



Careers in
Media & the Arts

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NOTE:

Wherever you see this icon  please go to www.graduatecareers.com.au>>What Job For You>>Career Profiles>>Media & the Arts>>More Information for continued discussion and/or useful websites on that subject.

Introduction

Do some or all of these words and phrases describe you: creative; passionate about working with a particular media, art form or technology; love variety and challenge? If so, you might consider a career in the Media-Arts industry. Once upon a time, before the advent of film, television and other collaborative arts, people in this field tended to work alone without the need for teamwork or communication. Media-Arts work today is undertaken in a highly collaborative environment, no longer are roles and duties entirely separate or definable, and a new, umbrella term has emerged to define it. The 'creative industries' is a collective term used to describe the range of roles, tasks, work environments and media employed to create and sell Media-Arts products and services.

It is an industry that is truly representative of the twenty-first century; constantly changing, adaptive, global, technology-driven. Planning for a career in this field can be difficult, with new opportunities becoming available almost daily as new products, programs and technologies are created. Unlike the more traditional disciplines (such as Engineering, Medicine, Law and Accounting), there is no single set of courses or other learning activities which will guarantee a pathway to success.

This is not bad news. As long as you are prepared to do some research and undertake appropriate learning and development activities, the Media-Arts is an exciting profession to work in, and opportunities abound. Just about everything we read, see or participate in has been created or at least revealed to us through the various skills and talents of Media-Arts personnel. Find your passion, and combine this with a 'can-do' attitude, the willingness to take a few risks and to keep abreast of the latest tools and techniques and your career will develop and thrive.

Constant shifts and changes are not something to be concerned over; rather, these pave the way for those who want to work in the Media-Arts industry, and especially those who are creative and innovative. This is a world where anything goes: the high arts, such as classical literature and opera, combine with popular fiction and heavy metal music to create new genres. 'Old' and 'new' technologies exist side by side, and people creating new pieces of writing now have to

consider what it will look like on the web as well as how it will come up in print. 'Media meshing' has led to blended styles and forms.

The Media-Arts profession today can be historic and current, cultivated and spontaneous, culturally and temporally situated and yet universally available. Modern communications and fast transportation methods make information and objects highly accessible. Consider the movie director who requires an authentic tribal spear for a set; it is a choice of either sourcing and shipping an authentic article from the jungles of Africa within 24 hours, recreating a replica from a digital image delivered in milliseconds to a Blackberry or using technology to superimpose an image in post-production.

Reality may be distorted or intensified using Media-Arts technology, such as blending two existing artefacts into new forms, and re-digitising photographs of people to make them look younger, older or in a completely different setting to the original.

The world for Media is also becoming, more and more, a virtual world. Consider interactive games, holograms and sensory interpretation centres that are popping up around the world in quasi-natural settings. Animated movies are being produced, in which real personalities become a caricature of themselves, while in others reality itself has become a new art form (eg. the *Big Brother* phenomenon). The production environment is everywhere, ranging from open spaces, large and small indoor settings and smart offices in multinational corporations, government agencies, the home and the workshop.



If you are considering a career in the Media-Arts industry, you will need to be the kind of person who takes on the responsibility for their own learning and control of their career development. Your working life will probably be quite different to those in the mainstream – you may find yourself working less as a full-time, permanent employee of an organisation, and more of a casual, contracted person who runs their own outsourced business. Your work may involve a ‘portfolio’ of activities in which you undertake several projects at the one time, or you might take on sequential projects. You will be constantly on the lookout for new opportunities and new income streams. Most of all, you will love thinking and working creatively and independently, while ensuring that your communication and teamwork skills are high. Even if you find yourself working alone, you will still need the support of others with different skill sets at different points in time.

This booklet has been designed to provide information to help students and career changers decide whether Media and the Arts offers what they are looking for; whether this be paid or voluntary work, a particular role, industry-specific environment or a combination of a Media-Arts specialisation with another discipline. It will also be helpful in creating career ideas for students and graduates with a range of qualifications who wish to make their careers in this industry.

Overview of Working Life and Roles

Generally identifiable features of working life in one of the media or supported industries include:

- keeping pace with technology
- managing multi-faceted portfolios
- responding to market demands and fluctuations
- working to a fast pace.

//Creative Economy//

The creative industries represent a leading sector of the economy in OECD countries, with annual growth rates between five and 20 per cent. The sector is increasingly important for the knowledge-based economy as it is knowledge and labour intensive and fosters innovation; it has a huge potential for generation of employment and export expansion.

(Source: http://ec.europa.eu/research/foresight/07/article_2403_en.htm)

Many Media and Arts workers have one or more specialisations, which they utilise as part of multidisciplinary teams. While special skills, talents and knowledge can assist a Media-Arts worker to become a much demanded commodity, so too does an understanding of the entire project and an ability to work well with others.

Whether specialist or generalist, it would be fair to say that anyone wanting to work in this field will need to have – or show a willingness to develop – high level skills, an interest in lifelong learning and the motivation to succeed. As well as having sound technical expertise, skills in demand include the ability to communicate well, conduct research and solve problems with a minimum of fuss. Other desirable attributes, depending on the particular role, include:

- taking responsibility for one’s own workload
- having a capacity to lead others
- the ability to stay calm under pressure and work to tight deadlines (to name a few).

As there are an ever-increasing number of people working in Media and the Arts, competition is fierce and candidates for positions will usually need to prove their worth before getting a job – this may mean proving yourself in an unpaid or work experience role. Positions usually go to those who have been observed in a role or who have a strong portfolio of evidence.

As has been the case for many years now, there are many organisations that are primarily involved in the delivery of media-based services (eg. newspapers, magazines, radio and television). However, today you’ll find Media personnel working in just about every industry and every type of environment: government, corporations, community, health, education, small medium enterprises (SMEs), etc. Many work on a freelance basis, either moving from project to project or offering one type of service to many organisations. It is important for people wanting to enter the profession to undertake appropriate research in order to find the range of opportunities that match their skills, interests and career goals.

In carrying out its tasks, the media industry enlists a range of other personnel and technologies. Artists, musicians, filmmakers, performers and other creative workers who previously plied their trade independently or in discreet forums are finding their skills and talents much desired. Or, conversely, they are finding the Media field a useful ally in assisting their publicity campaigns and in providing them with ongoing work. General administrative

workers, public relations personnel, marketers and advertisers are also making strategic links with media organisations, or are becoming valuable additions to the staff. These developments have not been lost on course providers, who are creating new programs that integrate and combine elements from Media and the Arts with studies in other disciplines, such as Law, Commerce, Business and IT.

