

# EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA





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## 1. Executive Summary

The availability of employment services to international students following their graduation is largely dependent on their education sector of study and institution which they complete their studies at. South Australia's universities deliver a comprehensive suite of services to support the development of their students' careers including advisory, job noticeboards, facilitating connections with industry and coordination of work experience placements and internships. In the public vocational and education training (VET) realm, TAFE SA provides career advice and equips students with information about a range of occupations. In contrast, the delivery of employment services by private VET providers is essentially non-existent. Aside from the education institutions themselves, Business SA, through Apprenticeship Support Australia, is a strong supporter of businesses with an interest in offering apprenticeships or traineeships, and provides both career advice and job matching services for students. In addition, StudyAdelaide is a valuable first point of contact for general advice and direction to international students seeking to work in Australia. Aside from this, a range of online job noticeboards are available for all job seekers in South Australia, however, guidance on using these is limited.

In conclusion, the students which have the greatest range of employment services available to them are those in the higher education sector. Students graduating from the VET sector appear to miss out in first instance, apart from those studying at TAFE SA, however, there are other organisations which could be considered as gap fillers. In any event, it is likely that many international students would not know who to turn to for employment services, and this sits in favour of a more centralised approach by the South Australian international education sector in assisting students to effectively transition from study to the workforce.

## 2. Introduction

This paper analyses the range of employment services available for international students across South Australia. It focuses on the career services offered by the South Australian universities, VET providers, StudyAdelaide, Business SA, and job noticeboards. It also considers traineeship and graduate programs offered by the Government of South Australia.

## 3. Universities

- University of Adelaide

The University of Adelaide (UoA) has a comprehensive careers service function,<sup>[1]</sup> offering advice on finding work, tips on applying for work (how to produce a job application as well as preparing for job interviews), career planning as well as information on opportunities for students to connect with industry and employers. The UoA has an online CareerHub which lists opportunities related to programs offered by the University. CareerHub advertises jobs from employers who are looking for applications from UoA students and graduates, as well as serving as the main access point for Careers Service resources and registrations for events and workshops. Opportunities promoted concern graduate programs, vacation programs, internships, program-related part-time or casual work, international opportunities, and volunteer positions.

The UoA promotes the Careers Expo, an invaluable opportunity for students to meet prospective employers on the University's campus. The UoA's 'Industry Connect Visits' program enables students to visit workplaces related to their profession. The UoA hosts company representatives wishing to present to students on campus. The UoA also coordinates a mentoring program, facilitating relationships between current students and industry professionals, providing opportunities for advice, insights and guidance to assist students' transition into the workplace.

In 2018, the UoA held its own 'Grow Your Career Week' featuring a series of initiatives to assist students boost their employability. Amongst other things, it included sessions on building confidence, networking, tips from job recruiters, and building personal brands on LinkedIn.

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[1] <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/student/careers/>

The UoA careers service website also contains a link to 'GoinGlobal', a website rich with information to help students prepare for an international career. It promotes worldwide job opportunities, internship listings, industry profiles and country-specific information.

The UoA offers specific information for international students preparing for work in Australia. Topics include:

- o Creating a resume that meets Australian employer expectations;
- o Improving your English skills at every opportunity;
- o Gaining Australian work experience;
- o Networking through on-campus events, student associations and professional associations;
- o Ensuring you have current information from the Department of Home Affairs; and
- o UoA's annual event 'Working in Australia: A Careers Evening for International Students' which features information from the Department of Home Affairs and Migration SA.

- University of South Australia

The University of South Australia (UniSA) has a comprehensive career services function, [2] offering advice on career development planning, building employability, finding work opportunities, career-related events and workshops, and building professional networks. UniSA has its own CareerHub serving as a noticeboard promoting part-time, full-time and casual work, as well as volunteering opportunities. Students can receive a weekly Careers eNews email, alerting them to new opportunities that have been posted on CareerHub.

UniSA's career services website includes a page dedicated to internships and placements. As well as outlining the benefits to students of undertaking internships and other work experience placements, the page advises students that they may be able to undertake a work placement as part of their University program, and that many programs now include the opportunity to undertake a placement as a compulsory or elective component. Placements are promoted on the UniSA CareerHub and via Careers eNews.

UniSA provides a range of online resources to assist students with their career development. Topics include: develop a career plan; career pathways; writing a resume; writing job applications (cover letters); interview preparation; job hunting techniques; interview training; practice online aptitude testing; interview simulator tool; career assessment; resume builder tool; develop an elevator pitch; career assessments; newsroom; skills e-learning and career e-learning (search for career topics).

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[2] <https://i.unisa.edu.au/students/student-support-services/career-services/students-graduates/>

UniSA students can attend a resume writing workshop on campus. In addition, Career Services Drop-Ins are available on campus to check resumes, cover letters and provide advice on how to respond to selection criteria. For students seeking general career advice, appointments can be made with UniSA's career advisers to discuss career pathways, changing courses, choosing an elective, and developing a job search plan.

