

What is the Big Picture Education Graduation Portfolio?

The Graduation Portfolio is a tool for capturing the extensive learning of students in Big Picture schools around Australia.

It is a compilation of a student's work from Years 9 through to 12, that demonstrates their capacity to explore, research and develop as a learner in their fields of personal interest.

The portfolio is a rich, tangible record of the rigorous, enquiry-based, real-world learning that typifies a Big Picture student. The portfolio can be used by all students graduating from Big Picture campuses to pursue employment, vocational education or university entry. It can also facilitate support for entrepreneurial ventures.



What's different about Big Picture students?

passion

In Big Picture schools, learning is highly personalised and based on students' passions.



Students work on a variety of projects in areas of personal interest that they have initiated and designed.



They also complete authentic projects while on internship with an expert mentor in the community.



Students collect evidence of their learning in a portfolio and regularly present their work at a public exhibition. This is the basis of their assessment throughout school.



The Graduation Portfolio allows young people to showcase their skills and deep knowledge in an area of passion to prospective employers, colleges and universities.

What's in a Graduation Portfolio?

Key components can include:

- **A Senior Thesis Project** In-depth, original research into a topic of personal interest
- **An Autobiography** A literary reflection on one's evolution as a learner
- **A Collaborative Service Learning Project** Development of community engagement and social reasoning skills
- **Learning Through Internship Projects** Experiences and products produced while on internship with an expert mentor
- **A Post-School Project** An exploration of future study and employment pathways
- **A series of Learning Plans and Exhibitions** Evidence of planned learning goals and their achievement
- **A collection of additional qualifications gained while at school** Including State-accredited and TAFE courses, apprenticeships etc.



"Big Picture students are uncommonly well prepared for life after school – they are already researchers and independent learners with real world experience. What's more, they have tested their passion for an area of work or study and know it's what they want to do."

Viv White AM,
CEO Big Picture Education
Australia



Does the Graduation Portfolio facilitate entry to university?

The Graduation Portfolio is a new parallel pathway to tertiary education for students of Big Picture schools around Australia. While the concept of using a portfolio to gain entrance to university is not new, the Big Picture Graduation Portfolio differs in that it is a national, standards-based process that has been negotiated individually with universities around Australia.

What standard does it meet?

The Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) is used at present to assess the Graduation Portfolio, with students seeking university entry required to achieve at Level 5. BPEA is currently working with The University of Melbourne's Assessment Research Centre to pioneer a micro-credentialing system for its graduates that will standardise and recognise the unique capabilities of a Big Picture graduate.

This system will be ratified by the University of Melbourne and students will exit secondary education with a unique Learner Profile that will provide prospective employers and university admissions officers with a useful summary of a student's strengths, interests, aptitudes and achievements.

Do students need an ATAR?

Big Picture students do not require an ATAR under this scheme. The components of the Graduation Portfolio can be tailored to meet the entry requirements of participating universities or other educational institutions.



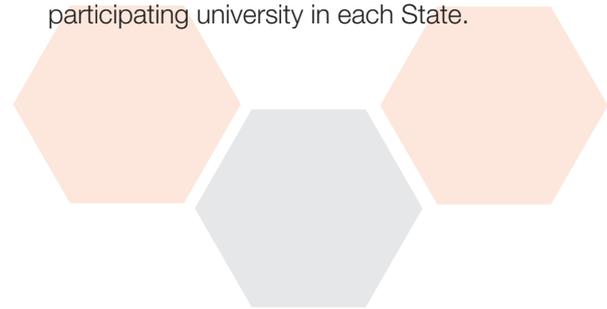
"These students have completed a portfolio where they've had to really find their passion, build a repertoire of information about their skills and present it. In university terms, that's a high level research project."

Professor John Fischetti,
Head of School
School of Education
University of Newcastle

Which universities are involved?

- Australian National University
- Charles Sturt University
- Flinders University
- Murdoch University
- Southern Cross University
- Victoria University
- University of Canberra
- University of Newcastle
- University of New England
- University of Tasmania
- University of Wollongong
- Western Sydney University

Negotiations are underway with University of NSW, University of Technology, Sydney, James Cook University, Swinburne University of Technology and La Trobe University at time of publication and other universities may follow. The goal is to have at least one participating university in each State.



Case study: Hamish



In Year 10, Hamish, a gifted athlete at Hunter Sports High School, found that he had a passion for business and the law. He could envision a career as an executive in a large sporting organisation. He began an internship with a local law firm, enrolled in legal studies courses at school and completed a course in globalisation and international management at the University of Newcastle.

While researching the Australian legal system in depth from criminal to consumer law, he enlisted the Head of Law School at the University of Newcastle as a mentor to help shape his studies. In 2017 Hamish successfully gained entry to a Business / Law degree at the University of Newcastle.



"It really allows our son to show what his skills are, it's not just some standardised test on one particular day. He can actually show what he can do and give a real picture of what he's like as a student."

David
Hamish's father