What Does the Media-Arts Industry Look Like

This industry has many faces, and you will find Media and Arts workers everywhere – in major cities, suburban areas and regional centres, remote locations and their own homes and workshops.

Having a working life that is consistent with one's values, strengths and interests is important to Media-Arts professionals. The working environment is part of this. Your place of work, the people you interact with can all contribute to career success. Of course, you might work in different locations and work environments at different stages in your life, according to your career priorities at that time.

The industry environment is quite diverse, but will include:

- **Boutique Companies:** employing between one and 10 employees – these usually focus on one aspect of the industry, eg. art galleries, photographic studios, website development companies and graphic or set design firms. This type of employment is great for people who have a particular interest in developing a particular skill to a high standard.
- **Home Offices:** more and more people are working at least some of the time from home these days, and this includes business owners and waged employees. Graphic designers and small publishers have made sea- and tree-changes to combine lifestyle with income. This way of operating generally means you have to purchase your own equipment and pay your own operating costs, but if you like the idea of walking from your bed to your office without changing out of your PJs or brushing your hair, a home office may suit you.
- **Independent Operators:** this could be anything from a person who starts up a local theatre group to an entrepreneur who develops mega-projects, employing thousands of people in the process. The common denominator is that independent operators all want to do things their way. They may make big profits or losses, but the main interest is in the challenge!
- **Large Organisations:** such as government departments, universities, charities, etc. that have their own Media departments that look after all internal and external communications,

and usually set guidelines for how anything in that organisation should look (this is usually known as 'branding'). These organisations may be national- or state-based, with an office located in a central or regional area. To work in the media department of one of these organisations means knowing a lot about its direction, mission and goals. These appeal to people who like to feel they are playing a pivotal role in supporting the organisation to achieve its ends. This would require you to have a particular affinity with that organisation and what it does. You will probably introduce yourself something like this: "I'm..., I work in video production for the Red Cross, we are currently filming in..."

- **Media Giants:** many of which are nationally or globally-owned, operate a number of specific media organisations – film companies, television and radio stations, newspapers and magazines, etc. Working for a Media Giant can provide you with the opportunity to work in different areas and learn different roles, and to find the best avenue for your skills and talents. Due to their size there are often layers of managers, providing opportunities for career progression.



- **Medium to Large Companies:** the 'business end' of the industry – marketing companies, advertisers, promoters. You might get the opportunity to work in project teams with people from other areas. People who work for these organisations tend to say they are in 'marketing', or 'advertising', rather than the type of job they have or the company they work for (although working for a high profile company carries a lot of credibility too!). People may switch companies quickly in the search for a bigger pay packet, higher status or other reward, however, if you hang around and play your cards right you could well become a partner one day!
- **Niche Organisations:** such as theatre companies, book publishers, events managers, modelling agencies, etc. If working with like-minded people towards a common goal that is quite focussed, a niche industry would suit you. You would work closely with others on a daily basis, and develop a deeper knowledge of the company's priorities in order to play a part in its success as well as achieving your own individual targets.
- **Studios:** are usually one-person shows or places where different creative workers attend on a full- or part-time or sessional basis to ply their craft, eg. jewellery makers, painters, sculptors and other fine arts workers. The working space is perhaps the most important element for these workers; it must provide the right sensory conditions as well as sufficient space for tools and equipment. This environment will suit if you have a need for self-expression, a creative passion awaiting an outlet and a particular desire to use one or more art forms in achieving this. There is not a high level of financial security in this field of endeavour – you might apply for funding via a grant or from a philanthropic association.
- **Support Companies:** include media monitors, retail outlets, ticketing companies, bookbinders, manufacturers of Media-Arts related equipment, etc. These organisations appeal to people who enjoy the background aspects of the Media and Arts industry, rather than the front line stuff. If you don't want to learn a particular skill or profession that is directly Media-Arts related, but really enjoy interacting with those in the industry, a support company might be just

the ticket! Because there are often part-time or vacation jobs in these companies, Media-Arts students often work here while they are studying, to make some money as well as learning a bit about the industry.

How Do Media-Arts Industry People Work Together

One thing that characterises the contemporary Media-Arts industry is cooperation. There are many people with their own special industry knowledge, skills and talents who all depend on each other to get their job done. The rewards they receive will often depend on how well all the other components work.

How many Media-Arts people can you identify in these two scenarios?

- It is coming up to election time and a political party needs to create a publicity campaign. The party employs a media company to come up with a tagline and several key statements. A **Professional Writer** is then briefed to prepare the content for an advertisement, an **Illustrator** designs the look and a **Web Page Writer** prepares it for internet presence. Another **Writer** who is specialised in broadcasting prepares it for television and radio. A **Songwriter** is hired to prepare a jingle, and a recording company hires **Musicians** to create the finished product. A **Graphic Designer** is required to make it work well as a newspaper ad, and a **Public Relations Officer** prepares a media release.
- A **Costume Maker** who works in a workshop for most of the week needs to attract customers. A decision is made to link up with a media group that invites **Artists** from a range of backgrounds to advertise their products and sell them online. Using some of their profits, the media group enlists the help of a public relations company to further spread the word. The public relations company enlists a **Creative Writer** and **Desktop Publisher** to prepare a range of advertisements. While all this is going on, a theatre company has just accepted a play from a well-known **Dramatist** and it is in the process of auditioning for the cast, organising sets, looking for someone who can create period costumes – and on it goes.

//Creative industries//

*Creative industries have been identified as enterprises with creative **outputs** – Publishing, Media, Software and the Arts. More recently the idea has been extended to creative **inputs**; creative design and practice from cars to tourism. But the idea can be extended even further to include consumer-generated content and user-led innovation.*

(Source: www.cdu.edu.au/newsroom/origins/edition2-2006/origins-creative-citizenship.pdf)

"the Arts have become commercial, there is now a stronger relationship between an artist who is also a graphic designer or who creates websites, or a writer who also does film work... the boundaries between artistic creativity and commerce are now much more blurred than at any time in the past."

(Source: John Montgomery, author of *The New Wealth of Cities: City Dynamics and the Fifth Wave*, speaking to Michael Duffy, Counterpoint 21 May 2007 – www.abc.net.au/rn/counterpoint/stories/2007/1928815.htm)

Making a Career

The Media-Arts industry is arguably one of the oldest in our history. Since the Stone Age, passing on information and entertaining others has been a major component of human endeavour. Information delivery and entertainment processes (and indeed the hybrid form, 'infotainment') have become highly sophisticated and more varied, especially over the last 20 years. With increasing commercialisation and the need to stand out from the crowd, creativity is now a buzz-word in the Media-Arts field and those once seen as peripheral are now being valued for their skills and talents.

