

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships (SBATs) are an employment-based learning pathway that you can take during your secondary schooling. You will combine your senior school years with paid part-time employment and skills training in your chosen field.

About Head Start

Head Start connects students to SBAT opportunities. Head Start Coordinators located in schools across Victoria support students to identify and commence their SBAT, complete school, and transition to full time employment post-school.

You can undertake an SBAT if you are:

- Over 15 years old
- Enrolled in years 10, 11 or 12
- An Australian citizen or permanent resident.

*Non-citizens may be eligible under certain circumstances. Speak with your Head Start coordinator for more information.

<http://embedded.pleasesign.com.au/#/embedded?e=ce271551362533bd4d466d7dba5bb923>

Benefits

- increase your future employability and earning potential, by gaining the skills, confidence and knowledge you need to succeed in the future workplace
- undertake a secondary certificate such as the VCE, including the VCE Vocational Major, or the Victorian Pathways Certificate.
- undertake paid employment to build the career you want.
- access quality VET courses, in a wide range of industries with an approved training provider.
- combine regular school attendance with a minimum of 7 hours per week of employment, and a minimum of 6 hours per week of structured training, (averaged over 3 periods of 4 months in each year of the SBAT). At least 1 day per week is timetabled by your school to be spent on the job or in training during the normal school week.

What is Head Start?

Includes Head Start information video

https://player.vimeo.com/video/761312908?badge=0&autoplay=0&player_id=0&app_id=58479

Testimonials

Student: Macey Ross, Certificate 3 in Early Childhood Education and Care at Violet Town Kindergarten

“The support I’ve received from Caz at Head Start has been absolutely invaluable throughout my SBAT journey at Violet Town Kindergarten and Daycare. From the moment I expressed interest, Caz guided me through every step from work experience to being fully set up in the SBAT within just a few months.

Her ongoing support has included clear, reassuring conversations about interacting with outside persons, and she's helped me navigate the RTO process with ease and confidence. Caz worked closely with myself, my school, and Violet Town to ensure I had access to every opportunity and felt supported at every stage.

Thanks to her guidance and encouragement, I've genuinely enjoyed every moment of my SBAT experience. It has not only confirmed my passion for early childhood education but has also set me on a direct path into employment as soon as I finish school.

I'm incredibly grateful for the care, time, and knowledge Caz has shared. Her support through Head Start has played a huge role in shaping my career journey. "During my School-Based Apprenticeship (SBAT) With Head Start, I have gained many new skills that I wouldn't have learned in a traditional classroom setting. This experience has allowed me to explore my dream job firsthand and gain a better understanding of the daily tasks I would perform in a full-time role. Everyone has been incredibly helpful, and I'm excited to continue learning new skills."

Employer: Mikayla Nicholson, Program Leader at Violet Town Kindergarten

"Head Start has provided us with an outstanding experience throughout the process of employing a school-based apprentice/trainee. Carolyn (Caz) was incredibly informative and knowledgeable, offering us the best possible options—benefiting both our service and Macey's ability to continue and complete her Year 12 studies.

She made the paperwork and communication feel effortless, keeping everyone—ourselves and the school—on the same page and prioritising the needs of all involved. Her coordination gave us complete confidence that Macey would be supported both academically and in the workplace.

From the outset, Caz and the Head Start team were consistently present—checking in, helping adjust Macey's workdays, and offering guidance whenever we needed it, including with RTO-related matters. Having that ongoing, reliable support meant we could focus on mentoring Macey without the added pressure of managing the formalities.

Our journey with Macey began during her Year 10 work experience. Not long after, she expressed interest in joining us as a trainee. Caz soon got in touch, and everything moved quickly from there. After discussing our needs and capacity, she took the lead—liaising with the school, Macey's family, and Macey herself to get everything in place. Within a week, she visited our service with all the necessary documents and officially launched the traineeship.

Since then, Caz has remained an incredible support—coordinating changes, communicating with teachers, and working alongside the school to ensure Macey could make the most of her time with us. Thanks to this strong partnership, Macey will complete her SBAT in September and begin a full-time role in our team from October.

We're so proud of her growth and incredibly thankful for everything Caz and Head Start have done to support her journey. While we'll miss Caz's visits, we couldn't recommend Head Start more highly to any workplace considering an SBAT. Their dedication, professionalism, and genuine care have made a lasting difference."

Image of SBAT and their employer at sign-up

HEAD START supports everyone

Includes videos for parents, students and employers

Head Start – Hearing from our employers:

https://player.vimeo.com/video/543448987?badge=0&autoplay=0&player_id=0&app_id=58479

Head Start – Hearing from our parents:

https://player.vimeo.com/video/543449143?badge=0&autoplay=0&player_id=0&app_id=58479/embed

Head Start – Hearing from our students:

https://player.vimeo.com/video/543449396?badge=0&autoplay=0&player_id=0&app_id=58479/embed

Training Contracts and Training Plans

Head Start Coordinators take the stress out of the SBAT sign-up process, by organising an appropriate time and date for:

- Apprenticeship Support Services
- parents and students
- employers

Your Head Start Coordinator will help you navigate the enrolment process with the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and ensure your school is supplied with a copy of your Training Plan. All VCE and VET providers enter and use the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS) to enrol students and record results.

Your Head Start Coordinator will also routinely check in with you, your employer, and your RTO to ensure you are progressing through the SBAT, whilst maintaining your studies at school.

Contact Us

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