

The SEEK Learning and Career Services vision is to be “Australia’s leading and most trusted career partner” and our leading metric is Career Decisions shaped. We see that our role is to provide accurate, relevant information to help people make the career and education decisions that work for them. While our primary market is working adults, our research extends beyond this segment to better enable us to understand the challenges people face making these decisions throughout their education and working lives.

We posed the question “what new information would make the most difference to our candidates when making education decisions”. Our research shows that prospective students lack confidence in their ability to make a good education decision. They are looking for information that is easily understood, highly relevant to them and can be trusted to inform their decisions. We believe that there are 3 key areas where improved information, underpinned by policy reform, could help inform student choice and lower barriers to undertaking lifelong learning:

- Current and accurate course information
- Simple transparent pricing and financing options
- Transparent pathway and admissions information

Current and accurate course information

Students need a variety of information to choose between courses and providers. A range of online sources provide access to this information including SEEK. Education providers, across VET and HE, change their offering often (course curriculum, start dates, campuses offered etc.) and online sources are not always immediately updated.

SEEK uses a range of techniques and allocates substantial time and effort to keeping our course information up to date. Making a direct feed of relevant information available to all stakeholders, including education aggregators and distributors, would help students at the point that they are comparing their options.

Simple transparent pricing and financing options

Education can be a substantial investment. Our research suggests that price is a significant consideration for many, particularly VET pricing, and that transparency about price details helps build trust. Over 30% of users come to our site looking for price details. Pricing of VET courses is complex, differs across jurisdictions and eligibility for subsidies can be dependent on individual circumstances. Particularly for the growing number who are attracted to the flexibility of online learning, these differences do not make sense. We are not confident that we can provide accurate and personalised information given this complexity and do not publish pricing on SEEK Career Advice or SEEK Learning.

Our qualitative research also indicates that having financing available, and understanding what those options are, is a significant factor. Spreading the financial commitment rather than having to pay for it when they have family and mortgage commitment lowers the barriers to learning. Our understanding of VET Student Loan regulations (Clause 49 (1) (b) and (c)) is that it limits our ability to even mention the availability of student loans for VET courses at the diploma level and above.

We believe that it is important that students have full understanding of the investment required at the point that they compare their options. Simplifying pricing and financing options and making this information readily available to students, will help inform education comparisons and decisions, build confidence, and improve outcomes.

Transparent pathway and admissions information

Upskilling and reskilling will be essential to most workers as they navigate the future of work. People will have to navigate both the HE and VET sectors during their learning journey. Much work has been done to improve admissions transparency for HE, but navigating between sectors can still be a challenge. Where does VET offer an equivalent outcome or alternate pathway to HE? What is the difference between VET and a HE course? How can I navigate between systems? These are all important questions for students to answer.

SEEK Learning is one of the few sites that allows students to see both HE and VET pathways to a specific employment outcome. Our information is inferred from historical data. We would welcome this information being readily available so that it can be provided to students at the point of choice.