

University of
South Australia

Graphic Design and Illustration

Experience. The Difference.

Careers



University of
South Australia



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South Australia

Experience. The Difference.

As a graduate of the University of South Australia, you can be confident that you will enter the job market with far more than just a degree. The skills, knowledge and experience that you have acquired during your time with us will ensure that you're ready to make an immediate contribution to the profession of your choice.

You will find that many of your potential employers, especially in Australia, will be aware of UniSA's status as an international university with a difference. We are widely recognised as being comfortable with innovation, which means that our research and teaching always stays relevant to the needs of society, industry and the professions. Employers value UniSA graduates because they know you have the capacity to bridge the gap between theory and practice and be immediately effective in the workplace.



Whether your UniSA degree is the starting point on your career path, or a step along the way, you can be sure that employers will appreciate the UniSA difference.

How to use this brochure.

No matter how strong your academic record, or how impressive your curriculum vitae, success in the job market depends on understanding your industry and what you have to offer potential employers. So while this brochure includes useful tips on where to find jobs, writing winning applications and succeeding at interviews, we've also provided information about employment trends and some ideas for marketing your knowledge and experience to employers. The section on Graduate Qualities will be particularly useful in helping you express to employers how you've learned what you've learned during your time at UniSA.

For those of you about to start job-hunting, this brochure will be an invaluable tool in developing a job-seeking strategy. Even if graduation seems a long way off, the sections on career planning and your industry may help you to clarify your goals and aspirations.

Whatever stage you're at on your career path, we wish you the best of luck in planning your career ... and winning your dream graduate job!

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Want to **know more?**

www.unisa.edu.au/careers
careers@unisa.edu.au

UniSA is a proud member of the Australian Technology Network (ATN), an influential alliance of five distinctive and prominent universities located in each mainland state of Australia.



Preparing yourself for a life of opportunities

As a student or recent graduate, you are at a very exciting point in your career: through your education and other activities you are developing skills ready for your next life opportunity. This may be further study, employment, travel, or voluntary work. With so many options open to you, it's not unusual to feel a little overwhelmed when it comes to decisions about your future.

Let's consider what you need to do to prepare yourself to take advantage of the many opportunities on offer and create a fulfilling life for yourself. And remember, it's never too early to start preparing!

What is involved in informed decision making?

The best decisions are well-informed. You will probably know if you have made the right decision as it will simply seem right to you.

It is important to be aware that you cannot plan the rest of your life from here. The contemporary workplace changes incredibly quickly, so you may one day be involved in challenges that are impossible to imagine right now. And it's not just the workplace that will change over time – you will, too. You may develop different interests and values as you progress through life. However, while you can anticipate frequently changing your plans, there is also a lot you can do to manage your own career. Put yourself in the driving seat: when opportunities arise to become involved in interesting activities, or meet new people, grab them with both hands.

The earlier you start to make decisions the better.

Many people put off decision making as they are fearful of making the wrong decision. In fact, a worse scenario is to make no decision at all. Feel confident that if you make a decision that isn't working out as you anticipated, it is within your power to alter your direction.

When to start making decisions

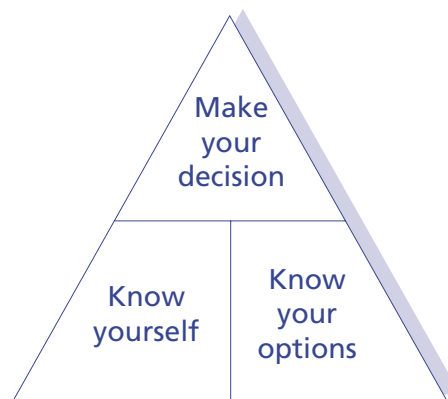
You are already making decisions. By selecting your degree program and choosing courses you are shaping your career (although you shouldn't feel your future is restricted by these decisions). Decisions about your first opportunity after UniSA will be influenced by deadlines for job applications and further study applications.

The earlier you start to make decisions the better. This will then leave you enough time to start implementing your plans to make your decision a reality.

So, read on to find out how to make career decisions.

A step by step approach to decision making

Career planning and decision making is about considering yourself, your options, decision making strategies and your own decision. This diagrammatic representation shows how you can organize your decision making. It puts the elements of decision making into a relevant order to help you understand the process.



