

Workbook to support
tertiary graduates from
culturally and linguistically
diverse backgrounds to seek
employment in regional areas



CREATE

Centre for Refugee Employment, Advocacy, Training and Education

Authors

Alex Newman
Huong Le
Luke Macaulay
Sherrica Senewiratne
Karen Dunwoodie
Siewmee Barton
Joe Jiang
Fara Azmat
Ahmed Ferdous

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Please note this workbook provides general information, and is not intended to and does not constitute legal advice regarding workplace or employment law in Australia.

The authors disclaim any and all liability arising from reliance on the contents of this workbook however caused.

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Introduction

This workbook has been developed to assist tertiary graduates from a culturally and linguistically diverse background to search for employment in regional areas of Australia.

This workbook should be used alongside the three-part video series. It provides a series of activities that can be undertaken individually or as part of a group workshop to help individuals explore career options in regional areas of Australia, build effective networks, search and apply for jobs, and prepare for interviews.

Which areas are classified as 'designated regional areas' for migration purposes?

Most locations outside major Australian cities, like Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, are classified as 'designated regional areas' for migration purposes.

Why would you choose to look for work in a regional area?

- The Australian government has introduced a specific quota of visas for skilled migrants to work in regional areas.
- There is priority processing of regional visa applications.
- The government has recently increased the length of time for post study working rights for international graduates of Australian universities, if they are in regional areas.
- There is plenty of opportunity to start your own business.

Additionally, as noted in the three-part video series that accompanies this workbook, there are many advantages of living in regional areas.

- A lower cost of living
- Affordable housing
- Lower population density
- A more relaxed lifestyle
- Access to state-funded school and healthcare
- A sense of community

Therefore, there are many benefits for tertiary graduates from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in terms of job seeking and establishing their career in regional Australia.



Tips and tricks to keep in mind

Stay up to date with relevant government websites



Video 1

Seeking employment in regional areas

In the first video, we examined the benefits of relocating and job seeking in regional Australia.

After watching the video, please undertake the following tasks to help you think about your future career options and the types of opportunities that may interest you.

After that, we will explore strategies for seeking employment in regional Australia.

Your Hard and Soft Skills

Skills refer to one's ability to do something well or the relevant expertise needed to do a specific job or task. Skills can be categorised as hard and soft skills.

Please think about an experience you have had (paid or volunteering), and the skills you developed. Brainstorm three jobs in which you might use such skills.

Skills

Suitable job

1.

2.

3.

Your interests

Please think about your current interests. List three key things you are interested in, passionate about or enjoy doing.



Consider what you are passionate about

What makes you feel happy? What kind of things you have enjoyed doing while working and volunteering?

1.

2.

3.

Now, brainstorm (either individually or with another person) the types of jobs that would allow you to draw on your interests/passions.

1.

2.

3.

Holland's Occupational Themes

Based on Holland's theory of vocational choice, Holland's Occupational Themes personality framework groups people based on their suitability for different occupations that meet their career interests.

The Holland Code (RIASEC) Test has been developed to help individuals identify which occupational theme(s) they are most suited to.

These themes are:

- Realistic
- Investigative
- Artistic
- Social
- Enterprising
- Conventional

Please undertake a free and open version of the test online using the following link: openpsychometrics.org/tests/RIASEC

Once you have completed the test, note in the space below which occupational theme you align best to, and the types of careers associated with that theme. Do you agree with these aligned themes? Did you learn anything new about yourself?

Occupational theme

Associated careers

Do you agree?

Did you learn anything new about yourself?

Searching for employment

In the first video, we highlighted several channels for seeking employment. These included graduate employment sites such as GradAustralia and GradConnection, employment agencies such as Hays and Adecco, and employment agencies and not-for-profits that cater specifically to people looking for employment in regional areas.

Please list the channels you have used to search for employment in the past. Consider which of these channels has been most successful and rank them from 1 to 3.

Channel

Ranking

In the video, we also highlighted the need to develop informal channels to search for work including attending industry events, joining local community groups, and reaching out on LinkedIn to people in the targeted industry.