In seeking appropriate positions in the profession, some candidates aim for roles in the 'traditional' media, such as radio, newspapers and television, or in the time-honoured Arts (eg. music, painting, sculpture, novels and plays). However, those areas of highest demand are increasingly those related to the 'new media', such as internet, electronic games, instant communications, blogs and e-tools.

In theory, anyone can work in a Media-Arts related industry, including those with no formal qualifications. However, this is not to diminish the role of education as the basis for a good career. In fact, a combination of passion, talent, high-level technical skills and a well-rounded education will markedly increase your chances of success in your chosen field. There are even courses for entrepreneurs!

As an industry that is truly reflective of the current times, entry points are available at all ages and stages. Those with obvious talents (or even just the right 'look' in some fields) may be snapped up without a glance at their credentials. However, for most, a carefully selected learning program will form part of a strategic career plan. For some, this takes decades. Many dancers spend years honing their skills before they complete their secondary school education.

A general degree can also enhance one's chances of getting into a Media or Arts related field, especially if it is combined with some extracurricular activities that are related to your area of interest, such as acting or working behind the scenes in a student production, interviewing a visiting academic or helping to publish the student newsletter.

Because of the irregularity of work, and the fact that many in the field are freelancers, part-timers or on short-term contracts, a high percentage of people who work in the Media-Arts industry find themselves topping up spare hours, weeks or months doing other jobs to pay the bills, so a good education, especially one that provides some practical skill development, never goes astray.

If you don't have a Year 12 qualification or did not achieve high scores, you can still establish a career path in the Media-Arts industry. A TAFE course is often a great way to begin, especially for those who want to focus on developing a particular skill. After obtaining a TAFE qualification, some graduates move into work, while others go on to higher education or undertake other training in their specific field.

//From online newspapers to multimedia platforms//

Just 10 years after the first Australian newspaper took its tentative technological steps onto the information superhighway, the online newspaper website has become a dazzling array of all the multimedia platform has to offer, bringing new dimensions to the newspaper/reader relationship and supplementing the printed text and picture stalwarts of traditional newspaper delivery.

(Source: www.presscouncil.org.au)



Overarching categories of media that may provide a starting point for people wanting to obtain work in the industry include:

- **arts/creative:** may include such productions as film, theatre, dance, choreography architecture, music, performance art, photography, visual art, design, gastronomy, animation, fashion
- **broadcast:** communications delivered over mass electronic communication networks
- **digital:** electronic media used to store, transmit and receive digitised information, eg. e-books
- **electronic:** communications delivered using electronic or electromechanical energy
- **mass:** any media widely available to the general public, including radio, television, internet
- **multimedia:** communications that incorporate multiple forms of information content and processing
- **new:** media that can only be created or used with the aid of electronic technologies
- **news:** mass media focused on communicating news
- **print:** communications delivered via paper or other two dimensional objects
- **published:** any media made available to a limited or unlimited public
- **recording:** devices used to store information.

Some people prefer to begin their career search by looking at what is produced – the end result of their work. Products and services range from the traditional to the *uber-moderne* and include:

- Arts festivals
- CD-ROMs
- computer-based dating services
- DVDs
- films
- interactive games
- magazines
- marketing campaigns
- news reports
- newspapers
- plays
- podcasts
- poetry readings
- press releases
- radio talkback shows
- television documentaries
- websites.

Still others like to look for work according to the stage of production and presentation that they prefer to work. There are seven broad areas (below)

1. Background:

- archivist
- curator
- historian
- IT consultant
- researcher

2. Pre-production:

- choreographer
- composer
- couturier
- dramatist
- fashion designer
- novelist
- playwright
- poet
- writer

3. Production:

- director
- graphic designer
- interactive games developer
- interior designer
- journalist
- photographer
- set designer
- video game designer
- web designer

4. Front People:

- host
- newsreader
- radio announcer
- reporter

5. Main Players:

- film-maker
- film producer
- stage manager

6. Performers:

- actor
- comedian
- dancer
- presenter

7. Post-production:

- advertiser
- distributor
- marketer
- public relations officer
- retailer
- reviewer
- sales representative
- subtitler
- wholesaler

While not strictly a part of the Media-Arts industry, allied professionals are also pivotal in the delivery of goods and services. These occupations include marketers, advertisers and public relations officers. Often students of these and other disciplines take a major in a Media-related subject area, and many these days are undertaking dual qualifications such as Arts/Multimedia, Marketing/Graphic Design and even Arts (Theatre)/Social Work.

There are many people who work in the Media and Arts fields who have no formal qualifications at all. Others have degrees of all kinds. What is both good and problematic about this industry is that anyone can be anything, but it is up to each person to drive their career. You can do this by having some clear goals, showing high level motivation and the desire to learn, determination to succeed and an ability to take rejection with good grace. If you want to get into a particular area you have to be prepared to undertake the appropriate training and development activities (and usually pay for it yourself). If your career interests lay closer to the Arts side of the industry, you might also need to be prepared to find alternate sources of funding, whether these are through employment, a partnership (or perhaps a wealthy supporter!).

There are also plenty of jobs for people who want to work in a support role in the Media-Arts industry; these include:

- administrators
- caterers
- chauffeurs
- fundraisers
- hair and makeup specialists
- IT specialists
- personal and executive assistants.

//Creative skills are the hardest to find - and easiest to lose//

Overall, a quarter of the industry indicated difficulties recruiting staff, rising towards a third among the larger entities and those producing software. Those who experienced difficulty found creative skills and then management skills the most difficult to find. Almost half of all companies indicating difficulties nominated design/creative as the hardest to source, compared to 37 per cent who cited management skills.

(Source: Australian Interactive Media Industry Association (AIMIA) Digital Content Industry Roadmapping Study – www.aimia.com.au/cms?page=1456)

//Cooperation keeps everybody busy and fulfilled//

"I started out studying Design & Technology (Jewellery) during VCE at Box Hill Senior Secondary, then went to NMIT at Greensborough and took the Diploma of Arts – Product Design/Jewellery. I then did the NEIS scheme through Kangan Batman TAFE.

I wanted to do either jewellery or fashion after finishing high school, I decided on jewellery because it's really hard to break into the fashion market. I already had basic jewellery hand skills from high school, but learning further practical skills was really important, so I chose the course at NMIT. The business, drawing/designing and jewellery photography skills were really valuable. I found the marketing training (both in the diploma and the NEIS training) a bit obvious (basically you get your product into stores and do all you can to expose your label/name).

