

VPG

Work Experience 2025

Cairns State High School

Facilitated by VPG



Student Highlights

Laila, All At Once Consulting

Laila was in her element during her placement at All At Once Consulting. From the very first day, she showed initiative, confidence, and a natural ability to connect with others, quickly finding her place in the team. Her week was varied and gave her insight into several aspects of the business. She took on reception duties, supported finance tasks and end-of-financial-year administration, and sat in on client sessions with NDIS participants. Laila described the opportunity to interact with participants as the most meaningful part of her placement, giving her a better understanding of the support services sector and the importance of professionalism when working with people. The experience highlighted the value of communication, teamwork, and adaptability, leaving Laila with practical skills and a clearer sense of how professional workplaces operate.

Her host employer summed it up best: "Over the course of her placement, Laila demonstrated curiosity, initiative, and a strong willingness to learn - traits that reflect the value of early exposure to professional environments. It was a pleasure to see her grow in confidence and capability as she engaged with real-world tasks and team collaboration."

Will, People Oriented Design

Year 10 student Will had a standout moment during his placement at People Oriented Design when he stepped into the designer's seat for a mock client workshop. He led the discussion with confidence and presented his own design ideas for a real project - an impressive effort for his age and experience. Over the course of the week, Will explored multiple facets of the architecture and design process. He learned how to interpret client needs, consider planning and code requirements, and understand the realities of project timeframes. He also gained an appreciation for how sustainability, functionality, and creativity intersect in real-world projects. The placement gave Will valuable insight into the profession, strengthened his communication skills, and confirmed his keen interest in architecture and design, while opening his eyes to the broad range of career pathways in the industry.



Program Impact at a glance



203

Students participated



173

Employer Champions hosted students



97%

Students Received Excellent Feedback Overall



92%

Students Showed Excellent Industry Interest



TOP 3 INDUSTRIES

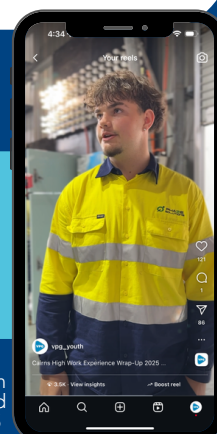
- Education 1
- Health Services 2
- Retail 3



46

Vocations explored

Click to hear what the students had to say about the program



*Feedback based on 39 evaluations received as at 29 August 2025

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Thurston, Bullsniips

Thurston's week at Bullsniips gave him a close-up look at the art of barbering. Guided by owner and lead barber Nick, he learned about clippers, watched cuts in action, and had techniques explained step by step. He quickly built his people skills, fitting in with the team and enjoying the chance to connect with customers. A highlight was knowing his dad would come in later in the week as a volunteer for Thurston's first supervised cut, with Nick mentoring him through the process. The placement gave Thurston a real sense of what barbering involves and the confidence to see it as a genuine trade option for the future.



Jaine, QLD X-Ray

At Queensland X-Ray, Jaine immersed herself in the field of medical imaging, observing X-rays, CTs, MRIs, ultrasounds, EOS scans, and mammograms while learning the processes that support patient care. Asking questions and picking up industry terminology helped her build confidence and broaden her understanding. A highlight was observing nuclear medicine and PET scanning, giving her a glimpse into advanced imaging techniques and reinforcing her ambition to pursue a career in medical imaging.



Kyle, Phaze Solutions

On site with Phaze Solutions, Kyle discovered what it takes to work as an electrician. Mentored by team leader Kevin, he gained hands-on experience wiring lights, running supply cables, and following workplace health and safety procedures across commercial sites. Time in the workshop added another layer, where he worked with subducting, corrugated wire protection, and basic wiring. The week gave him practical skills and a clearer understanding of the trade. Inspired by the experience, Kyle is considering a career as an electrician, with the possibility of combining it with his interest in the defence force.



Saskia, Double Tree Hilton

Saskia's placement at DoubleTree by Hilton gave her a firsthand look at the pace of a large commercial kitchen and dining floor. She supported the team with breakfast service, food preparation, clearing tables, staff meals, and pastry preparation. With prior hospitality experience, Saskia said the placement pushed her skills further and built her confidence in communication, organisation, and working under pressure. Interested in careers from hospitality to policing and forensic investigation, she knows these skills will support her wherever she goes.