Based on: Peterson, G.W., Sampson, J.P. Jr, and Reardon, R.C., 1991, *Career Development and Services: A Cognitive Approach*. Pacific Grove, California



When to look for graduate employment

Graduate employers include larger companies that have established recruitment and training programs. They generally recruit students in their final year, and graduates after they have completed their degree program. Application deadlines can be as early as March for a start date the following year. Some employers have

a limited recruitment period which means they may only advertise and accept applications over a few weeks.

Small and medium companies tend to advertise up to three months before they want the new employee to start.

Deadlines for further study tend to be half a year before the start of the degree program. (See SATAC and the UniSA website for more information).

By developing an understanding of yourself you are in a good position to make a strong, informed decision.

This means that you will need to indulge in some fairly deep and honest self-assessment and reflection about yourself in order to identify your values and beliefs, technical and transferable skills, knowledge, and your life/career interests.

Some suggested activities:

1. **Make a list** of your interests and consider why you like them.
2. **Consider what you value**, for example, helping people or animal rights.
3. **Think about what you enjoy most** and least about your degree – and why.
4. **Think about the Graduate Qualities.** Although you will be developing all of these through your degree you may have natural strengths in particular areas.

Know your options

This brochure has been written to help you begin to explore your career options. On the following pages you can learn about the industry and occupations connected to your degree. Use this information to spark your interest – you can find out even more through internet sites such as www.myfuture.edu.au, www.jobsearch.gov.au and the professional bodies associated with your degree.

Through exploration you can discover different industries, occupations and specific job roles. Some important considerations might be:

- what you will be doing on a daily basis
- salary
- training and progression
- entry requirements – and whether further study is required
- the industry sector, current issues and prospects
- what current employees enjoy and dislike about their roles.

Decision making

People make decisions in different ways. Some are very logical and others are led by their feelings. Some like to make decisions independently, and others are influenced by their family, friends and community. Reflect on your previous decision making – how could you have improved your decisions?

Know yourself

Ask yourself the following questions:

- **Which decision** are you making?
- **How do you feel** about your current decision?
- Are other people **influencing you**?
- **Is anything preventing** you from making a decision?
- Have you considered **all your options**?
- Have you **narrowed down** your options?

Consider the **pros and cons** of each option.

Start to **prioritise** the options.

Experiment by forming a plan of action for your preferred choice – think of the training you may need, and how you would start to apply for positions.

Consider whether this choice feels right to you.

You are now equipped to make well-informed decisions. Enjoy feeling in control of your future and your career!



Graduate Qualities

Graduates of UniSA:

- operate effectively with and upon a body of knowledge
- are prepared for lifelong learning
- are effective problem solvers
- can work both autonomously and collaboratively
- are committed to ethical action and social responsibility
- communicate effectively
- demonstrate an international perspective.

Graphic Design and Illustration

Visualise your career in Graphic Design or Illustration

As you'll know from your studies, a career in graphic design or illustration requires creative problem solving skills, excellent technical ability and the capacity to represent ideas or concepts visually. Successful graphic designers and illustrators are effective communicators and know how to maintain their cool under pressure; tight deadlines are par for the course. A career in visual communications offers opportunities to work both independently and as part of a team, and there's plenty of scope for self-employment.

Flexibility and adaptability are often the key to success in the visual communications job market. Working with an extensive range of applications, most designers and illustrators must be flexible enough to adapt design across a range of media, from still to animated, flat to three dimensional. However, you may also be able to find or create a niche role for yourself in a specific area of visual communications. A degree in Graphic Design or Illustration opens up doors to a wide range of creative opportunities from animation to fashion, from graphic art to interior design.

Employment growth for Designers and Illustrators to 2009–10 is expected to be strong and the Australian Government predicts job prospects for designers and illustrators over the next five to six years to be good.

Employment trends

Of the 49,300 designers and illustrators in employment around Australia, an above average proportion are in full-time jobs (80 per cent). The vacancy level for designers and illustrators is high with 58 per cent of vacancies arising from job changing, 34 per cent from job openings and 8 per cent from new jobs. This means it's well worth keeping your eye on both the print media and the internet to locate positions, as well as tapping into your personal networks.

Employment growth for designers and illustrators over the past five years is more than three times greater than the average for all occupations and more than double the average in the past two years. Since 2000, there has been a steady increase in the level of employment within this sector, with a very slight decrease from 2004 to 2005. Future employment growth is expected to be strong. So as a graduate of a Bachelor in Visual Communication, you're well placed to enter the job market.

On average, full-time designers and illustrators earn just over \$800 per week before tax, which is slightly higher than the average earnings across all occupations. Median salaries for designers and illustrators have increased slightly from 2000 to 2004.