UniSA coordinates a range of career-related events and workshops on campus, including its Career Insights events, and other events throughout the year facilitated by UniSA and its industry partners. The UniSA Careers Expo is open to all UniSA students regardless of their year level or experience. UniSA has partnered with the Australian Association of Graduate Employers to deliver a one-day UniSA Careers Expo with 'The Big Meet, which hosts local, national and international organisations representing their industry, including employers, not-for-profit organisations and small to medium sized businesses. It provides students an invaluable opportunity to speak to employers directly.

- Flinders University

Flinders University has a comprehensive career services function,<sup>[3]</sup> offering job search facilities, career advice and information, professional development activities, work experience programs, mentoring programs and career-related events. All these services are available to current students and some are to recent graduates.

Flinders University has an online Careers Hub which enable employers to promote vacancies to current students and graduates at no charge. Flinders' Careers Hub caters for all organisations (profit and not-for-profit) and government. Students receive personalised job notifications based on their preferences, and gain access to employment activities and events.

Flinders' Work Experience Program provides students with work experience over and above degree requirements and gives the business community access to enthusiastic volunteers preparing for their careers. Work activities and timing are directed by the needs of the host workplace. Placements can be completed in a block or spread over time.

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[3] <http://www.flinders.edu.au/careers/studentsandgraduates.cfm>

The Horizon Professional Development Award is an award program designed to complement a student's academic study at Flinders. It provides opportunities for students to engage in activities and experiences, on-campus and externally, that develop and enhance professional workplace skills. The Horizon Award includes a list of activities including skill development workshops, a professional mentoring program connecting students with industry professionals, leadership conferences and programs, volunteering, work experience, student clubs, international experiences, peer mentoring programs, online courses and resources, and professional association membership events.

The Careers and Employability Service works closely with industry and professional associations to enhance interaction between students and employers. Flinders regularly has employers on campus and invites them to share current industry expectations with students and facilitate engagement opportunities.

- Torrens University

Torrens University offers students a unique suite of employment services.[4] Torrens offers personalised success coaching where students are assisted in developing their resume, creating their elevator pitch and practice mock interviews.

Torrens offers industry placements that allow students to graduate with career experience and valuable industry connections. Hands on experience is worked into every Torrens course to assist the development of practical skills. Torrens students undertake placements with some of the most prestigious organisations in Australia and the world.

Torrens offers Touch-Point weekend sessions that give students the opportunity to hear from industry professionals, speak with lecturers and expand their multidisciplinary network in a face-to-face environment.

Torrens has its own Career Advisor Hub, an online resource created for high school career advisors and teachers. Torrens University's Schools Team offers a variety of events and services designed to keep teachers and career advisors, students and their parents up to date with developments at the University. Torrens delivers a range of interactive workshops both in schools, and on campus. Access is given to careers expos, presentations, career advisor days and monthly newsletters.

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[4] <https://www.torrens.edu.au/your-career>

#### 4. VET providers

- TAFE SA

TAFE SA's website contains a career services function.[5] Amongst other things, it provides useful tools to assist students in planning their career using personal reflection and investigation. Students are encouraged to consider their skills, values, personality and motivations, and use these factors to explore jobs which may be suitable for them.

The TAFE SA career planning website contains links to websites containing career quizzes to aid students in better understanding the type of job conditions they would like. Such websites include 'Job Outlook' and 'Myfuture'. There is also a link to TAFE SA's career profiles pages which provide information about many careers and examples of the courses which can be undertaken to equip students with the qualifications, knowledge and skills for these careers. The career profile pages provide information on job prospects, salary range, a brief description of the occupation, the industry/industries which employees typically work in, education requirements, description of the nature of the job and typical working environment, and possible career paths.

The TAFE SA website contains further links to assist students in applying for jobs (producing a resume, writing a cover letter and preparing for job interviews). Websites include 'WorkReady' and 'JobAccess'.

TAFE SA Student Services staff are available to meet students to discuss any aspect of the planning of their career. Student Services supports prospective, current and graduate TAFE SA students.

#### 5. StudyAdelaide

The StudyAdelaide website is rich with content to assist students in preparing for work life in Australia.[6] StudyAdelaide provides information to international students on the following topics:

- Working rights

Students are informed that to be able to work in Australia while a student, they need to have a student visa with work permission. A link is provided to the Department of Home Affairs website.

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[5] <https://www.tafesa.edu.au/services/career-services>

[6] <https://studyadelaide.com/work/>

- Employment rights

Students are informed that there is a set of rights and responsibilities that apply to all Australian employees regardless of their workplace. A link is provided to the FairWork Ombudsman website.

- Tax file number (TFN)

Students are introduced to what a TFN is and advised that it is issued by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). A link is provided to the ATO website.

- Superannuation

Students are introduced to the concept of superannuation and advised that it is compulsory for an Australian employer to pay a percentage of a wage into the employee's superannuation fund. A link is provided to the superannuation page on the ATO website.

- Part-time and casual work

Students are informed about the differences between part-time and casual work in terms of entitlements and hours of work per week.

- Internships

Students are informed that an internship is a temporary work placement where students can trial the career they want and gain practical experience in their area of study.

- Applying for work

Students are informed that most jobs require preparation of a written application, and that the Careers Service team at a student's institution will be able to assist with tips on writing and reviewing resumes.