I am signed up to do a gem setting short course; I think doing short courses to improve skills and learn new techniques is really important. I would love to teach in the future, so some sort of Dip Ed would be something I would need to do.

I work from home, sometimes outsourcing things like casting and mould making. I have work on consignment in most stores which involves getting sent a sales statement at the end of each month. I then send an invoice and get paid (either electronically or by cheque), I also sell my work through a contemporary jewellery website based in Sydney. I am lucky enough to sell to two stores on an outright basis, so paid 50 per cent first then the remaining balance on delivery. My main customers are in Melbourne and Sydney, but I have some overseas ones as well through contacts and the Definite Style website.

I first found out about Definite Style (the website that displays my work) through research. I have had a couple of good orders plus a design and manufacture of an engagement ring.

I don't work with anyone else directly, but I'm always ringing suppliers and friends in the industry for advice or assistance."

(Source: Stephanie Winther, Graduate – Jewellery, NMIT)

Working conditions

Working in the Media-Arts industry is constantly challenging as there is always something new to learn, a new skill to develop or the need to enhance an existing skill for a new purpose. It is accepted that professionals will take personal responsibility for sourcing and learning about new products, programs or procedures. This developing knowledge often occurs while continuing to work, rather than taking time out for it. This goes with expecting the unexpected (except that there is usually a deadline to meet!).

Flexibility is a key word; however, often it is the worker who has to be flexible. For some, working life is broken up into periods of time where you have the time to be creative and productive in a way that suits your individual style and pace; however, this is generally punctuated with necessary deadlines and emergency situations when the inevitable happens and things go wrong.

Besides this, working unusual and unsociable hours is the norm. Even those who have guaranteed regular timeslots (such as news presenters and late night radio show hosts) will find they need to do an interview or obtain some 'hot-off-the-press' information at any time. Hours can be highly irregular, for example if you are a reporter who needs to be on-the-spot as important news breaks.

It is generally expected that Media people work wherever and however they can. For most, there is little control over the working environment. Your 'office' may be a room in your house, a tiny sound booth or an airport lounge. You may need to be prepared to travel and/or work in less-than-pleasant conditions. Many Media and Arts professionals travel as a regular part of their job, whether it is to attend book signings or to meet a new client.

It is important that you become a good time manager to ensure that you can work at an appropriate pace to meet deadlines, but you also need to be available to put in extra hours if necessary.

Pay rates for a few workers is very high, but for the most part pay tends to be below comparable jobs in other industries. For example, according to the Australian Government's *Job Outlook*:

- 68 per cent of authors and book editors work full-time, and weekly earnings average out at \$775 per week
- Film, television, radio and stage directors earn \$1148 per week, and 79 per cent work full-time
- 55 per cent of media presenters work full-time compared with 79 per cent of journalists (who earn around \$1114 per week)
- Musicians and singers earn around \$570 per week and 42 per cent work full-time.

(Source: Figures quoted above are taken from the official Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations website (February 2008) – <http://jobsearch.gov.au/joboutlook>)



"Since commencing my studies (in Arts – Multimedia) at VU, I have been able to keep abreast of technologies while developing my own skills and knowledge in the field. During my course, I was fortunate enough to study abroad (in the USA) for six months, to further develop my multimedia skills and cultural awareness.

I also did work experience at ACMI (Australian Centre for the Moving Image) helping develop future programs and projects for their upcoming move and conception into Melbourne's newest landmark, Federation Square (which was nothing more than cranes and concrete at that point in time).

After my three weeks were up, I hung around, helping out and volunteering whenever I could. Now, over five years later, I'm

still here. I now work as the Digital Studio Coordinator. The job entails facilitating and assisting in the many varied school and general public workshops held in the Digital Studio. Outside of ACMI, I also edit and post-produce short films and music clips."

(Source: Dean Lawry, Multimedia (Arts) graduate, Victoria University – now working as Digital Studio Coordinator, Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI))

Course Provider Perspectives

Starting a Career in Journalism
by Amanda Crane Journalism
Lecturer, RMIT University

Our best applicants are those who show they have the tenacity to succeed in Journalism. We immediately throw students into the writing and reporting pool and the more experience they have, the better.

Prior to applying, students should be exploring reporting options at their local newspapers, the free 'café' papers, public radio stations and community television. When calling the papers, don't take 'no' for an answer: find a story in a daily newspaper and explore it from your neighbourhood's angle. The papers are much more likely to accept a story that's already written rather than sit down and explain everything there is to know about Journalism to yet another eager student. Is someone on your street a great athlete? Did someone you know win an award? Write about it!

It's experience like this that sets applicants apart from the rest of the field. You should also have a keen interest in everything that's news – from politics to human interest to sport – the broader knowledge the stronger your chance. You need

to know the difference between blogs and online Journalism. Your writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar have to be flawless – Journalism doesn't allow time for mistakes.

At the same time, you have to forget everything you know about formal academic writing for a grade and instead think about writing for an audience. Any bias needs to be shelved – we tune in to media for objective reports, not one writer's opinion. You need to be curious and not stop at the 'who, what, where and when' but dig deeper to find out the 'how' and the 'why'.

Finally, you need to be ready to work. You have to know how to balance your time and prioritise assignments. You need to write in a hurry – some assignments will start and stop in less than an hour. You have to be flexible and be able to change writing styles from newspaper to radio to online.

Our best students are those who can put on a news bulletin at 8.00 am and still show up prepared for their 9.30 class. They volunteer for writing jobs. They turn in work well before deadline with no questions left unanswered. They seek out their own work experience, get up and talk to guest lecturers and live, eat and breathe Journalism. I love it when a student comes up to me and says, "Did you hear about so-and-so in the news?" That's someone I know will do well.



After graduation, you need to maintain that drive and see all opportunities to work in Journalism as a step closer to your dream job. It takes a very special candidate to be able to land a cadetship at a major metropolitan daily newspaper or news channel immediately after receiving a degree. Sometimes the only options are at smaller organisations. Do you want to work in television? Then don't rule out rural radio – it will help you with your voice. Do you want to be on a daily newspaper? Then apply for a cadetship, but also apply at weeklies and rural dailies. Just like Journalism schools, media outlets are looking for candidates who show initiative, experience and curiosity. No job is going to come looking for you.

Our graduates go on to Journalism jobs at all levels, in all media, around the world. We have people working in radio in New York City, newspapers in Cambodia and television in Canberra. They're on weekly newspapers, dailies, magazines, commercial radio and television, online and in government.

