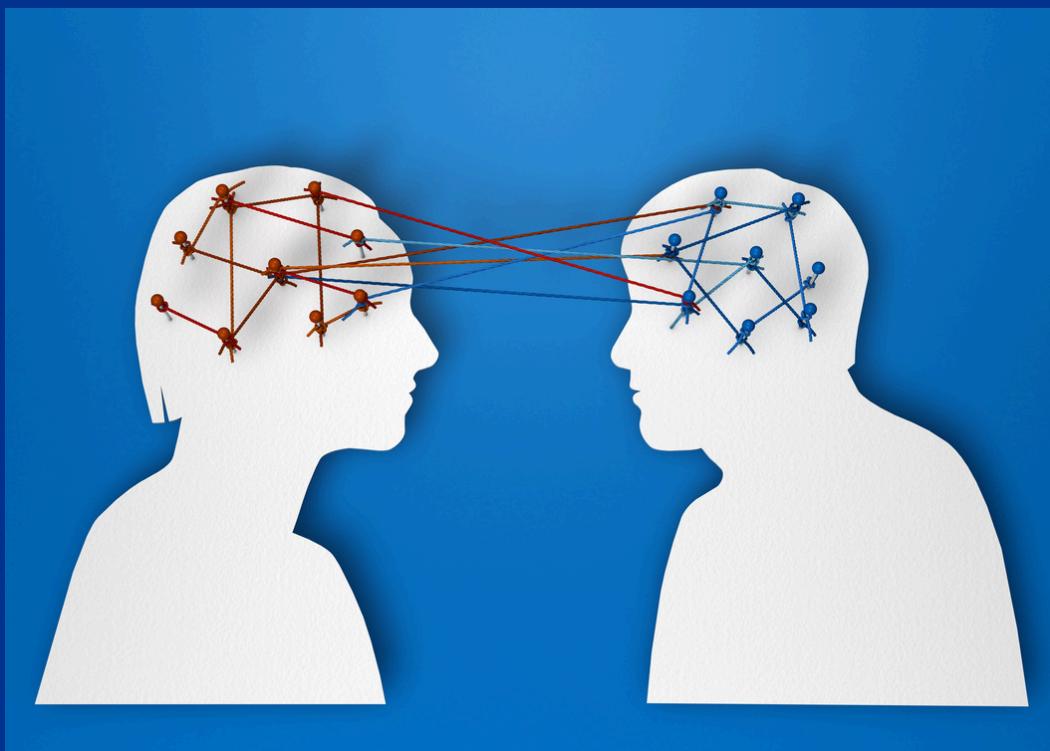




Guide to Psychology Careers



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DISCLAIMER

The details provided in this guide are accurate at the time of publication but subject to change without warning. Refer to relevant websites for updated details. Published October 2025 © Career Tools

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Introduction

So, What Actually Is Psychology?

Psychology is all about understanding how people think, feel and behave. It looks at what makes us unique, from how our brains work to why we react to certain situations the way that we do. It's not just about mental illness or therapy, psychology plays a role in everyday life, such as why we form certain habits, how we learn and what motivates us to chase our goals.

“Psychology is the science of behaviour and the mind – what could be more important than understanding ourselves? ”

At its core, psychology is a science. Psychologists use research, experiments and data to figure out how the mind works. They study topics like memory, emotions, personality, intelligence and even group behaviour. Basically, if it involves people, psychology can help to explain it!

The best part? Psychology isn't just something you read about in textbooks, it's used in a wide range of real-world jobs.

Whether it's helping athletes stay focused, designing safer road signs, or supporting students' mental health, psychology is everywhere. It's a career path that's meaningful, flexible, and always evolving.



Careers in Psychology

If you think psychologists just sit on couches and ask people, “how does that make you feel?”, think again. There are loads of different careers in psychology, and not all of them involve therapy. Some psychologists work in **schools**, helping students with learning difficulties or emotional challenges. Others work in **hospitals**, supporting people with serious mental health conditions or brain injuries.