Tips and tricks to keep in mind

If you have not yet developed a LinkedIn profile, please do this via this link: [linkedin.com](https://www.linkedin.com)

In the profile, you will need to have the following:

- A title
- A summary statement about yourself: briefly highlight your goals, skills, and experience, as well as what you are passionate about and the value you can offer
- Sections that provide information on your educational background and work experience

Personal brand

When developing your online presence on platforms such as LinkedIn, it is important to think about how you want to present yourself to the world. In other words, what is your personal brand?

Your personal brand is what differentiates you from others and is very important because it is the first impression you will make on people when you meet them (online or in person).

Remember, you are in control of your personal brand. Therefore, it is important to brand yourself before others brand you.

To help you establish your personal brand, please reflect on and answer the following questions.

1. Who am I?

2. What do I do?

3. How am I unique?

4. What are my goals?

Now that you have reflected on your personal brand, in the section below, write a summary statement about yourself to include on your LinkedIn profile. Remember, you are in control of how you present yourself to the world.

Networking

You should also try to develop a strong network of contacts in your chosen industry or industries and reach out to people for advice and support.

This is extremely important, as there is a huge hidden job market. What we mean by this is that not every opportunity will be advertised or discovered by you without having a strong professional network.

Networking can be thought of as building webs of like-minded industry professionals that, in the spirit of generosity, share information, advice, and referrals.

Taking this definition of networking into consideration, it is usually inappropriate to simply ask for a job when building your network.

Please make a list of three industry events, professional network meetings, career/job fairs, or alumni meetings that you might attend in the next few months (please note some of these may require you to join a professional network or event and pay a membership or registration fee).

1.

2.

3.



Tips and tricks to keep in mind

To build a network, consider attending industry events, professional network meetings, or career/job fairs.

If you have recently graduated from a university or TAFE, you might also consider attending alumni events.

Think about three people that you have met with in the last few months that might be able to provide you with advice and support in your career. You might have met them at a job/careers fair, professional meeting, industry event, or while you were studying. Please reach out and connect with them on LinkedIn.

Before doing so, please tailor a short message to each of the contacts and consider asking them if they might be willing to provide advice around looking for employment. Please remember: do not ask for a job. Instead, ask whether they might be able to meet up for coffee to provide career advice.

In the spaces below, please draft messages you may send to these contacts.

Person 1

Person 2

Person 3

Video 2

Applying for jobs in regional areas

In the second video, we provided advice on how to apply for jobs in regional areas. In doing so, we looked at how to prepare a CV, address key selection criteria, and write a cover letter

You are usually required to submit the following:

1. A CV: education background, work experience, professional/volunteer internships and referees
2. A cover letter
3. Key selection criteria: sometimes addressed within the cover letter or in a separate document

After watching the video please undertake the following tasks.
three jobs in which you might use such skills.

Writing a CV

In the video, we highlighted the main sections that need to be included in a CV. Some examples are given below.

- Education section: highlight average grades, scholarships or awards obtained, other evidence of academic ability
- Membership of professional associations: shows motivation to build networks and have industrial connections
- Referees: include details of their role, organisation and contact information (eg. former managers or team leaders who have worked with you/understand you well and support you, or a senior member of the community/lecturer) – remember to obtain permission prior to including referee details

In the following activities, we will practice drafting the main sections on your CV.

To help you with this, see Appendix A at the back of this workbook where we have provided you with a CV template.

Create a summary of your last education experience. Please highlight in bullet form what you studied, what you majored in, what grades you achieved, and whether you won any awards.

Now, think about one recent job or voluntary experience you have had. Please highlight in bullet form the things you did in this role, the hard and soft skills gained, and your main achievements. Try and be specific.

Finally, when preparing your CV, you may wish to refer to the simple 'do' and 'don't' list below.

Do

- Follow the employer's process (if they have one)
- Keep your file name simple (e.g. Name – CV)
- Make your CV clear and easy to read
- Stick to a maximum of 3 pages
- Ensure consistent formatting (eg. font size and type)
- Be mindful of margins, headings etc.
- Include information in reverse chronological order
- Write in 1st person but omit personal pronouns

Don't include

- A photo
- Age
- Date of birth
- Religion
- Marital status/family details
- Graphics, images, colour (unless relevant to the role)
- False information
- Declaration

Addressing key selection criteria

In the video, we provided advice about how to address the key selection criteria. They are generally divided into essential and desirable.

Essential

The qualifications, experience, skills or knowledge you *must show you have* to be considered for the job.

