

Careers Newsletter

Soft Skills: The Secret Superpower Employers Want



Grades matter, but it's your soft skills - like teamwork, communication and adaptability, that can really set you apart. You're building these skills all the time, often without noticing it: group assignments and sport strengthen teamwork, class debates or even making TikToks boost communication, and dealing with last-minute changes at school develops your adaptability. Employers see these qualities as just as valuable as technical know-how because they show you're dependable, creative and great to collaborate with.

How to Build Soft Skills at School (Without Even Realising It):

- Volunteer to be the group spokesperson in class = boosts confidence and communication.
- Join a sports team or music group = sharpens teamwork and collaboration.
- Take on a casual job or school leadership role = develops reliability and responsibility.
- Try something new (like coding, debating or drama) = builds adaptability and resilience.

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“Go as far as you can see; when you get there, you'll be able to see further.”

Thomas Carlyle, writer and historian

You don't need to be a computer genius to be a Cybersecurity Analyst.

What matters most is curiosity, problem-solving skills and a genuine desire to protect people and organisations from digital threats.



What is a Cybersecurity Analyst?

A Cybersecurity Analyst protects computer systems, networks and data from cyber threats like hackers, viruses and scams. They monitor systems for suspicious activity, investigate security breaches and put safeguards in place to stop future attacks. Cybersecurity Analysts might work for government agencies, banks, tech companies or even gaming platforms anywhere digital security is essential. The goal of a Cybersecurity Analyst is to keep information safe and ensure people and organisations can use technology with confidence.

What skills and strengths are needed?

Strong problem-solving skills are key, as analysts often need to figure out how a hacker got in and how to stop it happening again. Attention to detail and persistence help when scanning through data or logs for clues. Communication skills are also important because analysts must explain technical issues clearly to non-technical people. Curiosity and a willingness to keep learning are vital, since cyber threats are always evolving. Teamwork, adaptability and logical thinking are also big advantages in this fast-moving field.

What are the pathways?

You can begin with entry-level courses in IT or cybersecurity, such as a Certificate IV in Cyber Security. From there, many analysts go on to study diplomas or degrees in computer science, information technology or cybersecurity. Getting hands-on experience through coding clubs, cybersecurity competitions, or volunteering to help with IT support at school can be great ways to start building skills. Internships, part-time IT roles and industry certifications (like CompTIA Security+ or CISSP later on) can open doors into this high-demand and exciting career.



***2025 Early Entry offers
are opening now!***

***It's your chance to
apply early, show off
your strengths beyond
the ATAR and secure a
uni place before exams
even begin.***



Why wait for your ATAR?

Imagine opening your email in September and seeing an offer from the uni you've been dreaming about. That's the power of early entry. Instead of waiting until December for ATAR results, many universities across Australia give Year 12 students the chance to secure a place based on school performance, extracurricular involvement or community contributions. It's a confidence boost that can take the pressure off final exams.

What exactly is Early Entry?

Early entry is a program that allows you to apply for university before ATARs are released. Rather than focusing only on exam marks, unis look at your Year 11 or mid-Year 12 results, plus other achievements like volunteering, leadership roles, sporting involvement, or part-time work. Some programs also consider a personal statement where you explain your goals and passions. Each university runs its own scheme, so the details (and names) vary, but the idea is the same: recognising more than just numbers on a results sheet.

What to expect in the process

Applying for early entry usually means submitting an online application through the uni's portal. You might need a short written response about why you're interested in the course, a reference from a teacher, or a record of your school achievements. Some programs may invite you to an interview. Offers are often conditional - meaning you still need to complete Year 12 and meet any course prerequisites. But receiving an early offer gives you peace of mind and flexibility as exams approach.

Don't miss the dates!

Every early entry program comes with its own opening and closing dates, most falling between July and September, with offers released before final exams begin. Staying organised is crucial - set reminders, check deadlines carefully, and talk to your school's careers adviser to avoid missing out. Meeting those timelines is the first step towards securing your future.