But I didn't get any of them a single job. They did it themselves – through their own hard work, talent and determination.

Make the Most of Your Time at Uni

Here are some tips from current students to help you get the most out of your chosen course, wherever you are studying.

- **Bethany Lawler (Media and Communications, Honours QUT):**
 - Take an interest in what is happening in the industry and how that relates to what you're studying as well as your future in the industry.
 - Make the most of every opportunity that comes your way because experience is the key to this industry.
 - Don't expect offers to fall in your lap, you have to be prepared to look for them.
 - Get to know your lecturers and tutors because they often have great contacts and very helpful advice. Networking is very important in this industry.
- **Sarah (Advertising and Media and Communication, Third Year QUT):**
 - Don't be afraid to email your tutors and lecturers if you're struggling with unit content. They're there to help you pass, not merely to grade!
 - Enrol in a couple of electives which aren't necessarily linked to your course, but which you find interesting. In my second year I took a music subject called 'Sex, Drugs and Rock 'n' Roll' as an elective. It served as a nice change of pace and a welcome break from my Media, Communication and Advertising subjects.

//...media outlets are looking for candidates who show initiative, experience and curiosity. No job is going to come looking for you. //

STUDENT PROFILES

Stephen Nicolazzo

– Third Year, Bachelor of Creative Arts

I started this course straight out of high school. The course catered to the three main areas I was interested in: Creative Writing; Visual Media; and Theatre Studies. It had everything I wanted, and perhaps the most enticing part was the fact that the groups would be small, between 60 and 80 students per year. It was intimate, which meant focus and hopefully an opportunity to meet like-minded people all hoping to pursue creative careers.

As the course is so intimate, it has really built a strong network of creative and personal relationships that have influenced projects within my studies, but also on an external level, most notably, co-founding an all student, all Creative Arts, theatre collective at The University Of Melbourne – The Little Ones. The course supports collaboration, though being shut down in favour of the Melbourne Model, has given me a chance to bounce off some pretty strong personalities. Creative Arts has ultimately informed my practices as a theatre director and creative writer from a theoretical and practical perspective. I know how to think about theatre and scrutinise the mechanics of the performances I am working on with an objective approach. This is not to say that the school doesn't promote passion, because the tutors, mostly those involved with theatre, have been quite influential on my studies and supported creative decisions, good or bad.

I have directed a number of non-professional theatrical productions both at university and independent fringe theatres like The Store Room and Theatreworks. My creative writing has been published in two annual writers' journals, Express Media's magazine, *Voiceworks*, and read at The St Kilda Music and Poetry Festival, which again, really came about due to the contacts and staff at university.

Okay, it sounds far-fetched, but I would ideally like to open a small black box theatre in Melbourne that will support young directors, writers and performers in getting their work onto the stage. I also plan to continue work on The Little Ones Theatre Collective and apply for Arts Victoria sponsorship/funding to really get the company off the ground and promote the work of my comrades.

A double-degree compounds interest and outcome

Suzannah

– Final Year, Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts (Conservation Biology) (English and Creative Arts)

After finishing high school I enrolled in a Bachelor of Veterinary Science and Medicine at Murdoch. During first year I was lucky enough to study some Arts-based units as well: Introductory History and Creative Writing, as well as one of Murdoch's foundation units: Structure, Thought and Reality. My exposure to these made me rethink my future goals, and I went on in second year to study Environmental Ethics, Ecology, Introduction to Philosophy, Introduction to Literature and further Creative Writing units. At the end of my second year, I transferred to a Bachelor of Science in Conservation Biology, with a second major in English, which I eventually upgraded to a second degree, a Bachelor of Arts with majors in English and Creative Arts, and a minor in Creative Writing. Thus, after four and a half years at Murdoch, I am about to graduate with a double degree.



While this sounds like a very unusual combination, it has been ideal in allowing me to study a variety of units in which I was really interested, from across the spectrum of learning at the university. Studying both Arts and Science has taught me a wide variety of skills, from understanding scientific method to the ability to analyse a work of literature. I envision using my double degree in a way which allows me to maintain this combination of interests in my working life. I think it is wonderful to be able to have a broad background of learning, and that Murdoch enabled me to do this is testimony to the flexibility of the university, its programs and staff.

Having gone straight into university from high school, I'm now keen to take some time away from both study and a serious career path, and do some travelling as well as sailing. This year I will be sailing on an eco-voyage in the Kimberley and look forward to seeing how I might be able to combine my interests. Beyond sailing and travelling, my plans are not set, but with the scope of my degree I can see myself becoming involved in career paths as varied as Journalism or Landcare, or perhaps even some combination of the two.

Jobsearch Strategies

Networking

This might sound like a lot of hard work, but networking is the most effective job search strategy for workers in all industries, and especially for those in Media and the Arts.

There is no magic to networking, just common sense. Make sure you become known to the people who have the power to hire you as someone who does high quality work, is responsible and reliable. Whenever you meet someone new in the industry, make sure you give them some information about yourself that will help them to remember you, and if you are looking for work always ask if they know

someone who can help you in your chosen area. Having some marketing cards is a great idea as well. Keep up regular contact with your acquaintances and you will be assured of having an ongoing supply of jobs, contracts or roles.

Publicity

Creating your own publicity campaign is another kind of networking. With the rise in user-friendly desktop publishing and other computer packages, many individuals and small businesses are now taking charge of 'Me, Incorporated' via their own website or blog, while others, including writers, actors, singers, models and other creative individuals, sometimes find it useful to have an agent who acts on their behalf. Eventually, they don't have to go for auditions or submit pieces of work, they are asked! When this happens to you, you know you have really made it in your chosen field.

Cold Calling

Put together a portfolio of your work, awards and testimonials and send it out to likely organisations. Create your portfolio in a way that matches your career goals. For example, if you are into animation, put together a montage of your work on DVD or on your own website. If you are a writer, send extracts of your published and unpublished work. Be strategic rather than using a scattergun approach or you may end up watering down your campaign. Try one or two organisations at a time, and follow up with a phone call to see if you can grab yourself an interview.

Organisation and Company Websites

Many medium and large organisations and companies advertise for positions on their own website. Find out which ones do the kind of work you like, and which match your values and goals, then check them regularly for positions or potential commissions. 

//There is no magic to networking, just common sense.... make sure you give...[people you meet]... some information about yourself that will help them to remember you...//

GRADUATE PROFILES

Kat Barron

– Bachelor of Arts (Multimedia)



“I ended up having a fight with one of my performance teachers because I didn’t ‘use the space’...”