Desirable

Used to help decide between candidates who meet all the Essential Criteria.

These can be a reflection of your skills and abilities.

Hard skills or technical skills are teachable abilities that can be measured. They might include a formal qualification, language proficiency, knowledge of a computer program, coding proficiency, or the ability to operate a machine.

Soft skills or transferable skills are less tangible and harder to measure. They might include communication, presentation, teamwork, adaptability, and problem-solving skills.

These skills are often referred to as being transferable as they are desirable within a variety of employment settings, and thus, can be transferred across these settings.

We reflect on these skills in Video 2.

Please list three hard and three soft skills that you have.

Hard skills

Soft skills

In the following activity, we will draft some responses to common key selection criteria.

In some instances, it is good practice to draw on a previous experience to highlight how you meet the key selection criteria.

A useful approach when presenting a previous experience is the STAR method.

Situation	What was the situation?
Tasks	What tasks were required of you in that situation?
Actions	What actions did you take?
Results	What was the result?



Tips and tricks to keep in mind

Address each selection criteria separately.

Remember to include your name, the job you have applied for and the job reference number if available

Using this approach will help you present a previous experience in a clear and concise manner. This will make your responses easier to read and will help you get to the point of what you are stating.

In the following table prepare a short answer (2 to 4 sentences) to the highlighted key selection criteria. Please provide concrete examples. An example has been given for you below.

Ability to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction in an environment with high work volume, strict deadlines and competing client priorities.

I often come across competing client priorities in my work. For example, most clients have deadlines and require advice regarding options and requirements within a certain timeframe so they can complete their tasks. In these instances, I have to make a well-informed decision regarding the priority of clients based on their deadlines and the importance of the procurement. In one instance, I had three clients with varying requests. To approach this, first I assessed which task was considered a higher priority than the others.

Once I made a determination regarding client priority, I informed all clients of my turnaround time, explained the delays and higher priority issues that may affect the timeliness of advice.

In this instance, all the clients received the advice they required within an adequate timeframe and I received praise for the assistance I provided.

Key selection criteria

Response

Possesses outstanding interpersonal and communication skills.

Shows ability to work under pressure, prioritise tasks, and meet deadlines.

Exhibits the ability to solve problems.

Shows resilience in the face of challenges.

Possesses ability to use technology and analyse data.

Possesses ability to work in a team and in a collaborative work environment.

Writing a cover letter

Your cover letter is the introduction to your application, stressing key points from CV and KSC statement.

In video 2, we explored how to draft a cover letter. In the following activities, we will draft three key sections of the cover letter.

Section 1: Introduce yourself and your interest in role/organisation.

Section 2: Discuss your fit for the role, based on skills and experiences

Section 3: Thank the organisation for considering your application and provide contact details. Note you look forward to hearing from them.

Think of a job you are interested in applying for.

Introduce yourself and your interest in the role and the organisation.

Highlight your fit for the role considering your skills and experience.

Thank the organisation for considering your application.

In Appendix B at the back of this workbook, we have provided you with two examples of cover letters. One is considered 'good' and one 'not so good'.

Please read these cover letters.



Tips and tricks to keep in mind

Use the cover letter to highlight how you are best suited for the job, your motivation to apply and why you want to work for that employer.

Remember to learn about the company!

Check for spelling mistakes and get someone to proofread your application.

In the section below, identify which cover letter you believe was the 'good' cover letter and which you believe was the 'not so good' cover letter, and why?

Good

Not so good

Video 3

Interviewing for jobs in regional areas

In the third video, we provided advice to prepare for job interviews with employers in regional Australia, examined the questions that employers may ask in job interviews, and provided tips on how to act during the interview process.

- 1 Review application, CV and cover letter. Be prepared for more in depth questions.
- 2 Research job and company, job description, mission/vision, community engagement.
- 3 Explain how and why you are a good fit, given your previous experience and future aspirations.

After watching the video, please undertake the following tasks.

Create a summary of your last education experience. Please highlight in bullet form what you studied, what you majored in, what grades you achieved, and whether you won any awards.

Now, think about one recent job or voluntary experience you have had. Please highlight in bullet form the things you did in this role, the hard and soft skills gained, and your main achievements. Try and be specific.

Assessing your motivation in applying for this role

The interview panel will likely ask a series of questions to ascertain your motivation for applying for the specific job at their organisation.