The greatest percentage of designers and illustrators are employed in the eastern seaboard states (New South Wales at just over 36 per cent, Victoria at just over 27 per cent and Queensland at just over 16 per cent) with South Australia ranking fifth after Western Australia. So while there are plenty of opportunities in South Australia, you may also wish to consider looking further afield.

For those graduates who decide to start their own business or work as freelancers, small business management skills, networking skills, dedication, discipline, persistence and commitment will all be part of your recipe for success. You can seek assistance through government schemes such as the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme or through Business Enterprise Centres.

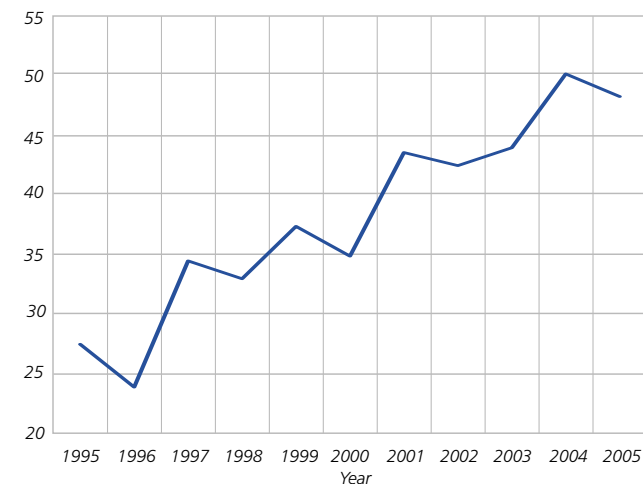
Tips from a graduate

Pina Falzarano
Graphic Designer, Mitoussa Design
Graduated 2002

One of our projects in the final year was to do a résumé and come up with our own personal identity, so I knew that with about 100 students graduating it was really important for me to have a point of difference. I created a personal brand and used this as my résumé after I graduated, presenting it as a hard cover, bound book. These were either hand delivered or posted to potential employers and I always did a follow up call a week later...it was great that everyone I sent it to recalled the branding that I'd created!

The employment level for designers and illustrators has, on average, continued to increase steadily since 1990.

The employment level ('000s of people) for graphic designers and illustrators from 1995 to 2005.



■ Designers and Illustrators

Which occupations?

Graphic Design and Illustration graduates fill a number of positions. These include art director, creative director, graphic designer, illustrator, advertising account executive, industrial or interior designer, website designer, exhibition designer, print finishing artist, printing machinist, set designer, signwriter, textile designer, printing machinist and visual merchandiser.

They work across a variety of environments, including graphic design studios, advertising agencies, publishing houses, education and government institutions, large private companies that have in-house design facilities, public relations firms, printing firms, architecture, interior design and industrial design companies, television, film and multimedia production agencies as well as freelance designers.

Which industries?

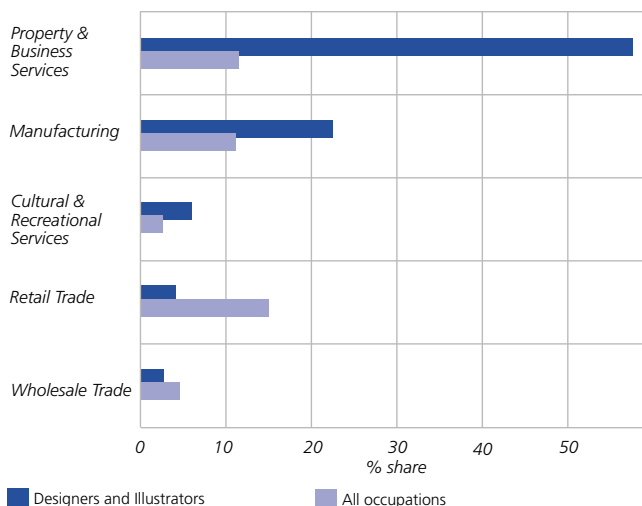
Property and Business Services is by far the largest employing sector for designers and illustrators with nearly 60 per cent share of employment for designers and illustrators compared to all occupations. As a sector, Property and Business Services has experienced strong growth over the past five years and this is expected to continue over the next five years.

The other main industries which provide a significant share of employment for designers and illustrators are Manufacturing (22.5 per cent), Cultural and Recreational Services (6 per cent), Retail (just over 4 per cent) and Wholesale (nearly 3 per cent).

The rapidly expanding world of digital communication continues to open up new opportunities for designers and illustrators involved in a variety of digital and electronic visual communication.