It's your chance to check in with friends, start conversations that matter, and help create a school community where no one feels alone.

What is it all about?

R U OK? isn't just about one day, it's about learning to check in with people regularly. The message is simple: you don't need to be a mental health expert, just a good friend. The campaign encourages us to notice when someone might be struggling, ask the question, listen without judgement, and encourage them to seek help if needed. It's about normalising conversations around mental health and showing care in everyday life.

Why it matters

We all have ups and downs, but sometimes people close to us might be going through more than we realise. By asking someone "Are you OK?" and really listening, you might help them feel supported and less alone. For secondary students, it's also a chance to build empathy, strengthen friendships and create a school culture where everyone looks out for each other.

Mark the date!

R U OK? Day is held on the second Thursday of September each year, this year it's on 11 September 2025. While the official day is important, the message is bigger: conversations should happen all year round. Putting the date in your calendar is a good reminder to pause, check in, and keep those four little words "Are you OK?" part of your everyday life. A few minutes of your time could be the start of someone's journey to feeling better.

How to get involved in school

Many schools run activities for R U OK? Day, such as yellow-themed fundraisers, wellbeing workshops, or assemblies with guest speakers. Students can take part by joining lunchtime activities, writing supportive messages for classmates, or simply checking in with a friend. Sports teams, music groups, and leadership councils often get creative by hosting events that combine fun with awareness. Even small actions, like sitting with someone new at lunch or sending a kind text, can make a difference.

If you're thinking about studying away from home, what do you need to know?

Why live on campus?

For those students who are looking for a unique experience that allows them to immerse themselves in their studies, enjoy a lifestyle with incredible access to local amenities, make new friends, or simply experience a new place, then on-campus living can be a great option.

How does on-campus living compare to living in other accommodation types?

At universities such as the University of New England (UNE), there are a range of on-campus accommodations on offer, all with their own unique qualities, cultures and inclusions.

For example, UNE's Wright College offers self-contained apartments with in-room kitchenettes and ensuite bathrooms, enabling a self-sufficient lifestyle while benefiting from common areas for study and socialising. In contrast, Wright Village features four-, six, or eight-bedroom flats with large full kitchens, with plenty of opportunities to socialise and meet new people.

On-campus living may also be a competitively affordable option compared to similarly-positioned off-campus options. In fact, UNE offers a free trimester of college accommodation to students who have applied through their Early Entry program.

What kinds of support are available for people interested in going to college?

UNE has a variety of support structures and organisations to help students and residents with their studies, making the transition into college living, and overall wellbeing.

This includes academic skills support, independent counselling and psychological services. Additionally, there are several scholarships on offer across academic, athletic and other criteria that can be put towards education-related expenses.

UNE is also currently offering free accommodation in the first trimester for college students who secure their place in the class using their Early Entry scheme.

How do I apply for accommodation?

You can register your interest in student accommodation at UNE before you formally receive your offer.

You'll need to register your details, create an account, and submit your application, including your specific college preference. The residential team will process your application and you'll receive a college offer email.

College rooms can be filled quickly, so it's often smart to accept your offer as soon as possible.



CareerTools adds a “Be Influential” Academy and five new Virtual Work Experiences for sustainable careers!

What is “Be Influential”

In collaboration with Coca-Cola Europacific Partners, this Academy is packed with practical, feel-good ways to take action and make a positive impact.

Whether it's improving their school, workplace, or local community, students will learn how to set goals, build support, bounce back from setbacks and create real, lasting change.

This program will guide students all the way from working out what they're passionate about, to taking real steps towards change - no matter their age.

By the end, they'll feel more confident, capable and ready to make their corner of the world a better place (and have fun doing it)!



Virtual Work Experiences

The 5 new Virtual Work Experiences have been created to give students an insight into the diverse careers available in the environment and sustainability sector.

Roles include:

- Supply Chain Manager
- Sustainable Packaging Designer
- Eco-Futures Investor (Ventures)
- Water and Nature manager

Each VWE includes an overview of the role and the key qualities that could align users to specific roles, pathways to enter the role, interactive activities, and resources to help users take the next step.