Please think carefully about why you are applying for this specific job at this organisation.

List three reasons why you are interested in this specific job.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

List three reasons why you want to work at this organisation.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

List three reasons why you are a good fit for this role and/or this organisation (in doing so please think about your previous experiences, hard and soft skills, and accomplishments).

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Assessing your motivation for applying for a job in a regional area

The interview panel may ask questions to ascertain your motivation for applying for a position in regional Australia. In video 3, we provided advice on how you might answer this question.

Note: don't discuss your visa category, be genuine in your reasons such as what is discussed in the video.

List three reasons why you are interested in working in a regional area more generally, and/or in this location more specifically.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Behavioural Interview Questions

During the interview process the interview panel will likely ask behavioural interview questions to ascertain how you think and deal with challenges at work.

Your answers to these questions will allow the interview panel to determine whether you will be suitable for a role in their organisation.

We previously looked at the STAR method in answering certain key selection criteria. This method is also useful to help you prepare to answer behavioural interview questions.

Situation

Describe the situation you were faced with

Task

Highlight what you had to do

Action

Highlight what you did

Result

Discuss the result of your action

In the table below, key behavioural questions that may be asked at interviews are presented. For each question prepare an answer using the STAR method.

Question	Situation	Task	Action	Result
Tell us about a time when you have faced a challenge at work.				
Tell us about a time when you have faced a stressful situation at work.				
Tell us about a time when you have had a disagreement with somebody at work.				
Give us an example of a time when you have had to assume leadership for a team.				
Give us an example of a time when you have had to work as a team. What challenges did you face and how did you overcome these?				
Tell us about a time you have failed or made a mistake at work.				
What is your biggest achievement in your career/life so far?				
Tell us about an innovative idea that you have had at work.				

At the end of the interview you will usually be given a chance to ask questions of your own. The types of questions you might ask could be about: the role and/or organisation, the culture and values of the workplace, and to clarify any uncertainty about the next steps in the recruitment process.

Please do not ask questions about salary, holidays, etc. This is not the appropriate forum for such questions.

List three questions you may want to ask at the end of an interview.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

After the Interview

When waiting for a response after the interview, it is important to stay relaxed.

While you wait, you may wish to:

Reflect on your performance.

- Stronger responses (what was good and why?)
- Weaker responses (what was weaker and why?)

Send a professional thank you email (this is a thank you email and not intended to follow up on the outcome of the interview).

If you are unsuccessful, it is always good to follow up and ask for some feedback.



Tips and tricks to keep in mind

- Check out the location early so you know where to go
- Aim to be at least 5–10 minutes early
- Report to reception upon arrival
- Introduce yourself and shake hands with everyone
- Consider the dress code
- Smile and maintain frequent eye contact-body language says a lot!
- Thank the panel and head person for asking you to attend an interview

In the section below, please draft a professional thank you email that you could send to an organisation after your interview.

Appendix A

CV example



Download your CV template

Click [here](#) to download the CV template Word document, then fill it out with your own details to create your CV.

Tayebie Abidie

Phone: 1421449300 • Email: tayebie@gmail.com • LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/tayebie-Abidiei-77b7b0270

Career profile

Focused and hard working psychology graduate. Committed to providing person-centred support and experienced in working with people who have complex needs. I am committed to providing a sensitive approach towards engaging with others and am eager to build a career as a clinical psychologist to assist and support members of the community to achieve their full potential.

Education

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY, Melbourne Bachelor of PSYCHOLOGY	March 2016–Nov 2019
Extracare Training, Box Hill Certificate IV in Ageing Support	March–May 2017

Professional experience

Research Assistant **November 2019–Current**
Deakin University, Burwood

- Researching, designing and writing a guide for students from a refugee background on how to access higher education in Australia.
- Managing and coordinating the launch of the guide in five states across Australia.
- Conducted research interviews with students as well as university staff working with the CALD student population.
- Research and gathering data on different pathways to access higher education.

Personal Care Assistant **February 2018–Current**
ABC Health, Elwood

- Maintain accurate records of resident care, condition, progress and concerns.
- Respond appropriately to the physical, emotional and developmental needs of residents.
- Help residents move in and out of beds, baths, wheelchairs and automobiles.
- Maintained a clean, healthy and safe environment for residents.