I took this course because I studied Media in high school and was very interested in pursuing this further. I started doing a Bachelor of Arts in Performance and Multimedia at VU Footscray Park Campus for six months, before I discovered that the kind of performance we did in that course was not the kind of performance I was interested in learning! I wanted to learn how to perform as a singer on stage – this was more theatrical drama which included weird things like giving each other a massage and ‘using the space’: which was fine, but not my kind of thing. I ended up having a fight with one of my performance teachers because I didn’t ‘use the space’ so I then quit performance and took up Multimedia full-time at St.Albans campus.

I really wanted to get into video production, so while I was studying I did a lot of my own projects to gain experience and skills. The knowledge I gained from these, and the experience of working on productions and assignments at uni, helped me get my current job [Programming Assistant at Channel 31 in Melbourne].

C31 is a small not for profit community station with about 20 employees, a mixture of full-time, part-time and casuals. It can get very busy, especially in the programming department when we are scheduling in the grids for our new seasons! All the staff are very friendly and unique. The atmosphere is very laid back, not corporate at all.

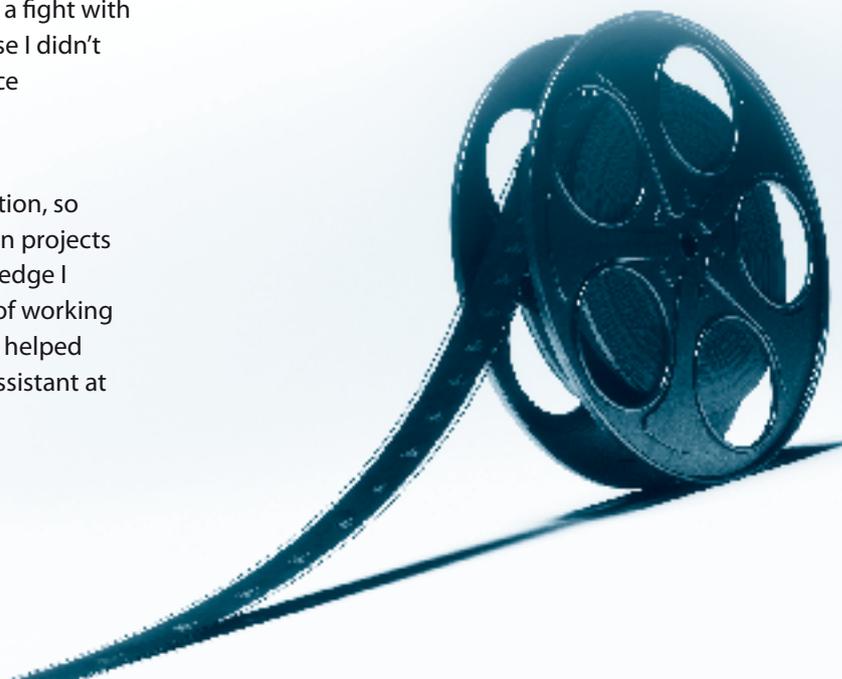
Lisa Pryor

– Bachelor of Arts (English and Art History and Theory) and Bachelor of Laws (Honours)

“In the end I chose Arts/Law for a good reason and a bad reason...Thankfully it turned out to be the right decision for me

I have worked as a journalist at *The Sydney Morning Herald* for five years. I am now the opinion page editor, plus I write a weekly column on Saturdays.

After finishing high school I tossed up between studying Communications and Arts/Law. In the end I chose Arts/Law for a good reason and a bad reason. The good reason was that it was broad while also being rigorous and vocational. The bad reason was I got the marks.



Thankfully it turned out to be the right decision for me. Law taught my brain how to think in a disciplined, rigorous way. Before I started studying Law I thought it would just look at what courts do. But Law is not just about courts. It is also about the workings of all kinds of institutions such as parliament and the police – very useful things for a journalist to understand.

I chose to go to Sydney University because the campus had a bit of buzz. Meeting people, talking a lot, joining clubs, engaging in ‘political warfare’ and editing student publications sounds like time wasted, but these things are valuable for working out what you want to do with your life – and what you don’t want to do. Editing *Honi Soit* confirmed for me that I wanted to be a journalist, while also providing me with a portfolio of stories to help get me a job in the industry.

I got my job at *The Sydney Morning Herald* the hard way: traineeships were advertised, I applied and I got one. I finished my Law degree part-time while working.

Like most people, journalists like to complain about their jobs. But unlike most jobs, journalism is fun, exciting and fulfilling in between the bits when it is stressful and boring. Journalism provides life experiences you cannot get any other way, no matter how much money you have. A couple of things that stand out for me: taking a road trip around country towns, watching Condoleezza Rice give a speech on a warship and getting thoughtful, handwritten letters from people who read my column.

Lucien Leon

– *Diploma of Screen (Animation)*



“...I am committed to inspiring my students to become practicing digital artists and researchers.”

I developed a passion for 3D animation during my trip to Rome, where I studied Maya at the European Institute of Design. Upon my return to Canberra, I successfully completed a Diploma of Screen (Animation) at the Academy of Interactive Entertainment (AIE). I was employed as a teacher at AIE for the next three years; during this time I also engaged in freelance work and produced a number of 3D animated television commercials. Inspired by the CNMA philosophy of creating art through digital media, I joined the CNMA as a lecturer in animation.

I found my experience from previous work as an industrial and graphic designer and teacher of secondary art, design and technology was invaluable, and I am committed to inspiring my students to become practicing digital artists and researchers. Currently I am undertaking a Masters degree, with research focusing on the production and dissemination of 3D animated political works.

//...talking a lot...engaging in ‘political warfare’ and editing student publications sounds like time wasted, but these things are valuable for working out what you want to do with your life...//

Postgraduate study creates a pathway to career success

Nick Brewster

– Bachelor of Commerce, currently studying Masters of Film and Television

“I chose Bond partly because it has strong industry links and also quite small classes; I really like the individual attention.”

After completing my Bachelor’s degree at Melbourne Uni I worked for insurance companies in workers’ compensation. I also travelled and worked overseas (London and Europe) doing whatever I could get for two years.

I chose Commerce because it is something I was really interested in, it was a good general degree and, basically, I really didn’t know what else to do. After graduating and spending a few years working in insurance I realised I would never make a career out of this, I just wasn’t motivated.

About three years ago I started to think about working in the film and television industry, and Bond University in Queensland was happy to take me with my undergraduate qualification from Melbourne Uni, even though I didn’t have any experience.