How to get started

Students can access the Academy and VWE programs through the Academies page in their CareerTools Student Dashboard.





Science and culture create powerful opportunities - discover where Indigenous STEM could take you.

Why get involved?

STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths, is about solving real-world problems and creating a better future. Indigenous STEM programs give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students the chance to blend cultural wisdom with today's science. From fire management and astronomy to robotics and health, these opportunities show how innovation and tradition can work side by side.

Programs to explore

There are some incredible initiatives across Australia:

- **CSIRO's Living STEM program:** Helps students from primary to secondary connect cultural knowledge with hands-on science, technology, engineering and maths through a Two-way Science approach.
- **Indigenous Engineering Summer School (IES):** A week-long residential program at universities such as Sydney and Melbourne, where students meet engineers, visit industry sites, and explore pathways into engineering.

- **DeadlyScience:** Founded by Kamilaroi man Corey Tutt, this program sends STEM resources and mentoring support to schools, while also sharing Indigenous knowledge of science and the environment.
- **Indigenous Science Experience @ Redfern:** A community-driven annual event that showcases Indigenous and Western science working together through workshops and demonstrations.

Skills that matter

These programs don't just focus on technical knowledge, they also build problem-solving, teamwork and leadership. For example, through Indigenous astronomy workshops, you can learn how traditional stories align with modern star maps. Fire management projects show how cultural burning practices connect with environmental science and climate action. The skills you gain, such as curiosity, innovation and resilience - are just as valuable as the knowledge itself.

World Space Week is blasting off soon!

From rockets to robots, it's your chance to explore how space science is shaping our future on Earth and beyond.

Why space matters to us

When you look up at the night sky, it can feel like a whole other world out there. World Space Week, held from 4–10 October each year, is the world's largest space-themed event, celebrating the role of space in science, technology and our everyday lives. From satellites that help predict the weather, to rockets that inspire the next generation of explorers, space has a bigger impact on our lives than we often realise.

What It's all about

World Space Week brings together students, scientists, teachers and space enthusiasts from across the globe. Each year has a theme, and for 2025 it's all about **"Space for Sustainability"**. This focuses on how space technology can help protect our planet, from monitoring climate change to finding cleaner energy solutions. It's also a chance to look ahead at what future space missions might mean for humanity - like Mars exploration or commercial space travel.



How you can get involved

Schools often celebrate World Space Week with science challenges, STEM workshops, or astronomy nights.

Students might choose to:

- Design their own spacecraft
- Explore coding and robotics
- Hear from guest speakers in space-related careers.
- Some events are run online, meaning you can connect with students and experts around the world.
- Even simple activities like stargazing, watching a space documentary, or joining a space trivia night are a fun way to be part of the celebration.

Whether you dream of being an astronaut, engineer, scientist, or are simply curious, this worldwide celebration encourages you to look up and see how space connects to your future.





***AI isn't just futuristic - it's already part of your classroom.
From essay helpers to smart feedback, AI is changing how students
learn and teachers teach.***

From grammar checkers to study apps, artificial intelligence is becoming a regular tool in learning. Teachers are using it to save time on marking, create resources and even personalise lessons so that students get more tailored support. Instead of replacing teachers, AI is helping them spend more time teaching and less time on admin.

Australia's AI rules for schools

In 2023, Australian governments introduced the Australian Framework for Generative Artificial Intelligence in Schools, which guides safe and responsible use of AI in classrooms. It's based on six key principles:

- Teaching and learning - using AI to enhance education, not replace it
- Human and social wellbeing
- Transparency - knowing how AI works and when it's used

- Fairness and accountability - ensuring AI is used ethically and responsibly
- Privacy, security and safety - protecting students' data and wellbeing.

What it means for you

AI in schools brings exciting opportunities, like personalised feedback, instant access to explanations and AI chat tools that help with written responses. In South Australia, for example, a chatbot called EdChat helps assess English skills in seconds, freeing teachers from hours of marking.