There are also psychologists who work with **businesses**, helping them create better workplaces and improve team performance. **Sports** psychologists coach elite athletes to stay mentally strong during high-pressure moments, while **forensic** psychologists work with police and in the legal system to understand criminal behaviour. You can even find psychologists working in **tech**, researching how we interact with apps and devices.

Many psychology careers require a university degree, plus extra training or study. But don't worry, there are also related jobs in the psychology field that don't take as long to get into, like working as a mental health support worker, case manager, or behavioural therapist. If you enjoy helping others, solving problems, or figuring out what makes people tick, there's probably a role in psychology for you!

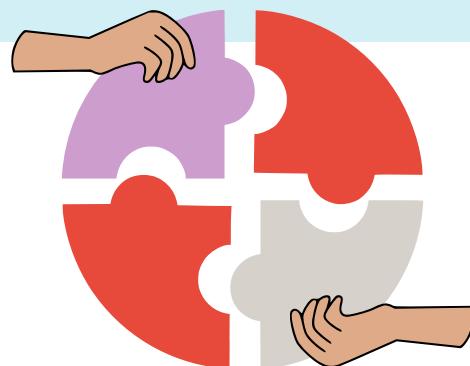
Growth

Right now, psychology is one of the fastest-growing job areas in Australia with a recent KPMG report finding the number of psychologists nearly doubled over the decade: Why? Because people are finally starting to understand how important mental health is. We now know that mental health is just as important as physical health and psychologists play a huge role in supporting it.



Demand

Since COVID-19, there's been a major spike in mental health issues across all age groups. Young people especially have faced challenges like anxiety, depression and social isolation. Schools, communities and workplaces are all looking for professionals who can help. That's where psychology comes in – offering support, understanding and real strategies to improve wellbeing.



Current Australian Initiatives

Australia is making big moves to improve mental health and grow the psychology workforce. New programs and projects are opening doors for future psychologists – could you be part of this exciting change?

Workforce Expansion for Psychologists

The Australian Government has committed to increasing the number of postgraduate psychology places, plus more internships and supervisor training spots. This is to help fix the shortage of registered psychologists. More students will be able to train and more communities (including regional, rural and First Nations communities) will receive better access.



National Mental Health Workforce Strategy, 2022-2032

This strategy is a plan to build a stronger, more sustainable mental health workforce over 10 years. It focuses on attracting, training, supporting and keeping psychologists and related professionals. It also emphasises making services more accessible in regional and remote areas.

Positive Education & Well-Being in Schools

Organisations like the Positive Education Schools Association (PESA) and The Positivity Institute are promoting wellbeing, resilience and positive psychology across school communities. These initiatives include whole-school programs that help students and teachers build stronger mental health and happier learning environments.

Digital Mental Health Support Package

The Australian Government has committed to a five-year investment of \$456.7 million to enhance digital mental health services. This funding supports organisations such as Beyond Blue, Lifeline, Kids Helpline and 13Yarn, enabling them to expand their reach and services across the country.

Benefits of Psychology Careers

Working in psychology is more than just a job, it's a chance to make a real difference in people's lives. Whether you're helping someone overcome a tough time, guiding a student through learning challenges or researching better ways to support mental health, your work truly matters. It's a career that lets you connect with others and feel proud of the impact you're making.



You get to **help** people improve their mental health and wellbeing.



Every day is **different**, with new challenges, opportunities and experiences.



There are lots of **career paths** to choose from, like sport, health, education or business.



You can work in a variety of **locations** such as schools, hospitals, offices or even online.



Psychology **skills** are useful in everyday life, not just in your job.



It's a growing industry with **strong job demand** in Australia.



You can make a real, **positive impact** in people's lives.

Career Quiz

PICK YOUR PSYCHOLOGY CAREER PATH!

Start at the top and answer each question by choosing A or B. Follow the path until you reach a type of psychologist that matches your interests!

1. Do you enjoy helping people and supporting someone through tough times?

YES

You're interested in how people think and feel emotionally. Keep reading!

