

Different pathways to uni

I hope this article might come in handy for all of those school leavers facing the uncertainties of ATARs and Covid-19.

Many school leavers are awaiting the supposedly all important ATAR.

In Queensland, this is the first year for ATAR and the pressures of moving the senior school system into the 21st century have been immense. But do you know just how easy it is to get into university these days? First, there are so many universities competing for your attention and, as an employer, I see no difference between a degree from a first-tier or a second-tier university, as long as you actually learned something. Second, the cut-off ranks for university courses are all about supply and demand.

Pre-requisites provide a filter for some courses but many institutions have dropped these, offering specialist catch-up topics instead.

Universities will be struggling to fill places this year, as many overseas students cannot enter Australia. You can already see the effects of this, with some universities proudly announcing they have dropped the use of ATAR altogether. So, apply for the highest-level course that interests you, you never know what might happen.

Instead of increasing course quotas and therefore dropping the rank, many universities have set up alternate entry pathways. An increasing number (Griffith, QUT and RMIT among them), provide a diploma pathway set as a TAFE qualification with guaranteed entry to a related degree. Sometimes the diploma comprises simply the first year of the degree itself. Personally, I think this is a very worthwhile and pragmatic approach, which also provides the university with a with an income stream separate from government supported university places.

For those with their hearts set on a career requiring a degree with an entry score above

SPEAKING FRENCH

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their ATAR, another option is to do the first year of a different degree. Many universities offer generous concessions regarding the conversion from a Grade Point Average (GPA) to an ATAR, often after the completion of just two subjects at the same university.

Regarding trades, try and set your trade study up so that it will get some recognition in the event you want to do some higher-level study later on. Many tradies aspire towards a move into building, management, engineering, architecture or anything beyond using their hands. Prepare for this possibility by exploring diploma opportunities early, especially the ability to substitute or integrate a diploma level qualification for the normal trade related classroom time.

You'll be keeping your options open for the future.

Some people simply don't know what they want to do and to them I say, just do something. Preferably, something aligned with your general interests. A job on a property or farm will provide exposure to growing things, animals, machinery, people management, commodity markets and even aircraft. A job at a resort might include catering, housekeeping, boating, guiding, or event and activities management. Both can provide semi-formal environments in interesting places, where you can start growing into the person you need to be. A love of music or skills in an instrument might be supplemented by an internship with a promoter or label. Getting involved with Big-



Don't despair, there's plenty of pathways to your future.

Sound is one way to start exploring this area. Getting an HR or forklift ticket is a great way to progress beyond front counter retail and into warehousing and logistics.

People complain about the cost, but it's modest in the scheme of things will very likely be repaid rapidly in salary uplift and the new opportunities it can bring.

Looking back, one of the things that has struck me is how little we know about jobs and careers when we're young. We see things happening around us but we cannot grasp what's actually involved. Even headline jobs, being a doctor for example, splinter into a myriad of specialties in areas sometimes not even related to the discipline. Another thing that clients have taught me from when I've met them in

my financial advising capacity is that you can make money out of just about anything, if you are prepared to take a few risks and set your mind to it.

Just in my lifetime, whole new industries have developed around disability, PCs, the internet and mobile phones.

In the decades before me it was sophisticated healthcare, nuclear technology and plastics. Before that, it was electricity, aeroplanes and automobiles.

You can't possibly know all of the potential opportunities that will befall you or where they will lead, so begin to put a platform in place now while you're young. If you leave it too long, you'll have to run harder and harder just to keep up, a sure recipe for regret and resentment.

Unusual kookaburra photo

Having taught photography classes for many years, it should not come as a shock that I might include some photography information in some of these stories.

The photo of the laughing kookaburra pictured demonstrates a rather unusual aspect of photography.

This is one of my favourite 'Birds in Flight' shots in particular for its sharp detail and clarity.

However, if you look closely, you will see the unusual feature of having shadows of the bird both in front and behind it virtually showing in mid-air.

I took this photo back in the days of my film camera, loaded with a roll of Colour Transparency or Slides as it was commonly known. It was a heavily overcast day so the lighting was dull with no real highlights.

I was in a hide waiting for the kookaburra

BIRDS IN OUR WORLD

KEITH IRELAND



to return. To be able to take a sharp photo of the bird landing, meant it needed a very fast shutter speed of at least 2000th of a second.

With such dull light outside, the only way I could get that speed was by using my flash which went off at about that speed.

To use flash with the camera that I was using, the shutter speed had to be no faster than 1/250th second to synchronise with the flash. The lens would then be open so the flash could go off during that time.



Keith Ireland's photograph of a laughing kookaburra demonstrates the effect of 'Ghosting'.

The kookaburra would travel a distance while the lens was open, creating a dark blurred image over all, but the light of the flash froze its image in the middle of that distance.

The rest of the distance is the dark shadow depicted firstly on one side then the other, giving what looks like a shadow round the bird.

This shadow effect is known as 'Ghosting'.

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