



Encouraging young people to engage with Australian Apprenticeships information

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Australian Apprenticeships and Traineeships Information Service (AATIS) is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.

Our goal is to create greater awareness of Australian Apprenticeship career options, encourage participation in Australian Apprenticeships with a focus on industry skills and training needs, and to contribute to the interconnectivity of Australian Apprenticeship information across stakeholder groups and jurisdictions.

The material is made available for the purpose of providing access to information in connection with Australian Apprenticeships and not as professional advice. The Commonwealth accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of this report.

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The Australian Apprenticeships and Traineeships Information Service (AATIS) plays a vital role in providing accurate, relevant and timely information promoting apprenticeship paths to young people. Young people, along with those supporting them in making decisions, are key users of career information.

It is important to understand good communication avenues for engaging with young people, specifically the types of content presented and the method for doing so. Social media channels present both an opportunity and problem for engaging young people, due to the complex nature of career decisions and the ways information is presented across varying platforms.

Research by AATIS is examining the information use and needs of young people and their influencers. This work will examine the differences in how young people and their influencers are accessing career information, and the risks and benefits of accessing information on different platforms.

Key points

- The careers landscape is changing, as is the technological environment in which people access careers information.
- Young people and those who influence them, access careers information across a variety of platforms, including through printed materials, online, and social media platforms.
- There are benefits and risks to accessing career information online, including heightened engagement from young people but with both good quality information and misinformation.

Background



The career landscape has changed significantly compared with even 10 years ago



Full-time employment for young people 15 to 24 years old has declined in the past 30 years, while part-time and casual employment has been on the rise (Skujins & Lim, 2015)



Since the Compact with Young Australians (Australian Government, 2009) the participation of young people in education has continued to increase, partly due to the increased school leaving age of 17 years old



Participation in post-school study has continued to increase, as has the attainment of post-school qualifications (Skujins & Lim, 2015)



One in eight people who leave school early will never go on to complete year 12 or equivalent education (Lamb & Hua, 2017)



Many jobs have moved from lower skilled occupations to those requiring high level of skills and communication. 70% of jobs that young people tend to enter will be radically affected by automation (FYA, 2015a)



Young people are expected to have up to 17 different jobs across 5 different careers (FYA, 2015b)

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Information

Setting the scene:

Youth employment and education



The career landscape has changed significantly compared with 10 years ago



Full-time employment has declined while part-time and casual employment has increased



Since 2010 the participation of young people in schooling has increased partly due to the increased school leaving age of 17 years old



Participation in and attainment of post-school qualifications has increased



1/8 people who leave school early will never go on to complete year 12 or equivalent



70% of jobs that young people tend to enter will be radically affected by automation



Young people will have up to 17 different jobs across 5 careers

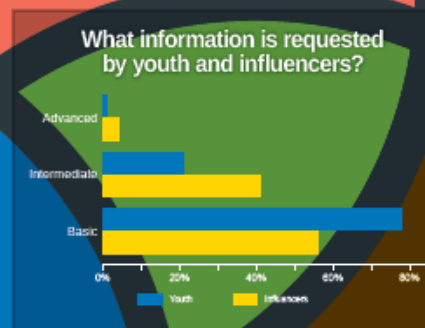
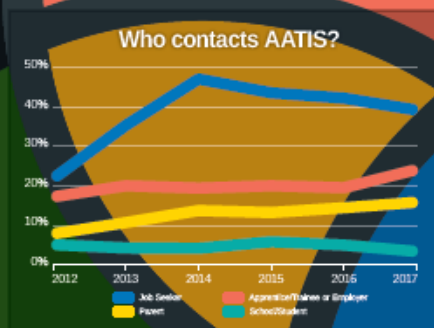
See report for sources

- Good quality career decisions are based on accurate and up-to-date information
- Questions remain about whether young people are actively engaging with career information and through which platforms
- Young people can be heavily influenced by the people and media around them, fuelling misperceptions about what makes a good career
- One misperception is that VET, including apprenticeships, are second-rate options
- Online resources are quickly taking over the ways that most people are accessing information
- Among the risks that online and social medias bring is the disparity of access between youth and their influencers

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It is important to understand good communication avenues for engaging with young people, specifically the types of content presented and the method for doing so. Social media channels present both an opportunity and problem for engaging young people, due to the complex nature of career decisions and the ways information is presented across varying platforms.

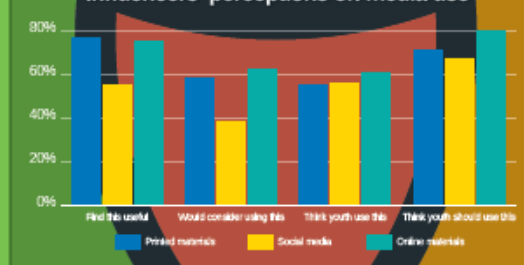
Research by AATIS is examining the information use and needs of young people and their influencers. This work will examine the differences in how young people and their influencers are accessing career information, and the risks and benefits of accessing information on different platforms.



Young People

- Most young people care about their futures and want to make the best careers decisions they can
- It is important to have an understanding of education and employment pathways, and the rewards and consequences of these options
- Emulating older people may result in trying to fit into a career landscape that no longer exists
- While young people have embraced technology in all forms their influencers may find these forms of media difficult to navigate
- Misinformation is perpetuated throughout the online landscape, so it can be difficult for a young person to navigate through this

Influencers' perceptions on media use



Influencers

- Influencers include: parents, family and friends, teachers and career advisers
- May not understand the changes in the career landscape over time and the impacts on youth career paths
- Parents and friends play a major role in shaping young people's career decisions, but are often likely to have a limited understanding of careers
- Traditional methods of information sharing may work best with some influencers, while others are more adept with technological advances

Overview of the research

Definitions

Youth: Australians aged up to 25 years, with a focus on those who are making decisions about their education and employment pathways, and career directions

Influencers: anyone who discusses or otherwise informs or influences young people about careers. For example, influencers include parents or family, friends, teachers or career advisers. For the purpose of this research like-aged friends and family (e.g. siblings) are not included as influencers.