The largest share of employment for designers and illustrators is in the Property and Business Services sector.

Industries with the largest share of employment for graphic designers and illustrators compared with their share for all occupations.



■ Designers and Illustrators

■ All occupations

It's really important to show initiative and while you're looking for work, try and get as much work experience as you can. If you can't get experience directly in a design studio, try other facets of the industry such as a printing or paper house, or offer to do voluntary graphic design work. Not only does this tell potential employers that you show initiative – which they'll look upon favourably – it also helps build up your portfolio and add to your résumé.

The advice I'd give to graduates looking for work is that you need to have the right attitude and perseverance. Another thing is the follow up call...I really made a concerted effort to follow up a week after I sent out my résumé. Even though a lot of times people would say they didn't have positions, I took the opportunity to ask for feedback and suggestions. This was really helpful as it often led to face to face meetings which not only gave me an industry point of view but helped to expand my contacts and network.

Which companies?

There are many companies and organisations that employ designers and illustrators. These include advertising agencies, graphic design houses, commercial art studios, retail stores, printing firms, manufacturer's promotion departments, packaging companies, computer games developers, multimedia studios, exhibition and display companies, book and newspaper publishers and marketing and public relations firms. Smaller design firms often prefer graduates capable of developing design concepts as well as doing their own artwork. Opportunities exist for designers and illustrators in industries such as film and television. Some designers and illustrators may choose to be self-employed or to start their own businesses.

Professional Recognition

Graduates satisfy the requirements for Licentiate Membership of the Design Institute of Australia.

Graduate Qualities and Employers

Employers look for graduates who have not only strong academic records and relevant qualifications but also the personal skills and qualities needed to do the job well. As you will know, UniSA programs are designed to develop a range of Graduate Qualities that are highly valued in the workplace.

With the Graduate Qualities you'll be able to approach employers knowing that you stand out from graduates of other institutions.

As a Visual Communication graduate, you'll need to demonstrate that you have the design skills that relate to the needs of your employer and your folio of work will be critical in demonstrating this. To show that your skills are more than just design and illustration, **you might want to tell potential employers that you:**

have an ability to operate with/upon a body of knowledge

You should emphasise that UniSA programs offer the most recent discipline knowledge centred on both practical and theoretical design. Make employers aware that you have been taught by leading professionals and gained real-life work experience in designing for a variety of clients and managing projects through all stages from client brief to production.

are prepared for lifelong learning

Tell employers that your degree provided you with a broad theoretical base in design and illustration complemented by a focus on practical studies and real-life studio application. In addition, you had the opportunity to undertake other courses outside the Design and Illustration program that helped to broaden your outlook and appreciation for further study and lifelong learning. Let employers know that you understand the strategies, avenues and information required to help keep your professional skills and knowledge up to date.

are an effective problem solver

Inform employers that the range of areas you studied provided an opportunity to understand and appreciate effective problem solving skills with an emphasis on creative problem solving techniques and processes at a professional level. Highlight that your focus on studio-based applications provided the opportunity to analyse and evaluate various techniques, to tackle real-life issues and to develop effective solutions.

can work autonomously and collaboratively

Emphasise that your studies aimed to give you confidence in yourself and your working style. You could talk about how you developed your portfolio of work and how at times, this involved the need to work collaboratively to share, explore and create new ideas and concepts. You may wish to mention that UniSA's Design Consultancy provided an opportunity for you to work both individually and collaboratively on various professional projects.

are committed to ethical action and social responsibility

Indicate that underpinning all UniSA programs is a commitment to ethical practice. Within the Design Studio courses, students of the Graphic Design and Illustration program developed an understanding of the need to work ethically in a professional capacity.

communicate effectively

You'll want to demonstrate that you are aware that a fundamental skill within design and illustration is the ability to communicate well, and that you have honed these abilities during your time at UniSA. You could talk about how projects undertaken during your study encouraged deconstruction of ideas and reconstruction of design solutions in unique ways, along with the ability to communicate the reasoning behind your concepts.

demonstrate an international perspective

Let employers know that you learnt about Perspectives on Modernism and The New Internationalism and were encouraged to explore design and illustration ideas and concepts from around the globe. You could also mention that many of the students studying at UniSA campuses in Australia are from overseas, which has provided you with an opportunity to interact and communicate with students from all parts of the world.

Note: Statistical data used in this brochure has been sourced from the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. All details were correct at the time of printing.