I chose Bond partly because it has strong industry links and also quite small classes; I really like the individual attention. The course I am doing is quite broad and gives a good overview of the industry. It prepares you for a number of roles; your Masters can take you to whatever part of the industry you wish.

With this course I am finding that I can still use a lot of the skills I learnt from my Commerce degree. For example, I’m doing Finance and Marketing, but because it has direct application to something I am interested in it is so much more enjoyable. The course includes internships which are a great way to get hands-on experience.

The Masters course is one-year full-time, but I will take a year and a half because I am studying and working part-time. At the moment I am doing anything I can get that fits around uni hours, and I’m also helping my brother with a charity he runs; I do event management which is related to theatre work. Soon I’ll probably start looking for a job in a theatre.

When I finish the course I will try to get work in a production company as an assistant producer and, eventually, I would like to be an independent film producer. My dream is to get bigger budget movies into Australia and help our film industry grow.



Paul Kirwan

– Bachelor of Computer Science and Masters of Electronic Arts



“For the past 10 years I have worked...on...Titanic, Pirates of the Caribbean, the Lord of the Rings trilogy and, most recently, Transformers...”

I graduated from the Australian National University with a Bachelor of Computer Science. While studying for my Master in Electronic Arts I was offered a job working for a top-level Hollywood visual effects company. For the past 10 years I have worked at the highest levels of the movie industry, on such films as *Titanic*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy and, most recently, *Transformers*, working with directors Peter Jackson, James Cameron and Michael Bay, and Australian legends George Miller and Peter Weir. I have completed my Masters degree and returned to Australia to lecture in Digital Video and study for a doctorate.

As a specialist photo-real compositor I am responsible for integrating all the various image layers of a scene into a single coherent image, eg. you might have actors shot in front of a bluescreen, then a photographic plate of the scene they're supposed to be standing in, a matte painting of the far background and, finally, computer-generated imagery of giant robots chasing them. A compositor will take these layers and integrate them to create a final polished scene. It is a demanding discipline, requiring both technical and artistic skill, an eye for detail and knowledge of digital imagery, cinematography, lighting and colour.

//Film, Television, Radio & Stage//

Employment for Film, Television, Radio and Stage Directors to 2011-12 is expected to be moderate. Employment in this small occupation (6600 in February 2007) fell slightly in the past five years, and rose strongly in the long-term (10 years), but with small occupations employment estimates can fluctuate.

(Source: <http://jobsearch.gov.au/joboutlook> – February 2008)

Industry Trends

The Media and Arts industry is most definitely 'on the move'. Whether this is a move towards technology, into the global village or the virtual world, there is no space for sitting still as wave after wave of change moves in and affects some aspect of working life, whether this be to do with what the work is, where it is done, how it is done or who does it.

- **The global marketplace** requires candidates to compete with others world wide for roles and markets, particularly in the computer games, animation and visual effects sectors. (Source: Australian Interactive Media Industry Association)
- **The market meets the creative genius:** creative types are more in demand, but the corporate world hasn't yet learned how to manage them. If you can show you are creative and can fit into a team you will have a distinct advantage in the jobs market. (Source: Australian Interactive Media Industry Association)
- **More jobs are becoming available outside the bounds of the Media and Arts industry** if you only look inside the industry you are doing yourself and your career chances a disservice. (Source: Australian Film Commission, 2006)
- **The electronic age is bringing sweeping changes to entertainment and media of all kinds**, eg. publishing, broadcasting and film. These include online (instant) delivery (newspapers are increasingly being read on the internet to catch the news as-it-happens), the emergence of the mobile phone as a media creation and storage unit, illegally shared music and video files, causing multimedia, the internet and other digital media outlets for entertainment and information to be refined at a rapid rate. (Source: Plunkett, 2006)
- **The domination of reality TV in broadcast programming** is opening up the world of broadcasting to everyone, so the roles of specialised personnel will need to change accordingly in managing and selecting programs. (Source: Plunkett, 2006)
- **The ability for the layperson to operate outside the establishment** to create a film, publish a book or present a play (and win awards for it) is on the increase.
- **Video-on-demand is overtaking the cinema**, with implications for how these are made and marketed. (Source: Plunkett, 2006)
- **Media giants are merging and making big acquisitions** (Source: Plunkett, 2006), while boutique companies are also on the rise, meaning that if you work in the industry you should not rely on middle-fielders for ongoing work.
- **Blogs are now features of all major newspaper websites**, bringing virtually instant feedback and reader connection but creating their own range of monitoring problems. Photo galleries, video and audio clips, invitations for readers to file story ideas, news tips, pictures and videos... all these now appear on major websites as newspapers and journalists embrace what many of them once feared. (Source: Australian Press Council)



Jobs for the Future

Some emerging areas that have been identified as providing increasing employment opportunities over the coming years include:

- interactive TV
- webcasting and videostreaming
- e-Learning
- online news pages (replacing tabloids). 

Further Information

Courses in Australia

Because of the constantly changing nature of the Media-Arts industry, course providers are always revising what they are teaching to ensure that their programs are relevant. For those wanting to undertake a program, it is important to keep in mind that there are no set courses that will guarantee graduates a place in a particular profession. You should select a course that interests you and which your research shows will give you the best chance of success in achieving your career goals. You might find that as well as undertaking your course, you will have to learn other skills on-the-job or via short courses. Professional Associations offer a range of professional development activities, which are often offered at a very reasonable cost to students.

There are many different places to study, including TAFEs, universities and private colleges. You will need to do plenty of research in order to find the most appropriate course to match your learning

style and career aspirations. The following list contains links to universities that offer courses in Media-Arts in Australia. Many universities offer a range of dual awards, combined degrees and distance learning options.

TAFE and private colleges

TAFE institutions operate around the country and offer a range of accredited and short courses in Media and the Arts. Check each state's website for further details. 

Professional Associations and Support Organisations

- **Australia Business Arts Foundation (AbaF)** was established in 2000 by the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts. With offices in every state, it promotes private sector support for the Arts.
- **Australian Cinematographers Society (ACS)** keeps members abreast of technology, new equipment and ideas through meetings, seminars and demonstrations, and provides a forum for cinematographers to meet with other members of the industry to discuss and exchange ideas, promote friendship and better understanding of each others' industry role.
- **Australian Dance Council** is a service and advocacy organisation which provides a united voice for dance in Australia and a range of professional services and programs.
- **Australian Directors Guild (ADG)** is an industry association representing the interests of film and television directors, documentary filmmakers, animators and independent producers throughout Australia.

