



# VET'S THE BEST BET - NOT UNI

Try out a potential career with a cheaper, shorter course. Lauren Ahwan discovers

**S**TUDENTS enrolling in a university course to test out a career path should instead choose vocational education.

Nicholas Wyman, author of *Job U*, says the VET sector is far better than university for those still unsure about their future.

Wyman, who is chief executive of training organisation WPC Group, says VET courses are cheaper; provide more practical, work-ready skills; and are far shorter than a university degree.

He says too many university students, after already having done two or three years of study, drop out in their final year because, during work placement, they discover the job is not for them.

But in vocational education, through apprenticeships, traineeships and other links to industry, students can immediately determine if they are on the right track.

"For people who want to go to university and know exactly what it is they want to study, fantastic, go to uni," Wyman says.

"But I think everyone else needs to realise that the bragging (rights associated with) telling your friends that you're going to uni wears off really quickly.

"People have this phobia that if you don't go to university then bad things are going to happen to your career - but that's absolutely a load of nonsense."

Wyman says VET graduates still have the option of progressing to university later if they choose vocational education first, gaining what he calls "stackable credentials".

He recalls the pathway an acquaintance took to becoming an engineer - first enrolling in VET and then, using his qualification to get partial credit for a degree, studying at university part time while using his existing skills in paid employment.

"He was probably the fastest moving (performing) guy in that (university) course because he already had the practical, hands-on (skills) and was already out on worksites," Wyman says.

TAFE Gold Coast education and training director Lee Russell says some university graduates may be unsure about where their qualifications will lead them but VET courses have clear links to employment outcomes.

She agrees even those students set on going to university can benefit from completing a VET qualification first.

Scott Byrne, 33, is part way through his Diploma of Nursing and believes choosing VET has paid off.

"The nursing labs here at TAFE are just absolutely brilliant - they're state-of-the-art," he says.

"You get to see straight away what (working as a nurse) will be

like."

**MOST STUDENTS WHO ACCEPTED A UNIVERSITY COURSE STILL HAVE THE OPTION TO DEFER THEIR COURSE THIS YEAR. CHECK WITH THE UNIVERSITY AS TO DEFERMENT CUT-OFF DATES**

## COURSE OF THE WEEK

# NURSING

### DIPLOMA

A diploma nursing qualification enables graduates to work as an enrolled nurse (also referred to as a Division 2 nurse) in healthcare and medical settings such as a hospital, aged care centre, or a community health facility. They work under the supervision of registered nurses.

### STUDY PERIOD

A diploma generally can be obtained between 18 months and two years of full-time study.

### SKILLS TO HAVE



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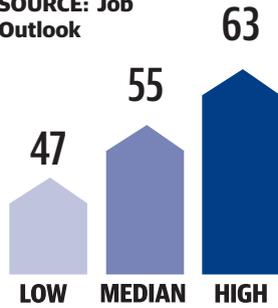
Enrolled nurses need to have good communication skills and be able to follow instructions precisely. They need to solve problems, work in a team, and be tolerant, patient and tactful with many different types of people.

**REGISTRATION**

A police clearance, first aid qualifications and immunisations may be required before starting a course. Enrolled nurses need to be registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia before they can practise in any state or territory.

Pay summary \$k

**SOURCE: Job Outlook**



HAPPY: TAFE nursing student Scott Byrne says VET's paid off. Picture: ADAM HEAD