Creating your own opportunities

By Suzanne Connelly, VTAC

Today is the day! Before checking to see if your name is in the supplement you take a breath and check for your name. It’s not there! Panic begins to seep in but you take a breath and try to think...maybe VTAC has spelt your name incorrectly, maybe they have spelt O’Connell as O Connell or MacBride as McBride..... You check again...it’s still not there.

Reality starts to hit - maybe you haven’t received an offer. Don’t panic!

- Check the permissions section of your VTAC user account to ensure that you have given VTAC permission to release your name to the newspapers.
- Check your email and VTAC user account for your offer details.

You didn’t receive an offer, what happens now?

- Your application will continue to be processed for Round 2:
  The good news is that your application will continue to be processed by VTAC for the next round of offers. At this stage it is hard to tell how many offers will be made in Round 2, but some courses may not have filled their quotas. Round 2 offers will be available through your VTAC user account from 2pm on 6 February 2014.

- The negotiated offer:
  Remember, you are still eligible to use an Application for a negotiated offer and apply directly to a course not listed on your final list of preferences or one that is lower than the course you have been offered. The negotiated offer application is available from your VTAC user account. Further information about this process is available in this supplement.

- Supplementary offers:
  If you do not receive an offer in either the first or second round you may be considered for a supplementary offer, but please make sure that you have ‘ticked’ the correct box on your application and given VTAC permission to distribute your application to other courses with vacancies. If you want to be considered for all other supplementary offers you must select ‘Yes’ before 9am Monday 10 February 2014.

Additional Options

Year 12 courses

If you were not made an offer this year, you may decide to return to school as a continuing year 12 student or a new year 12 student to do further VCE or VCAL studies. This may assist you improve your current ATAR or art and design folio.

Before deciding what to do, talk to your parents, teachers and the course adviser from your local TAFE or university about the best course of action. Where possible, get any advice in writing and make sure you have the name of the person you spoke to.

Before considering going back to do more Year 12 studies, consider whether you are likely to perform better than last year. You can do this by asking your teachers for their opinion, and by critically assessing your own work.

- Did you work to your full potential?
- How much effort did you give to particular studies?
- Did you waste too much time?
- Were you easily distracted or disorganised?
- What is going to change that means you will do better this year, than last?

Consider whether your choice of studies clearly reflected your strengths. While repeated studies no longer incur a 10% penalty, some courses will consider your repeated studies as part of their selection process.

If you return for further VCE studies this year you can check out tertiary prerequisites for next year by referring to the Victorian Tertiary Entrance Requirements (VICTER) 2015 available at www.vtac.edu.au

If returning to secondary school is not an option, there are still a number of other alternatives available:
**Adult Community Education Sector**

A range of courses are available in the community sector at a location near you. Apart from adult VCE, many community providers offer accredited vocational education courses in a range of areas including Information Technology, Hospitality, Social and Community Services, Retail and a host of other courses. In addition, preparatory courses are available including the Diploma in Liberal Arts and Diploma of Further Education. Check the Adult, Community and Further Education website at [http://www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au) and follow the links to Further Education and Training.

**VET Courses**

The Vocational Education Training (VET) system is a major provider of post-secondary courses. There are many courses available at many locations across Victoria with both part-time and full-time courses available.

VET programs provide you with the opportunity to access a range of education and training pathways; if you successfully complete each level you can progress through a range of qualifications from Certificate I through to Advanced Diploma. In addition to this, satisfactory completion of some courses may enable you to obtain credit towards completion of degree studies in a range of areas.

For further information about VET courses telephone your local VET provider directly or log onto [http://www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au) and follow the links to Further Education and Training.

Other useful contacts include:

- FUSE at [https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au](https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au) and follow the prompts to Secondary students

**Single-Study Subjects/Continuing Education**

Most institutions offer students a chance to study, and be assessed in subjects at tertiary level, outside the normal degree program. Some people may just wish to pursue studies which interest them, without aiming to complete a degree; others may wish to study at this level to try to improve chances of selection should they wish to apply for entry to a degree program for the following year.

By undertaking a single study subject or Continuing Education course, selection officers are able to assess your actual performance at university level studies rather than your potential performance that are indicated by your VCE results.

Contact individual universities to see what is available, what the costs are and what study results can be achieved.

**Pre-apprenticeship training**

A pre-apprenticeship course is a stepping stone to get into the industry of your choice. Completion of a pre-apprenticeship course will help to:

- prepare you for the working environment in the selected industry;
- give you some basic skills, or improve your existing skills; and
- pave the way for the learning you will get as part of your apprenticeship.

**What pre-apprenticeships are available?** There are pre-apprenticeships available for a variety of trades in eleven different industries.

**How do I start a pre-apprenticeship?** Once you have chosen a pre-apprenticeship course, you can search the TAFE and Training Course Directory to find the training providers that offer it. You can also contact your local training providers directly to find out what pre-apprenticeship courses they offer.

For a list of the different trade industries or to find your local provider go to [http://www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au) and follow the links from Further Education and Training.

**Apprenticeships/Traineeships**

An apprenticeship or traineeship is a training contract between an employer and an employee in which the apprentice or trainee learns the skills needed for a particular occupation or trade.

An apprenticeship or traineeship can be undertaken on a full-time or part-time basis and can be used as a valuable stepping stone to start a career in an industry you want to work in.
Why start an apprenticeship or traineeship?
As an apprentice or trainee, you can:

- learn valuable, nationally recognised job skills
- get paid while learning
- combine formal training from a TAFE or training provider with workplace-based training

For further information about becoming an apprentice or trainee go to www.skills.vic.gov.au and follow the links.

Voluntary work
Voluntary work can be a rewarding way to benefit yourself and the community. By becoming involved in community programs you can improve communication skills, gain valuable work experience and also contribute to those in need. Your local Council can provide advice, or you could contact welfare agencies in your area.

Further information about the types of organisation that use volunteers can be found at http://volunteeringvictoria.org.au/

Interstate or Overseas Study
Relocating interstate or overseas is not a realistic option for everyone however it may be worth considering.

Formal applications for most states would not be possible at this stage, however direct applications and those for mid-year intakes may be available. You might even like to delay the application until the following year.

Interstate and overseas institutions have different requirements and prerequisites that may better suit your qualifications and/or interests.

If you are considering overseas study, you may like to contact the Consulate or Embassy of the particular country where you would like to study. They generally have advisers who would be able to help you arrange this. Certain universities and institutions within Australia would also have such information, especially those who have arrangements regarding exchanges with universities and institutions in other nations. If you already know of an institution where you would like to study, you may like to contact them directly.

Preparatory programs
Many Higher Education and VET providers offer a range of preparatory programs. These programs may provide an alternate way into a post year 12 qualification. For a complete list, refer to the VTAC Facebook page or VTAC Blog.

Finally
If you do decide to undertake some form of study or training on the assurance of getting into a course or area of work next year, make sure you note down the name of the person you were talking to and confirm any promises or assurances in writing.

The key to creating opportunities is to ask questions, contact tertiary institutions and associated bodies and find out what is available. While there are no guarantees, the first step can lead to opportunities in the area of your interest. Good luck with whatever you decide to do.