Successful Job Search Strategies


Once you've made some decisions about your career directions, you'll be ready to develop a personal job search strategy. This will help you feel in control of the process and ensure that you use your time wisely.

What with researching possible employers, preparing applications, scouring newspapers and the internet, you'll find that job-hunting can be a full-time occupation! For detailed information about job seeking, don't forget to check out the UniSA Careers website at: <http://www.unisa.edu.au/careers>

Finding your dream job

To begin with, it's worth considering the wide range of ways in which you can find out about employment opportunities. Most people immediately think of newspapers and online job search sites, and of course, these are a great place to start. However, you also need to be aware of 'the hidden job market' – for example, those vacancies found through family contacts or by approaching an employer directly. Tapping into the hidden job market requires you to be proactive in seeking out your own opportunities.

The results of a recent survey by Graduate Careers Australia indicated that the most successful job search methods for graduates in full-time employment included media advertisements, personal contacts and approaches to employers. These results suggest that you should explore a range of job search avenues and adapt them to suit your personal and professional style.

- Media advertisement (22.7%) 
- Consulting family and or friends (10.8%) 
- An approach by an employer (10.4%) 
- Direct approach to an employer (10%) 
- Internet based job search (8.4%) 
- Using work contacts or networks (7.2%) 
- Other University source (7.1%) 
- Careers Fair or information session (6.8%) 
- Using University Careers Services (6.5%) 
- Registering with an employment agency (5.0%) 
- Other (5%) 

It's never too early to start planning for employment

It's never too early to start developing a job search strategy. Even if graduation is a few years away, it's worth thinking about what you can do now to improve your chances of finding employment after uni. You could undertake a summer placement with a potential employer, volunteer for work in an area related to your degree, or simply start developing a professional résumé. If you'll be graduating next year, then it's definitely time to put together a strategy that will help you find the job you really want.

The **successful** application

Most job applications consist of a cover letter and a résumé. Sometimes you will also be asked to include one or a combination of the following: an application form, a separate document addressing selection criteria and/or an academic transcript. Remember, a successful application is one that convinces the employer that you are worth interviewing!

Whatever combination of information you are required to provide, bear these rules in mind when preparing your application:

1. **Tailor your résumé**, covering letter and response to selection criteria for each vacancy or organisation. You will need to emphasise different skills, experience and qualities depending on the nature of the job.
2. **Think carefully** about what skills and qualities the employer requires and how you can demonstrate them. Include examples from activities such as part-time work, volunteering, recreational pursuits and travel if they demonstrate skills or experience that are relevant to the job.
3. **Your covering letter** and the first page of your résumé should include your specific skills and experience that are most relevant to the position. Employers may receive dozens of applications and your outstanding qualities need to be immediately obvious.
4. **Finally, ask a trusted friend** or family member to read through your entire application; you don't want to be let down by spelling errors or typos!

Here is a step-by-step approach to creating your personal job search plan:

1. Use the internet, the UniSA Careers Service, your personal contacts and perhaps relevant professional associations to create an employer directory of organisations for which you would like to work. Remember to include recruitment agencies in your directory.
2. Develop a weekly job search calendar. Schedule specific times in your diary to undertake tasks related to job-hunting and don't let yourself be distracted by more appealing alternatives!
3. Decide how you are going to make initial contact with employers and the frequency of contact. You might make an initial phone call to find out a contact name, then send a covering letter and your résumé, and follow up with a phone call a week later.
4. Keep meticulous records of the organisations you've approached, the positions for which you've applied and the responses you've received.

The winning interview

If you have been shortlisted for an interview, you can feel confident that the employer believes you have the appropriate skills and experience to do the job. The following tips will help you convince the interview panel that you also have the commitment, enthusiasm and qualities to be an asset to their organisation.

- Prepare! Researching the organisation and industry will increase your confidence and help you appear knowledgeable in the interview.
- Anticipate possible questions, and prepare and practise responses. If a question surprises you, don't be afraid to ask for a moment to reflect.
- Have questions prepared to ask the employer.
- Identify specific examples of occasions on which you have demonstrated the skills and qualities the employer requires.
- Be positive, both in what you say and in your body language. Remember to shake hands firmly, maintain eye contact and thank the interviewers for their time.



International Students

Whether you're seeking work in Australia or in your home country, as an international student you have already demonstrated many of the qualities that employers value; adaptability, initiative, and a willingness to take on challenges. So in your applications and interviews, make sure you emphasise the skills and knowledge you've acquired through studying overseas, such as the ability to communicate effectively in English and the capacity to work across cultures.