NO

Maybe you prefer focusing on other areas like behaviour and learning. Let's explore those options next.

2. Do you like the idea of working directly with people in hospitals or clinics?

YES

You might enjoy being a **Clinical Psychologist**, who supports people with mental health issues.

NO

You may prefer to study through research, rather than working one-on-one. This could lead to being a **Research Psychologist**.

3. Are you passionate about sports and interested in helping athletes stay focused and motivated during competitions?

YES

A **Sport Psychologist** works with athletes to boost their performance by improving their mindset.

NO

Maybe your interests lie outside of sports, so let's look at other areas.

Career Quiz

4. Would you like to help students who find school or learning difficult, or who struggle with behaviour?

YES

An **Educational Psychologist** supports children and teens to manage challenges at school.

NO

You might enjoy helping adults in workplaces or other environments instead.

5. Are you interested in improving how people work together in businesses, making teams happier and more productive?

YES

An **Organisational Psychologist** helps businesses build better workplaces and solve team problems.

NO

You might prefer working in the legal system or with brain-related issues.

6. Are you curious about how psychology helps with legal cases, working with police or courts?

YES

A **Forensic Psychologist** works in the justice system to help understand criminal minds and behaviour.

NO

You might be interested in brain science and helping people recover from injuries such as a **Neuropsychologist**.

Results

- If you answered **Yes** to most questions, a career in psychology could be an amazing fit. Learn more about psychology pathways to get started on your journey.
- If you answered **No** to several questions, use what you've learned to discover different career paths that excite you.

Will a Psychology Career Suit Me?

If you've ever found yourself wondering why people think or act the way they do, or if you're the kind of person who friends turn to when they're going through something – then psychology might be a great fit for you. It's all about understanding how people think, feel, and behave and using that insight to help them navigate life's challenges.

People who succeed in this field are usually great listeners, curious about human behaviour and enjoy solving problems. You don't need to have all the answers now, but if you're someone who cares about others and wants to make a difference, you're already on the right path.

School Subjects



Psychology

This subject gives you a head start on the basics of how the mind works. It covers topics like memory, personality, emotions and behaviour.



Biology

Understanding the brain, nervous system and how the body responds to stress is important in many psychology fields, especially clinical and neuropsychology.



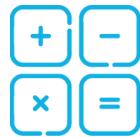
Health and HD

This subject helps you understand people's development through different life stages, including mental health and wellbeing.



English

Clear writing and strong communication are key skills in psychology. Whether you're writing reports or listening to clients, being able to express ideas clearly and accurately is essential.



Mathematics

Psychologists use data to understand patterns in behaviour. Statistics and research skills are especially useful in psychology studies



Tip: If you're not sure which psychology field interests you yet, try learning about different types by watching videos, listening to podcasts, or asking your teachers.

Strengths and Interests

Empathetic

- They care about how others feel.
- They can put themselves in someone else's shoes.

Good Communicators

- They explain ideas clearly and speak in a way people understand.
- They enjoy writing and share advice with teams or families.

Great Listeners

- They pay close attention to what people say (and don't say).
- Listening helps them understand others without judgement.

Psychologists are:

Problem Solvers

- They look for patterns and solutions to help people feel or function better.
- They use research, strategies and psychology tools to guide their work.

Curious About People

- They ask why people think, feel and act the way that they do.
- They enjoy learning about behaviour and the human mind.

Adaptable

- They understand that no two people or problems are the same.
- They shift gears depending on the person, context or challenge at hand.

Work-Life Balance

Psychology careers offer flexibility through full-time, part-time and private practice options.

While some psychologists work standard Monday-to-Friday hours, others have flexible schedules depending on their clients, setting and specialty. During busy periods or crisis situations, psychologists may work extended hours to support client needs and ensure ongoing care.



What Do Psychologists Earn?