- Employer Portal

StudyAdelaide has coordinated an online employer portal to assist international students in securing a job with South Australian companies which are looking to grow their export business. The Portal connects local businesses directly to Adelaide's universities who can assist employers to find the right international student or graduate for their business.

- Graduate work rights

Students are informed that following graduation, those who choose to stay in Australia and work may need a new visa. Links are provided to the Department of Home Affairs website for different visa options including:

- o Temporary Graduate visa (subclass 485);
- o General Skilled Migration visa; or
- o Sponsored or nominated work visa.

- Graduate Programs

Students are informed that many South Australian and global companies hire international students for their graduate programs each year.

## 6. Business SA

Business SA is South Australia's peak Chamber of Commerce and Industry and peak employer body. Business SA provides extensive support for businesses seeking to offer apprenticeship or traineeship opportunities.[7] Business SA partly owns and operates Apprenticeship Support Australia (ASA), a body which provides expert guidance about employing or becoming an apprentice or trainee. ASA provides employers with business-wide training advice and skills development solutions, as well as job seekers and students with career advice and job matching services.

The ASA website is rich with apprenticeship/traineeship related advice and resources, including who is eligible for an Australian apprenticeship, what qualifications are available, tools to guide students to make informed career choices on topics such as career planning and tips for job interview preparation. ASA provides advice on the level of pay and other financial support available to Australia apprentices. A link is provided to the Fair Work Ombudsman's website listing a range of awards available across all industries. This provides information about the minimum wage and conditions that an apprentice is entitled to. Information is also provided on incentives provided by the Australian Government, usually aimed to assist with the costs incurred while undertaking training, including Trade Support Loans.

Business SA has partnered with over 11,000 businesses across South Australia and signed up more than 100,000 apprentices and trainees. Business SA has a team of industry training consultants, operating from five offices throughout metropolitan and regional South Australia. Its services include:

- Advice on accredited training packages and appropriate pathways;
- Targeted job matching to connect apprentices and employers;
- Workplace visits to sign up apprentices/trainees and administer the training contract;
- Support for the duration of the apprenticeship or traineeship including tailored mentoring; and
- Administration of incentives for employers and personal benefits for apprentices.

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[7] <http://www.apprenticeshipsupport.com.au/Home>

## 7. Government programs

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment (the Office) website contains information on the South Australian Government Traineeship and Graduate Programs which it coordinates.[8] The Office works with agencies to support those employed within the program.

### Traineeship Program

Trainees participating in the program are:

- offered 12 months employment with a South Australian Public Sector agency (under a Contract of Training);
- enrolled to undertake Certificate III in Business, or similar;
- assigned a mentor group;
- provided with exposure to the diversity of opportunities across government; and
- offered job seeking and interview skills workshops for future opportunities.

To complete the program, a participant must:

- successfully fulfil the requirements of the Contract of Training;
- successfully complete the qualification component;
- achieve satisfactory performance throughout their employment and be verified by their supervisor; and
- uphold the public sector values and Code of Ethics.

The Trainee Program is designed for people who have not completed vocational education and training (VET) (higher than Certificate III) or attained tertiary qualifications.

An eligible candidate for a traineeship will have the following characteristics:

- aged between 17 & 30;
- be a South Australian resident;
- be an Australian Citizen or have an appropriate work visa;
- be without VET (higher than Certificate III) or tertiary qualifications;
- have not completed a traineeship within the SA Public Sector previously or one hosted by the SA Public Sector; and
- not currently a SA Public Sector employee.

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[8] <https://publicsector.sa.gov.au/people/south-australian-government-traineeship-graduate-program/>

## Graduate Program

Graduates participating in the program will be:

- offered a minimum 12-month employment contract with a SA Public Sector agency;
- enrolled to undertake Certificate IV in Project Management Practice or similar;
- assigned a mentor group;
- provided with exposure to the diversity of opportunities across government; and
- offered job seeking and interview skills workshops for future opportunities.

To complete the program, a participant must:

- successfully complete their study component;
- achieve satisfactory performance throughout their employment and be verified by their supervisor; and
- uphold the public sector values and Code of Ethics.

An eligible candidate for a Graduate position will have the following characteristics:

- be a final-year student and will be conferred before employment commences or have completed a university qualification within the last 3 years;
- be a South Australian resident;
- be an Australian Citizen, permanent resident or have an appropriate work visa;
- have not completed a graduate program within the SA Public Sector or Commonwealth Government previously, or one hosted by the SA Public Sector; and
- not currently a SA Public Sector employee.

## 8. Job Noticeboards

International students have access to a range of online job noticeboards, including:

- CareerOne
- Indeed
- Seek
- LinkedIn
- University Job noticeboards
- South Australian Government Job Portal ('I work for SA')
- Federal Government Job Portal ('APS Jobs')
- Company websites (most companies have job noticeboards on their websites allowing students to register their details and access job email alerts)
- Recruitment Agencies - The Recruitment & Consultancy Services Association (RCSA) is the professional body for all recruitment agencies and provides a directory of all their members.

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