Top tips for job-seeking in Australia

1. Have a look at www.immi.gov.au for information about obtaining permanent residency.
2. Australian employers want more than good degree results; they want to know you have built skills (team work, communication, problem solving) through work experience, voluntary work, sports and student societies.
3. The importance of accurate English in your applications cannot be underestimated. Make sure you ask someone who speaks English as a first language to check your résumé, application forms and covering letter.
4. On your résumé it is important to write about all your work experience, even if it is unrelated to your future career. This helps employers see the range of life experiences that you would bring to their organisation.
5. In Australian interviews it is expected that you will speak about your successes, and attribute your achievements to yourself rather than the team.

Don't be afraid to talk confidently of your skills and experience!

6. It's not worth applying to employers who are only looking for Australian Citizens, or have decided that they want only permanent residents.

Top tips for job-seeking in your home country

1. Make contact with employers and recruitment companies from your home country and ask about different approaches to job seeking. Many organisations will have websites containing useful information that you will be able to access before returning home.
2. Reflect on your experience in Australia and how this can help you in your future career:
 - You have improved your English language skills.
 - You have learnt about a culture which may be very different from your own.
 - Through your studies you have learnt how to think in a different way and to value skills such as team work and communication.
3. Contact employers or recruitment agencies that have offices in Australia and your home country and ask for advice on applying for employment at home.

Useful Websites

Websites and resources for Graphic Design and Illustration graduates

Industry Associations

<http://www.agda.asn.au>

The Australian Graphic Design Association (AGDA) is the national association for professional graphic designers. Includes a section on jobs.

<http://www.icograda.org>

Website of the International Council of Graphic Design Associations with international design news and events.

Starting your own business

www.business.gov.au

The Australian Government's Business Entry Point provides excellent information on starting a business.

<http://www.workplace.gov.au/workplace/Individual/Jobseeker/SelfEmployment>

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations site contains useful resources for people wanting to start a business.

<http://www.beca.org.au>

Website of Australia's network of Business Enterprise Centres, which are located in rural and urban towns throughout Australia and work with and on behalf of the small business sector.

http://www.ozco.gov.au/arts_resources/publications/arts_marketing_the_pocket_guide

Arts Marketing: the Pocket Guide – a handy guide with tools and tips to help you market yourself.

Online resources for graphic designers and illustrators

<http://www.agda.asn.au/links/magazines.html>

A comprehensive list of design magazines.

<http://www.agda.asn.au/links/othersites.html>

A comprehensive list of resources for designers and illustrators.

General career information

<http://www.gradlink.edu.au>

The official website of Graduate Careers Australia (GCA). Provides useful insights into graduate careers, outcomes and recruitment in Australia.

<http://www.myfuture.edu.au>

A joint initiative of the Federal and State governments. Help with career exploration, decision making, job search and job preparation.

<http://www.graduate.com.au>

Career resources for graduates, including tips on job-seeking.

<http://www.unimail.com.au>

Career resources for graduates, including a job search facility.

Job search

<http://www.careerone.com.au>

<http://www.seek.com.au>

<http://www.mycareer.com.au>

<https://jobsearch.gov.au>

Federal Government job search site.

<http://www.psgazetteonline.gov.au>

Includes a job search facility for positions in the Australian public service.

Labour market information

<http://www.jobsearch.gov.au/joboutlook>

Website of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. Find out about job prospects, weekly earnings and other useful occupational information.

Workplace relations

<http://www.workplace.gov.au>

Comprehensive employment information, including specific advice for disadvantaged job seekers, Indigenous Australians, migrants and volunteers.

<http://www.wagenet.gov.au>

Provides information about wages and conditions of employment in Australia for work that is covered by federal awards and agreements.

Sites for international students and students wishing to work overseas

<http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/content/view/full/35>

The International Outlook section of the website of Graduate Careers Australia.

<http://www.goinglobal.com>

Full of information about working in different countries throughout the world.

Sites for people with disabilities

<http://unisa.edu.au/regdisability/education.htm>

Information about the Regional Disability Liaison Officer Initiative.

<http://www.ocpe.sa.gov.au>

The South Australian Office of Public Employment; click on 'Equity and Diversity', then 'Disability and Employment'.

http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/employment/employment.html

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission website. This page is intended to provide a convenient entry point for resources on equal employment opportunity and disability.

Further Information

www.unisa.edu.au/careers
Career Services
Email careers@unisa.edu.au

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