//Lifelong learning the key to a successful career//

"...education is a major player in the creative industries, both directly in producing creative personnel, products and services, and indirectly, by providing employment for many who can then use that security to support their 'creative habit' in a multitude of different fields."

(Source: John Hartley, keynote speaker at the Creative Citizenship Symposium (Charles Darwin University, 2006: Community, Creative Industries and the Future) – www.cdu.edu.au/newsroom/origins/edition2-2006/origins-creative-citizenship.pdf)

"Society and economy' is changing, driven by the rise of human creativity, which becomes a key source of competitive advantage. The rise of the 'Creative Economy' is drawing the spheres of innovation (technological creativity), business (economic creativity) and culture (artistic and cultural creativity) into one another, in more intimate and more powerful combinations than ever."

(Source: Richard Florida, The Rise of Creative Class, 2000, p. 201)

"To prepare for [a career in the creative industries, people] need new skills and capabilities in education, but they also need to be avid lifelong learners, returning to education – formal and informal, accredited and non-certified – as they navigate their individual 'portfolio career'; self-employed, freelance or casualised, project-based, part-time or working in teams with multiple partners who change over time."

(Source: John Hartley, keynote speaker at the Creative Citizenship Symposium (Charles Darwin University, 2006: Community, Creative Industries and the Future) – www.cdu.edu.au/newsroom/origins/edition2-2006/origins-creative-citizenship.pdf)

- **Australian Graphic Design Association (AGDA)** is the national association for professional graphic designers, providing designers with the tools and information to take control of their professional lives and increasing awareness of the value of graphic design in business.
- **Australian Interactive Media Industry Association (AIMIA)** is the peak national industry body representing the interactive media and digital content sectors in Australia.
- **Australian Network for Art and Technology (ANAT)** is Australia's peak network and advocacy body for media artists working in screen, sound, installation, performance, literary and networked arenas; creating opportunities for connection, collaboration, innovation, research and development both nationally and internationally.
- **Australian Press Council** is the self-regulatory body of the print media. It was established in 1976 to help preserve the traditional freedom of the press within Australia and ensure that the free press acts responsibly and ethically.
- **Australian Society of Authors (ASA)** is a national body that sets minimum rates of pay and conditions for writers and illustrators, maintains a trust fund to defend the rights of copyright holders, lobbies governments at all levels to promote authors and illustrators' professional interests in areas such as copyright, moral rights and taxation, represents its membership to policy-making bodies and on the boards of copyright collecting and lending rights agencies.
- **Australian Writers' Guild (AWG)** is the professional association for all performance writers, that is, writers for film, television, radio, theatre, video and new media.
- **Design Institute of Australia (DIA)** represents all professional designers in Australia. It is Australia's only multidisciplinary organisation of professional designers, representing all disciplines of design, and provides a valuable networking base on state, national and international levels.
- **Institute of Professional Editors (IPEd)** is an informal body of delegates from the Australian societies of editors. It exists to coordinate national activities.
- **Jewellers' Association of Australia (JAA)** is a national association that represents and protects the interests of the jewellery industry, covering all areas from retailing to manufacturing.
- **Media Entertainment & Arts Alliance (MEAA)** is an amalgamation of the Australian Journalists Association (AJA), Actors Equity of Australia and the ATAEA, and covers the interests of workers in the Media, Entertainment, Sports and Arts industries.
- **Musicians' Union of Australia (MUA)** is the support network for musicians in Australia, including negotiating awards governing conditions and rates of pay, representing musicians at all levels of government and industry and acting for musicians whenever their interests are threatened.
- **National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA)** is the peak body representing and advancing the professional interests of the Australian visual arts and craft sector.
- **Painters and Sculptors Association of Australia (PSA)** was originally established as a lobby group representing the needs of professional artists, it now provides information relevant to the industry and recognises artists who have made outstanding contributions to the Arts.
- **Screen Producers Association of Australia (SPAA)** is the industry body that represents Australian independent film and television producers on all issues affecting the business and creative aspects of screen production. 



Other Organisations

- **Australia Council for the Arts** is the Australian Government's Arts funding and advisory body. It directly supports young, emerging and established artists, as well as new and established organisations. It also provides information about grants and resources, and provides journalists, editors and producers with Arts sector news, background research and statistics, images and assistance with press, radio and television interviews.
- **Australian Film Commission (AFC)** is an Australian Government agency operating under the Commonwealth Film Program (Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts) to ensure the creation, preservation and availability of Australian audiovisual content, by supporting the development of film, television and interactive media projects and their creators, promoting the availability of Australian content to Australian audiences, and cultivating and assisting the development and appreciation of Australian screen culture, locally and internationally.
- **Express Media** creates quality literary Arts and Media opportunities for young and emerging artists.
- **Writing centres** operate in each capital city and some regional centres, assisting writers through the various stages of their development, offering information and professional development services for aspiring and established writers. Membership costs are very reasonable. 

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This booklet is one of a series produced by GCA and intended for use by Careers Advisory Services in Higher Education in Australia. The booklets will also be of interest to secondary students and others considering further study.

A full list of titles is available on the GCA website – www.graduatecareers.com.au. Selected booklets are also available online.

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Author: Julie Farthing FAACC, *Principal Consultant Career Dimensions, Victoria and President, Australian Association of Career Counsellors (Victoria) Inc.*

Editor: Graham Watson, GCA

Graduate Careers Australia
PO Box 12103

A'Beckett Street VIC 8006

GCA Helpdesk: 03 9670 5860

Facsimile: 03 9670 5752

Email: info@graduatecareers.com.au

Web: www.graduatecareers.com.au

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Graduate Careers Australia is an organisation that provides quality careers education products to students and graduates. These include a popular website designed to help students look and apply for work, as well as publications and videos covering many aspects of employment and career exploration.

www.graduatecareers.com.au

The Graduate Careers Australia website is an easy-to-use, central source of information about graduate careers, which can help students and graduates to:

- search for a graduate position
- investigate work in different industries
- find vacation work
- write a winning job application and résumé
- get in touch with university careers services
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Graduate Careers Australia Products

Graduate Careers Australia products include the employer directory *Graduate Opportunities*, the self-assessment guide *Your Career And You*, industry career information booklets, the *Australia Graduate Survey* reports and DVDs such as *Making an Impact* and *Selection Success in One*.

Many Graduate Careers Australia products are available to students free of charge from Careers Services on campus, or by visiting our website at www.graduatecareers.com.au

For further information contact the GCA Helpdesk on:

t: 03 9670 5860

f: 03 9670 5752

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