Careers information: any form of formal or informal information used to help people make career decisions. This includes but is not limited to information about education and employment pathways, the labour market, and career interests and aptitude.

Method

Call analysis: The AATIS database has records of the information requested by callers, the responses given, and the type of caller (job seeker, student, school, parent, apprentice or trainee, employer). Records will be analysed for the level of information (basic, intermediate, advanced) and the content requested.

Surveys: Two surveys are being conducted, one of influencers and one of youth. The surveys focus on the platforms used to access career information, and the risks and benefits of different platform use.

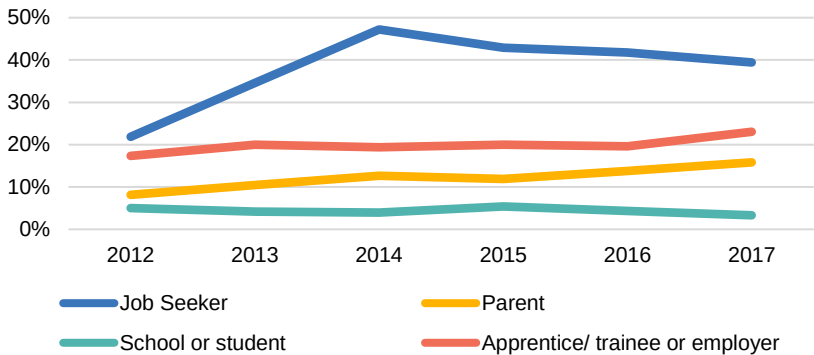
Focus groups and in-depth interviews: Following up on call analysis and survey results, qualitative data will be collected to explore the use, benefits and challenges of accessing career information in different forms across varying platforms.

Preliminary results

AATIS call analysis

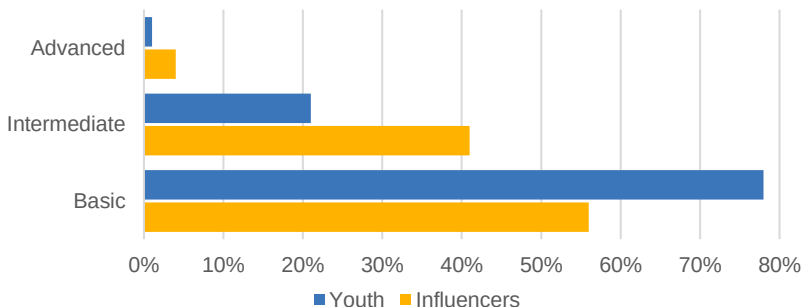
AATIS takes an average of around 200 calls a month from job seekers (40%), parents (15%) and schools or students (5%) among others.

Figure 1: Who contacts AATIS?



The information that callers request varies, from basic information such as *'What is an apprenticeship?'*, to intermediate questions including *'I have been offered an apprentice job, what do I do now?'*, and more advanced queries such as *'How can I get recognition for competencies I have already done?'*

Figure 2: What information is requested by youth and influencers?



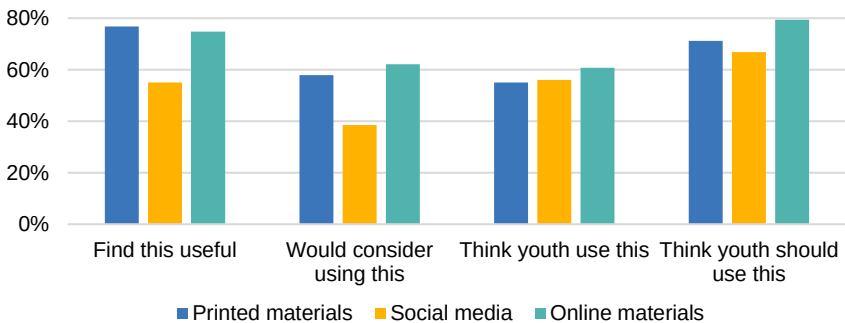
Across both youth and influencers, the most common call was requesting basic information, however this was close to 80% of all youth calls, with over 40% of influencers requesting intermediate or advanced information.

Influencer survey

Preliminary results from our survey of influencers indicates that influencers find printed and online materials most useful, while those who don't use that media type would consider using printed and online materials.

Overall influencers perceptions are that young people use online materials most, however most believe young people should use all sources.

Figure 3: Influencers' perceptions on media use



As reported by influencers, key benefits of engaging youth in their natural information environments include youth being more likely to engage with information in platforms they prefer, the readily accessible nature of information, and the interactivity of online and social media platforms. Several risks were reported, with the most common being young people's inability to differentiate good quality and misinformation, especially when provided through social media.

Conclusion

- The level of information that young people and their influencers request varies, with youth more likely to ask for basic information. This is likely due to the difference in prior experience and knowledge of young people and influencers
- Influencers reported differences in how they prefer to access career information and how they think youth are accessing this information. This indicates that different channels of information should be targeted to each group, but that young people may be accessing content that is unreliable and that their influencers aren't aware of
- Benefits to providing career information across diverse channels include allowing people to engage with information in a way that best suits them, especially in an interactive environment, however this was joined with the risk of poor quality information on some platforms.

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