But with opportunity comes responsibility. Students and schools need to understand how and when AI is used, avoid over-reliance on it and ensure work remains honest and authentic. Schools around Australia are now exploring how to use AI effectively, ethically, and fairly.



Turn your old phone into new possibilities through art, film and recycling.

Win great prizes while helping the planet!

What's it all about?

Every mobile phone is packed with metals, plastics, glass and other parts, many of which can be recycled into new products like park benches or electronics.

The MobileMuster Schools

Competition invites students across Australia to creatively explore the theme "What's in a phone?" by submitting either artwork (drawing, sculpture, photo, painting, digital image) or a 1-minute short film that shows what materials are in a phone and what they could become when recycled.

Extra points are awarded if your entry is paired with a real phone recycled!

Who can enter & how?

The competition is free and open to all primary and secondary students in Australia - including home-schooled learners. You can enter as an individual, a small group, or as a whole class through your school.

Make sure to check and follow the full terms and conditions when entering. You can find them listed [here](#) on the competition website.

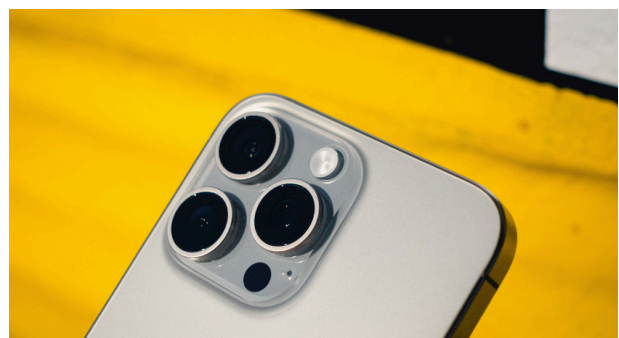


Important dates & prizes

- Entry Period: Submit your entry (artwork or film) between 15 May and 1 November 2025.
- Winners Announced: Winners and runners-up will be revealed around the start of December 2025, following National Recycling Week.
- Prizes: The top prize is a \$2,000 gift card, with two runners-up receiving \$500 gift cards.

Why students should get involved

This competition pairs creativity with environmental action. It's a chance to raise awareness about e-waste, recycling and sustainability while developing artistic or filmmaking skills. Teachers can also access free lesson plans and teaching resources, making it an easy and meaningful activity to integrate into your class.





Heart day awareness

Your heart works non-stop, beating over 100,000 times every single day. World Heart Day, held on 29 September, is a global reminder to protect this vital muscle. Heart disease is one of the leading health issues worldwide, but the good news is that many risk factors such as diet, exercise and stress, are things we can control. For young people, building healthy habits early makes a huge difference later in life.

How schools get involved

Across Australia, schools often mark World Heart Day with activities like fun runs, sports challenges, or healthy eating events. Some schools encourage heart-healthy lunchbox swaps, while others hold awareness talks or fundraisers for the Heart Foundation. These activities not only raise awareness but also help students see how heart health fits into everyday school life.

World Heart Day is coming up!

It's the perfect time to learn about how small choices like moving more, eating well and managing stress, can keep your heart strong for life.

Healthy habits for students

You don't need to overhaul your life to look after your heart - small changes add up. Try:

- Choosing water instead of energy drinks
- Aiming for 8 hours of sleep each night
- Walking or cycling to school
- Keeping active through sport or movement breaks
- Managing stress through mindfulness, music or spending time with friends.

A lifelong message

This year's theme, "Use Heart, Know Heart", encourages everyone to understand their heart health and take action. For students, it's about recognising that the choices you make now - around food, exercise and stress, shape your wellbeing in the future. World Heart Day is more than a reminder; it's a chance to start building healthy routines that will benefit you for years to come.

REACHOUT

A listening ear, from someone who gets it - PeerChat makes it easier to open up.

What is PeerChat?