Whether you're drawn to clinical practice, forensic analysis or educational support, psychology offers diverse career paths with competitive salaries. Each specialisation provides unique opportunities to make a meaningful impact while earning a rewarding income. Salary ranges are indicative and may vary depending on factors such as experience level, job location and employer.

Role	Estimated Salary Range (AUD)	Details
Clinical Psychologist	\$90,000 – \$120,000	Help people with mental health issues through therapy and assessments. Higher earnings often in private practice or senior roles.
Forensic Psychologist	\$85,000 – \$115,000	Work with legal systems and settings, assessing offenders and providing expert reports. Salaries vary by experience.
Educational Psychologist	\$80,000 – \$100,000	Support students' learning and development in schools or educational institutions.
Organisational Psychologist	\$85,000 – \$110,000	Improve workplace wellbeing, culture and employee performance.
Sports Psychologist	\$75,000 – \$95,000	Help athletes improve performance, motivation and cope with pressure. Support current and past athletes who may be dealing with injuries.
Positive Psychologist	\$80,000 – \$105,000	Promote wellbeing and happiness through strengths-based approaches; work in schools, workplaces and community programs.
Health Psychologist	\$80,000 – \$100,000	Focus on mental health in hospitals and community health services.

Pathways to Psychology Careers

VET Pathway

TAFE / RTO

Great for hands-on experience and entry-level roles in mental health and community services.

Certificate IV in
Mental Health or
Community
Services



Diploma of
Counselling,
Mental Health or
Youth Work



- Work as a mental health support worker or caseworker
- Gain practical skills and experience before studying further
- Ideal stepping stone into a psychology-related degree

UPSKILL

Use
Diploma as
a pathway
into Uni

Higher Education Pathway

University

The most common starting point for becoming a psychologist.

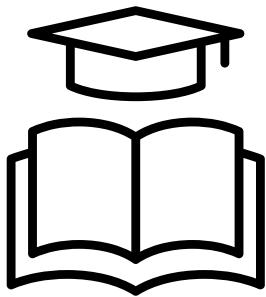
Bachelor of
Psychology (or
Bachelor of
Psychological
Science) – 3
years

OR

Can also begin with **Bachelor** of Arts or **Bachelor** of Science majoring in psychology



- Must complete an honours year to be eligible for postgraduate training
- Builds knowledge in human behaviour, research, and mental processes
- Prepares you for careers in HR, education, wellbeing, and more



Postgraduate Pathways

University

Required if you want to become a **registered psychologist**.

- Must complete supervised practice and pass registration requirements through AHPRA
- Specialise in your chosen field (e.g. clinical, educational, health, sport, forensic)
- Leads to registration as a provisional and then fully registered psychologist



Complete a
Master of
Psychology (e.g.
Clinical, Forensic,
Organisational)
– 2 years

OR

Or a combined
Master/PhD or
Doctor of
Psychology
(PsyD)

Entry programs and scholarships

From state-funded scholarships to university entry programs, there are real opportunities to help you start your psychology career – wherever you live in Australia.

NEW SOUTH WALES

[Psychology Graduate Scholarship Program \(School Psychologist\) via NSW Department of Education](#)

- For those doing the Master of Professional Psychology (School Psychology).
- Helps with tuition, placement, incumbency, supervision, employment as a school psychologist after graduation.

[Indigenous Australians Psychology Scholarships, Western Sydney University](#)

- Support for Indigenous students in undergraduate psychology, honours year or graduate diploma.
- Includes waiving or reducing part of tuition fees, intended to increase representation.

VICTORIA

[Melbourne Graduate Scholarship \(Applied Psychology\), University of Melbourne](#)

- For high-achieving students undertaking the Master of Applied Psychology.
- Offers up to \$10,000.

QUEENSLAND

[Mental Health Scholarship Scheme \(via Queensland Health\)](#)

- Queensland Health has a mental health scholarship scheme to assist students from Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and CALD backgrounds who want to study postgraduate mental health related fields.

TASMANIA

[The DECYP School Psychology Scholarship](#)

- Offers \$25,000 to students studying psychology who are provisionally registered and enrolled in an accredited pathway.

NATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

[APS University Scholarships, Grants & Bursaries](#)

- The Australian Psychological Society offers many university scholarships and bursaries across various states at many universities

Occupation Profiles

Clinical Psychologist

What they do: Help people manage and overcome mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression and trauma. Their work changes lives by improving emotional wellbeing.

Where they work: Hospitals, private clinics, community health services, universities and telehealth platforms.

Pathways: Bachelor of Psychology → Honours → Master or Doctorate in Clinical Psychology → Supervised practice → Registration through AHPRA.

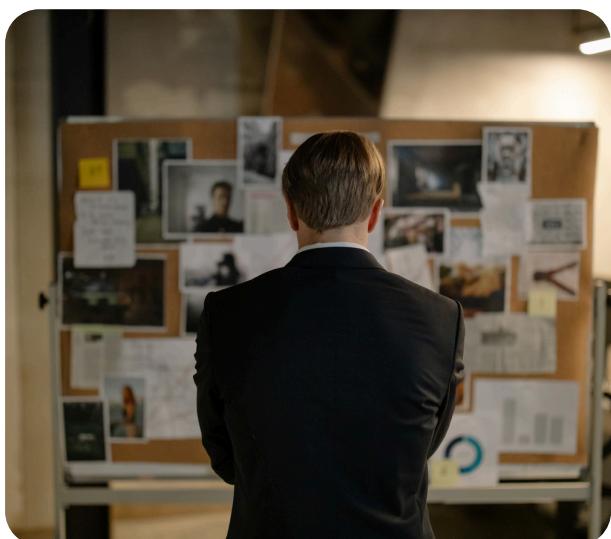


Forensic Psychologist

What they do: Apply psychology to legal and criminal justice systems. They assess offenders, provide expert testimony and contribute to rehabilitation and risk management.

Where they work: Courts, prisons, law enforcement agencies, government departments and private consultancy.

Pathways: Bachelor of Psychology → Honours → Master of Psychology (Forensic) → Supervised practice → Registration.



Educational Psychologist

What they do: Support children's learning and development by helping address behavioural, emotional and cognitive challenges. Their work helps students thrive in education.

Where they work: Primary and secondary schools, education departments, learning support centres and private practice.

Pathways: Bachelor of Psychology or Education → Honours → Master of Psychology (Educational & Developmental) → Supervised practice → Registration.



Occupation Profiles

Organisational Psychologist

What they do: Focus on improving workplace wellbeing, culture, productivity and leadership. They ensure healthier, more effective organisations.

Where they work: Corporations, HR departments, consulting firms, government agencies and remote/workplace wellbeing programs.

Pathways: Bachelor of Psychology → Honours → Master of Psychology (Organisational) → Supervised practice → Registration.



Health Psychologist

What they do: Help people manage chronic illness, promote healthy behaviours and cope with physical health challenges through psychological strategies.

Where they work: Hospitals, rehabilitation centres, community health services, research institutes.

Pathways: Bachelor of Psychology → Honours → Master or Doctorate in Health Psychology → Supervised practice → Registration.



Sports Psychologist

What they do: Assist athletes in managing stress, improving performance and staying mentally fit. Their support can make or break performance under pressure.

Where they work: Professional sporting clubs, institutes of sport, schools, private clinics and performance consultancies.

Pathways: Bachelor of Psychology → Honours → Master of Psychology (Sport & Exercise) → Supervised practice → Registration.



Occupation Profiles

Positive Psychologist

What they do: Promote wellbeing, happiness and resilience by focusing on people's strengths. Their work is about helping others to thrive.

Where they work: Schools, wellbeing programs, corporate environments, coaching practices, community centres.

Pathways: Bachelor of Psychology → Honours → Master in Positive Psychology or related field → Additional training depending on setting → May or may not require registration depending on role.



Psychology in Australia: The Big Picture

Real stats showing why psychology careers matter.

