**Information for adult learners**

## **What are the educational options for students over 18 years of age?**

If you are 18 years or older and would like to complete or continue your education, there are several pathways you may wish to consider. The best option for you will depend upon your study and career goals. By identifying these goals and your motives for undertaking further study, you can find the most suitable pathway for your situation.

It may not be necessary for you to return to high school in order to achieve your desired result. Utilising the flexible learning styles and condensed programs available to adult students will ensure you can select the quickest and easiest path to accomplish your goals.

## **What pathways are available?**

### Completing secondary school

If you are wishing to complete your standard secondary studies, you may wish to consider studying through TAFE Queensland, one of the Queensland schools of distance education, or as a mature age student at a mature age state school.

### TAFE Queensland

For further information on studying Year 11 and 12 at TAFE Queensland, [get in touch or find a TAFE Queensland location near you](https://tafeqld.edu.au/contact).

### Mature age state schools

Mature age state schools offer some adults the opportunity to complete your senior studies in a school environment.

For an adult to be considered for enrolment at a mature age state school, you must:

* not be a continuing student
* not hold a student visa
* and be prepared to undergo a criminal history check by the Queensland Police Service.

Further details about this process are outlined in the [*Mature age student applications procedure*](https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/mature-age-student-applications-procedure)*.*

Adults who are continuing students or hold a student visa may be able to apply for enrolment at any appropriate state school and will not be subject to a criminal history check by the Queensland Police Service. Entitlement to enrol at a state school is subject to meeting all eligibility criteria of the school and all enrolment requirements outlined in the [*Enrolment in state primary, secondary and special schools*](https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/enrolment-in-state-primary-secondary-and-special-schools-procedure) procedure.

*Prior to enrolment at a mature age state school, you should talk to the principal or the enrolment officer and discuss:*

* your study and career goals (is attending school the right pathway for you?)
* if the school offers the subjects you want to study
* the costs and workload associated with your proposed course of study
* if you have been previously excluded from the school or any other state school
* your remaining allocation of state education
* if you will need a Learning Account ([Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority Learning Account](https://myqce.qcaa.qld.edu.au/your-qce-pathway/about-the-qce))
* the rules and conditions of enrolment.

Contact your desired [mature age state school](https://education.qld.gov.au/careers/pathways/adult-learners/completing-high-school-education) to determine if their program will meet your needs.

*If you decide that you would like to apply to enrol at a mature age school you must:*

* complete the:
	+ [Mature age student criminal history check consent form](https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/attachment/prospective-mature-age-student-criminal-history-check-consent-form.docx)
	+ [Application for student enrolment form](https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/attachment/application-for-student-enrolment-form.pdf)
* arrange payment of the criminal history check fee:
	+ payment can be made to the school or
	+ the school may approve your request for them to pay the fee on your behalf
* provide appropriate proof of identity by showing the principal or enrolment officer one of the following:
	+ your current driver’s licence
	+ your current Adult Proof of Age Card (18+ card)
	+ your current passport including your photograph and signature page.

The school will copy your original identification document or you can provide copies that have been certified by a Justice of the Peace or Commissioner for Declarations.

*Timeframe for criminal history checks*

Criminal history checks are very thorough and may take eight weeks or longer to complete. Enrolment cannot occur until this process has been finalised.

*Enrolment decision*

The principal will decide if you can enrol after reviewing your criminal history check and other relevant information. If they are satisfied you are eligible for enrolment, you will be advised of the decision and your enrolment will be activated. However, if the principal determines that your enrolment will pose an unacceptable risk, the principal will commence the [Refusal to enrol](https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/refusal-to-enrol-risk-to-safety-or-wellbeing-procedure) process.

If you are refused enrolment by the Director-General of the Department of Education in accordance with the [Refusal to enrol](https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/refusal-to-enrol-risk-to-safety-or-wellbeing-procedure) process, you may then choose to apply for enrolment at a school of distance education.

### Schools of distance education

Studying at a school of distance education, you can complete your senior studies from home and will not be subject to a criminal history check. You will also be exempt from paying a fee for the provision of that program of distance education if you have been refused enrolment by the Director-General of the Department of Education in accordance with the [Refusal to enrol](https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/refusal-to-enrol-risk-to-safety-or-wellbeing-procedure) process) or your principal place of residence is at least 16 kilometres from a mature age state school, in accordance with the [*Distance education enrolment and fees*](https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/distance-education-enrolment-and-fees-procedure) procedure.

Contact a [school of distance education](https://education.qld.gov.au/schools-educators/distance-education) to find out more about home-based learning.

**Preparing for tertiary study**

It is not always necessary to complete schooling up to Year 12 in order to access tertiary study. There are several alternate pathways for adults who are returning to study.

### TAFE Queensland

By studying with [TAFE Queensland](http://tafeqld.edu.au/), you can study the [Certificate IV in Adult Tertiary Preparation](https://tafeqld.edu.au/news-and-events/news/2017/10-reasons-to-study-adult-tertiary-preparation), which aims to provide people aged over 18 years with the knowledge and skills required for successful tertiary study in an encouraging and relaxed adult education setting.

Through TAFE Queensland you can enrol at selected TAFE campuses, or [online course](https://tafeqld.edu.au/courses/ways-you-can-study/online-learning.html) at any time of the year, study at your own pace, anywhere at a time that is convenient for you, and pay as you go. Your previous education, training, work experience and life experiences may help you gain credit towards your course.

### University bridging courses

Universities offer a number of pathways for entry including Adult Tertiary Preparation courses, bridging or enabling courses which offer flexible learning styles and enrolment by distance, helping you to find the best option for you. Some universities recognise work and life experience as a pathway to undergraduate study.

### Contact your preferred university for information about course entry requirements. For contact details and campus information, visit the list of [Queensland universities](https://education.qld.gov.au/careers/pathways/higher-education).

### QTAC alternative entry

The Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) provides an option for alternative entry to tertiary study for some people who have not completed Year 12 or do not have formal academic qualifications. To check your eligibility, visit [QTAC](http://www.qtac.edu.au/) or call 1300 467 822.