Sometimes it helps just to talk it out. ReachOut PeerChat is a free online service where young people aged 16–25 can connect one-on-one with a trained peer worker. These peer workers are people your own age who have been through tough times themselves and can listen, understand and share helpful strategies. It's not about giving advice, it's about having a safe space to chat when you're feeling stressed, overwhelmed or just need someone to talk to.

How it can help

Life at school and beyond can get stressful - assignments, friendships, family and figuring out the future all at once. Sometimes just having a conversation is the first step to feeling better. PeerChat offers a space where you can be heard without judgement. Knowing that someone else has walked a similar path can help you feel less alone and more understood. Plus, it's completely free, online and private, so you can reach out from wherever you are.

How does PeerChat work?

Using PeerChat is simple. You log onto the ReachOut website, choose PeerChat, and then get matched with a peer worker. Sessions run for about 45 minutes, and you can talk about whatever's on your mind - whether it's school pressure, friendships or big life decisions. Peer workers are trained to listen, encourage and share positive coping strategies. If you ever need extra support, they can also point you toward helpful resources and services.

ReachOut PeerChat is there for you whenever you need someone in your corner. Next time you're finding things hard, remember - you don't have to face it alone. Support is just a click away.



BELL SHAKESPEARE.

**Discover your inner actor,
filmmaker or storyteller!
Bell Shakespeare
opportunities are open Term 3
and 4 - don't miss your chance!**

Why join in?

Bell Shakespeare brings the timeless stories and language of Shakespeare off the page and into schools - through performances, workshops, festivals and behind-the-scenes experiences. Whether on stage or behind the scenes, these opportunities help students connect to literature in creative, hands-on ways.

Bell Shakespeare isn't just for drama students - it's for anyone curious, courageous, and ready to explore storytelling in a whole new light.



What's on offer during Term 3 and 4?

• **The Players Performances:**

This touring ensemble brings live 50-minute Shakespeare shows such as 'Such Sweet Sorrow' (Romeo & Juliet) and 'Macbeth: The Rehearsal' straight to your school, followed by a Q&A. They're high-energy, curriculum-linked, and perfect for Year 7-12.

- **Student Workshops:** Two-hour, hands-on workshops where teaching artists guide your class through theme exploration, scene work, character analysis and language in plays like Macbeth, Hamlet, A Midsummer Night's Dream and more. Available throughout Terms 1-4.
- **Bell Shakespeare Shorts Festival:** A chance for budding filmmakers to retell Shakespeare in creative, modern ways in a short film - shot on smartphones, tablets or cameras. It's open to all students across Australia and runs into late Term 3/early Term 4.

Hands-on career & creative experiences

- **Work Experience:** Year 10 & 11 students can apply to spend a week (17-21 Nov) at Bell Shakespeare HQ in Sydney. You'll explore everything from rehearsal rooms to marketing, production to education - gaining genuine insight into how a theatre company operates. Successful applicants are announced August.
- **John Bell Scholarship:** For Year 10+ students in regional schools, this scholarship includes a workshop audition with a Bell Shakespeare artist. Winners receive mentorship and a chance to perform for key company creatives.



National Schools Poster Competition (NSPC)

- **Date:** Entries close Term 4 (October)
- **Eligibility:** Open to high school students across Australia
- **Details:** Students create posters that communicate mathematical concepts in engaging and creative ways. It combines design with maths communication, encouraging clear explanations of complex ideas.



UN
youth
australia

UN Youth Australia Competitions (Voice & Evatt)

- **Date:** National finals held in Term 4 (state rounds earlier in the year)
- **Eligibility:** Open to secondary students nationally
- **Details:** These competitions challenge students to develop public speaking, diplomacy, and problem-solving skills. Voice focuses on pitching creative solutions to global issues, while Evatt simulates the UN Security Council with students acting as country representatives.

FlickerUp - Flickerfest National Youth Film Competition

- **Date:** Entries close 15 November 2025
- **Eligibility:** Open to secondary school students in Australia and individuals aged 18 and under.
- **Details:** Submit a short film (under 35 minutes, created in last two years) for the national youth competition. Includes substantial cash and industry exposure opportunities.