01

There were about 33,000 psychologists working in Australia in 2022. That number includes those working in private practice, public health, schools and other settings.

02

Government spending on mental health services reached approximately A\$12.6 billion in 2022-23, which is about \$478.47 per person across the population.

03

The psychology workforce is meeting only about 35% of the projected national demand. In response, the Australian government has committed to increasing postgraduate psychology places, internships and supervisor numbers.

04

The mental health market in Australia is expected to grow at around 16.6% annually between 2025 and 2033, driven by rising government-funded programs, better accessibility and innovations in treatment and service.

Day in the Life – Psychology

Sarah

Educational Psychologist

Setting: Works across multiple schools in a metro area

Role Overview:

Sarah supports students in overcoming learning challenges, improving focus and building confidence in the classroom.

Time Activity

8:00am Arrives at a primary school and sets up in the staff meeting room.
8:30am Observation of a Year 3 student referred for attention difficulties.
9:30am One-on-one assessment using cognitive and behavioural tools.
10:30am Break, then meets with the learning support coordinator.
11:00am Writes up assessment findings and drafts recommendations.
12:30pm Lunch at a nearby café between school visits.
1:30pm Visits a high school for follow-up on a student's behaviour intervention plan.
2:30pm Meets with parents and teachers to develop learning strategies.
3:30pm Ends the day with a webinar on inclusive education practices.



Jake

Sport Psychologist

Setting: Works with elite athletes and sports teams.

Role Overview:

Jake helps athletes improve their mental focus, confidence and manage stress to perform their best. He works closely with players and coaches to build strong minds for tough competitions.

Time Activity

7:30am Arrives at the sports training facility, reviews athlete progress notes.
8:00am Works one-on-one with a swimmer on goal-setting and focus techniques.
9:30am Leads a mental skills training session with a football team.
11:00am Meets with coaches to discuss athlete wellbeing and training adjustments.
12:30pm Lunch break and networking with other sports health professionals.
1:30pm Supports an athlete recovering from injury with stress management strategies.
3:00pm Attends a sports science seminar to stay updated on performance research.
4:30pm Reviews training feedback and plans mental prep strategies for upcoming competitions.



Day in the Life - Psychology

Mia

Clinical Psychologist

Setting: Private Practice

Role Overview:

Mia works in a suburban clinic, helps clients understand their thoughts and emotions and teaches strategies to cope and heal.

Time Activity

8:00am Arrives at the clinic, checks emails and reviews client notes for the day.

8:30am First client: a young adult managing anxiety and social phobia.

9:30am Second session: a client undergoing trauma-focused therapy.

10:30am Quick break and some session documentation.

11:00am Third client: child with behavioural concerns—works with both the child and parent.

12:00pm Lunch break and a walk outside.

1:00pm Team case conference with other clinicians to discuss complex cases.

2:00pm Two more client sessions back-to-back.

4:00pm Updates case notes and sends follow-up resources to clients.



Alex

Organisational Psychologist

Setting: Works in a large multinational company

Role Overview:

Alex works with businesses to improve teamwork, leadership and employee wellbeing.

Time Activity

8:30am Arrives at the office, reviews emails and current projects.

9:00am Meets with HR team to discuss staff wellbeing survey results.

10:00am Conducts interviews to help select new team members for a high-performing project group.

11:30am Runs a workshop on stress management and resilience for middle managers.

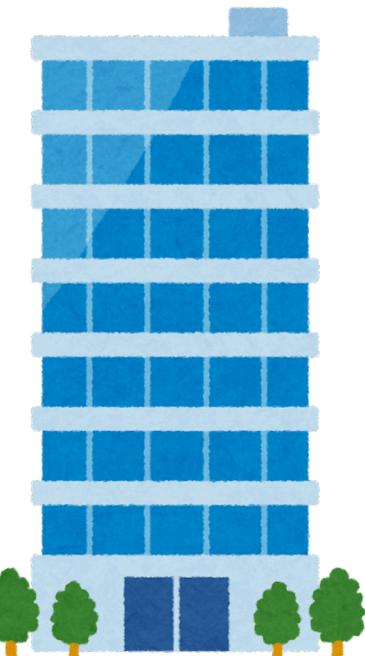
1:00pm Lunch break with colleagues in the staff lounge.