Employer Feedback

“Byron was the best school work experience person that we have had to date.
~Koru Construction

“Rana was an absolute pleasure to have at the clinic. She was very quick to learn tasks, well-liked by everyone, and delivered high-quality customer service to our patients. Well done Rana, and thank you.
~Cairns GP Superclinic

“I was so impressed with Beth's efforts. Such a positive attitude and a lovely bubbly-spirited girl. She fit right in and got along very well with the other breakfast staff as well.
~Crystalbrook Collection

“Ari was really responsive to the kids and used great initiative to see students needing assistance. Without teacher direction, he would move and sit with those kids for support. He was keen to learn anything that was said and joined in games at lunchtime. He was a really positive presence and has the makings of a great teacher.
~Machans Beach SS

“Skye was an absolute pleasure to host. Eager to learn, showed interest, and is very knowledgeable in IT.
~Orchard Business Technologies

“Amelia was wonderful to have here at the centre. The children were drawn to her, and she displayed great communication and relationships with all the children. We would happily welcome Amelia back.
~Balaclava Children's Centre

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Malin, Department of Primary Industries

Keen to explore science, Malin joined the Department of Primary Industries, rotating through fisheries, the lab, biosecurity, and the Crazy Ant project team. She observed scientific processes and fieldwork, from preparing fish samples and identifying species to using an underwater drone to survey shells for invasive species. Highlights in both lab and field gave her a clear sense of how research supports environmental management. Malin is still exploring her path, balancing curiosity for science with creative interests like teaching, film, and music.



Oliver, HKS Russell

Oliver, keen on finance and entrepreneurship, gained hands-on insight into how these fields intersect at HKS Russell. At his own desk in a welcoming office, he learned tax processes, client interactions, and compiling basic returns, while becoming familiar with office systems and ATO requirements. Observing client interactions firsthand and asking questions under his host's guidance gave him practical understanding and confidence. The placement strengthened both his knowledge of finance and his sense of professional operations.



Talha, Specsavers

Talha is curious about careers in the medical field, and his work experience at Specsavers gave him insight into optometry. He observed optometrists assessing eye health and using technology, including an OCT scanner for detailed eye imaging. He also gained practical experience with dispensers, consulting with customers, adjusting frames, and packing lenses. The placement built his confidence and people skills while exposing him to a part of the medical field he hadn't previously considered. Optometry is now among the career options Talha is exploring in health care.



Saoirse, VPG

Saoirse, interested in journalism, teamed up with VPG's Communications Officer to gain experience in storytelling, media engagement, and reporting. She visited her peers on placement, conducted interviews, and took notes, learning to capture key information and turn it into a story. She developed skills in structuring content for an audience and discovered the value of curiosity and asking the right questions. As her first workplace experience, it also gave her the chance to build foundational workplace skills in a supportive environment, practicing professional communication and understanding workplace expectations.



Employer Feedback

“Payton had a busy week and took on any task handed to her. She showed initiative and produced high-quality output in any job given.”
~ St Andrew's CC

“Hans was a pleasure to have working with us. He is respectful, courteous, genuinely interested, and has great work ethic.”
~ Maxa Construction

“Sienna was a pleasure to host. She was willing to undertake any task and showed a positive disposition at all times. Sienna was well accepted by the children, families, and educators at the kindergarten. She would be an asset to any future employer.”
~ C&K Bayview Heights Community Kindy

“Tara has been a pleasure to have in our clinic. She has been a valuable asset to the therapeutic process.”
~ Klever Kiddies OT

“Charli should be proud. It's not easy stepping out of your comfort zone. You did well. All the best.”
~ Good Start Early Learning Brinsmead

“Amy showed genuine interest in the career. She asked lots of questions and was confident and polite at all times.”
~ I_Med Radiology

“Jomarie was a pleasure to have in our clinic, and we all wish him the best moving forward.”
~ Royal Rehab