

Your Side Quests - preparing for VCE or VCAL

Approaching your final years of high school might bring up some complex feelings. It might feel exciting and daunting. After all, these years will likely be quite different from your schooling so far. Some big decisions about your future are drawing closer too.

There will be exciting things to look forward to, but also some things you might be feeling a bit nervous about. It's normal to feel mixed emotions, and it's normal for some of these emotions to be conflicting—transitioning to and completing your final years of school is no small matter!

New side quests, new opportunities

Completing Years 11 and 12 may be your main mission, and it's an important one. But, if it's your one and only focus, your experience overall might feel a little incomplete or unsatisfying. That's where side quests come in!

Side quests—like in a video game—are extra experiences beyond your main mission. They can be big, like joining a club, volunteering for a cause you're passionate about, trying a new creative pursuit or learning a new sport. They can also be small, like saying 'hi' to a classmate you haven't spoken with before, or deepening your appreciation for something you already do and love. While they may not directly relate to completing school, they offer us additional opportunities and experiences. You might discover a new interest, a new passion, or gain a new skill.

Now is a great time in life to be exploring your side quests and discovering new things - you might just surprise yourself!

If you're not sure what you're interested in or passionate about, or if you haven't decided what your plan is after school ends, side quests can help. They provide the opportunity to try out new things. You might gain a clearer idea of who you are and what you might like to do in the next few years.



Wait, but completing VCE or VCAL is still important, right?

Definitely! Doing your best in your last years of high school is important. It might even be your main goal. The experience can be enjoyable and rewarding if you allow it to be.

But while it's important to knuckle down and get into the dedicated study zone when you need to, remember that your VCE/VCAL score or final result is not the be-all and end-all. There are plenty of pathways after school to get to where you want to go—to enrol in an exciting course, or get an apprenticeship, or even land a dream job. So, if you don't land your first choice right away, be open to seeing what other doors might take you to the same destination, or even a new destination that you hadn't previously considered.

You might even need some dedicated time to devote to side quests right after completing school, to give you more time to explore your options. If you feel like you need to explore your interests and passions even more before committing to a direction, that's perfectly normal too! Take your time and enjoy the process.

TRY IT

- Set aside 5-10 minutes to write down a few potential side quests that you're currently working on or might be interested in exploring in the future. Remember, you can take as many as you like.
- What are you hoping to get from them?
- What's the first step to taking each side quest?

REFLECT

- Now that you've thought about your quests, which ones make you the most excited?
- Did any of your side quest ideas surprise you?
- How might your side quests support—or perhaps change—your main goal?

WANT MORE? CHECK THESE OUT!

Article: Purposeful activity: hobbies <https://www.headtohealth.gov.au/meaningful-life/purposeful-activity/hobbies>

Feeling It, Your Mission: Finding Purpose and Values in Life <https://www.smilingmind.com.au/feeling-it-year7-to-10>

10 ways to get stuff done: <https://au.reachout.com/articles/10-ways-to-get-stuff-done>

CHECK OUT THE FEELING IT SERIES HERE!



Web app link:
<https://app.smilingmind.com.au/explore/youth/feeling-it-year-7-10>

Smiling Mind app location:
All programs > Youth > Feeling It, Year 7-10

WHERE TO FIND SUPPORT

Immediate danger

If you're in a life-threatening situation and need immediate help call 000

Want to talk to someone?

Your school

- Reach out to a teacher or wellbeing coordinator at your school

During business hours

If you're having difficulty coping during business hours you can also contact:

- Headspace <https://headspace.org.au>
- A local GP to arrange an appointment with them that day

Available 24 hours every day

If you're in crisis or are having difficulty coping call one of the following services, both of which are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

- Lifeline 13 11 14
- Kids Helpline 1800 551 800