Personal Care Assistant **May 2017–Feb 2018**
Smith Health, Dandenong

- Cared for clients with diagnosis such as respiratory failure, Parkinson's disease and Muscular dystrophy.
- Answered client calls for care and feeding.
- Reported any unusual circumstances in patient's condition and environment.

Professional development

CPR/First Aid Certified Infection Control Certified Extracare Training, Box Hill	March–May 2017
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Appendix A

CV example

Volunteering

Salvation Army – Victoria

February 2017–May 2018

- Feeding the homeless program.
- Cooking and serving food every Tuesday night at various locations across Melbourne.

Awards and scholarships

Amelia Jones Graduate Award for best undergraduate thesis

2015

Bevan High School year 12 Dux

2016

Languages

English, Farsi, Urdu.

Referees

Available upon request.



Appendix B

Cover letters: example 1

Tayebie Abidie

203 Warren Street, Ballarat, VIC, 3350

Phone: 1234567890 Email: tayebie@email.com

6th March 2020

Dear Jennifer,

Re: Clinical Psychology Position at Ballarat Psychology Institute

I am a very driven professional with experience of working in aged care and higher education research. Recently, I learned of the clinical psychology position at the Ballarat Psychology Institute. I was not only self-motivated but also encouraged by a number of colleagues in the clinical psychology community to apply for this position. I believe that my professional background and record of accomplishment, working in the aged care and the homeless sector make me an ideal candidate for this role.

As a person who thrives in high-pressure and fast-paced situations, I have established a proven track-record of working collaboratively with numerous organisations for the benefit of the aged and vulnerable communities in Australia. Including but not limited ABC Health and Smith Health as well as at Deakin University as a research assistant.

Throughout my study, volunteering, and work placements, I have promoted and advocated for the rights of the aged and the homeless community and have a very strong commitment to ethical work practices but especially best practice clinical treatments for those who are often isolated. This has been demonstrated most recently in my role as nursing assistant at the ABC Health aged care unit. At the unit, we have many residents from non-English speaking backgrounds; hence, we are often unable to communicate with patients even for the most basic needs. I have now implemented a system where a family member is asked to write down the questions we need to regularly ask, ensuring patients are okay throughout the day, such as, how are you? Are you hungry? Do you need anything? We then produce a poster with the English translation alongside each phrase and position it on the wall in each room. This has resulted in less confusion for staff and substantially reduced the stress levels for the patients.

In addition, I am able to appreciate and successfully navigate the challenges associated with operating in a highly regulated environment. Especially since I am currently working in a research centre aligned with a publicly funded University, where all our research requires ethics approval and regular reporting.

As a final point, I have enclosed my CV for your review and very much appreciate your time and consideration of my candidacy for your new clinical psychologist position

Sincerely,

Tayebie Abidie.



Appendix B

Cover letters: example 2

Tayebie Abidie

203 Warren Street, Ballarat, VIC, 3350

Phone: 1234567890 Email: tayebie@email.co

Hi Jennifer,

I have seen that you are hiring a clinical psychologist at your institute. I think I would be really good at this job and can't wait to have an interview and talk it over.

I have many excellent skills and I work very hard. Many people have told me I would be great at this job. I believe that my professional background and record of accomplishment, working in the aged care and the homeless sector make me an ideal candidate for this role.

As a person who thrives in high-pressure and fast-paced situations, I have established a proven track-record of working collaboratively with numerous organisations for the benefit of the aged and vulnerable communities in Australia.

Throughout my study, volunteering, and work placements, I have promoted and advocated for the rights of the aged and the homeless community and have a very strong commitment to ethical work practices but especially best practice clinical treatments for those who are often isolated.

In addition, I am able to appreciate and successfully navigate the challenges associated with operating in a highly regulated environment. I even currently working in a research centre aligned with a publically funded University, where all our research requires ethics approval and regular reporting.

As a final point, I have enclosed my CV for your review.

Looking forward to hearing from you about the clinical pathologist position.

Cheers,

Tayebie Abidie.



deakincreate.org.au

Deakin University CRICOS Provider Code: 00113B



Appendix A

CV template

Phone:

Email:

LinkedIn:

Career profile

Education

Professional experience

Professional development



Appendix A

CV template

Volunteering

Awards and scholarships

Languages

Referees

Available upon request.