2:00pm Analyses employee engagement data and prepares recommendations for leadership.

3:30pm Meets with senior leaders to discuss ways to improve workplace culture and productivity.

4:30pm Works on designing a leadership development program for emerging managers.

5:30pm Wraps up, sends follow-up emails, and plans for next week's team-building event.



Accreditation

What Does It Mean to Be an Accredited Psychologist?

“Accreditation gives people confidence that their psychologist is properly trained, ethical and safe to work with during life’s most challenging moments.”

In Australia, becoming an accredited psychologist means you've completed the required university qualifications, supervised training and are officially registered to practise. All registered psychologists must be listed with the Psychology Board of Australia (PsyBA) and meet the national standards set by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). This ensures they're qualified, ethical and safe to work with people's mental health and wellbeing.

Why Accreditation Matters

Accreditation is important because psychologists help people through tough times. From anxiety to injury recovery or workplace issues, clients need to know their psychologist is properly trained. Most career types, such as clinical, health, forensic and educational psychologists – must be accredited. Some roles, like sport psychology in coaching, might not require it, but many still choose accreditation for trust and credibility.

If you're thinking about a psychology career, knowing the path to accreditation helps you plan ahead. Most psychologists study for four to six years, including supervised practice. It's a big commitment, but it leads to meaningful, professional roles where you can really make a difference.



Ready to Explore More?

I'M AT SCHOOL - HOW DO I START?

Thinking about a career in psychology? These 3 steps will help you take your first confident step into the field!



Explore Psychology Roles in Detail



Deep dive into the different types of psychology careers on the [Good Universities Guide website](#). Compare specialisations, job descriptions, and future job growth.



Map Out Your Future Pathway



Use Career Tools to explore and plan your next steps!

- **Copilot** designs a plan that matches your strengths, skills and interests
- **Course Search** helps you find psychology degrees, check uni prerequisites and suggested Year 11–12 subjects
- **Career Investigator** lets you explore psychology careers and record what you discover
- **Career Planner** helps you organise your goals and plan ahead – pulling everything together to increase confidence for post school plans



Talk to Someone in the Field



Reach out to a school careers adviser, local university rep, or even ask to shadow a psychologist for a day. Hearing real-world experiences can give you valuable insight and inspiration.



Further Resources

If you're curious about where a career in psychology can take you, there are plenty of resources to help you explore different paths, required qualifications and real-world experiences. Whether you're just starting out or planning your next step, these tools can guide your journey and connect you with valuable insights.

1. Australian Psychological Society (APS) – Careers in Psychology

- Explains the different fields of psychology with real-world examples.
- Offers career planning advice for students at different stages (undergrad to postgrad).
- Highlights pathways to registration and how to choose the right specialisation.

2. APS Study Pathways Information

- Breaks down what qualifications are needed for general registration (4+2, 5+1, or postgraduate pathways).
- Provides a step-by-step roadmap from undergraduate study to becoming a registered psychologist.

3. PsychXchange (APS Job Board)

- Lets students browse real psychology job listings to understand what skills and qualifications are in demand.
- Useful for identifying internship and graduate job opportunities in the field. insight into pay scales, job descriptions and career expectations.

4. The Australian Handbook for Careers in Psychological Science

- Written specifically for Australian psychology students to explore diverse career paths beyond clinical work.
- Includes chapters on government, research, health and organisational roles for psychology grads.
- Features real career stories and advice from professionals who studied psychology in Australia.

5. APS StudentHQ – Student Resources

- Offers career planning tools, study tips and guidance on navigating postgraduate applications.
- Connects students to mentoring programs and networking opportunities within APS.
- Helps students understand how to get involved early (e.g. volunteering, internships, APS student membership).