

School of Education

**Secondary Students' Career Development
Phenomenarratives**

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Doctor of Philosophy
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Declaration

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgment has been made.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

The research presented and reported in this thesis was conducted in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) – updated March 2014. The proposed research study received human research ethics approval from the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (EC00262), Approval Number: HRE2017-0406.

Signature:

Date:09/09/2023.....

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Abstract

Technology and globalisation are changing the way we work. Our work-world is less predictable than was once thought and the knowledge, skills and mindsets that individuals need to be successful in their careers and work is also evolving. The career development process is complex and commences from a young age as children explore social roles, observe adults participating in work and engage in problem solving. Career-related learning experiences shape an individual's cognitive metasystem over time as they engage recursively with their socio-environmental setting. Career education and guidance can support the complex lived experiences of young people as they traverse their way through school culminating in their participation in senior secondary pathways aligned to their aspirations and goals. This study is a phenomenological narrative case study that explores the lived experiences of three young people through the creation of phenomenarratives. The research utilises a narrative co-reflection process as part of the personalised career guidance and pathway planning of the participants. A range of themes emerged from the student experiences that highlighted the importance of a system-wide approach to career education and guidance that embeds personalised and holistic learning experiences; connecting young people to authentic labour market networks to build self-awareness, work skills and confidence in their future direction.

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Glossary

This glossary includes a definition of abbreviated terms:

ATAR	Australian Tertiary Entrance Rank – The standardised measure of attainment provided to secondary students at the end of their schooling to provide an admission standard for entrance to higher education
SCSA	School Curriculum and Standards Authority – The Authority for educational standards and regulation in the state of Western Australia
TISC	Tertiary institutions Service Centre – The regulating body for university admissions in Western Australia
UWA	University of Western Australia

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Context and background

This thesis seeks to examine the lived experiences of young people as they transition through the senior secondary years of education. The 21st century economy is changing rapidly driven by globalisation, technological change and a shift towards a knowledge-based economy (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2015; Pryor & Bright, 2011; Trilling & Fadel, 2009). This rapid change is widening the skills and capabilities gap between secondary education and the future world of work (Hanover Research, 2011; Kay, 2010).

Furthermore, the transition pathways from school to work have become progressively more complex (The Foundation for Young Australians, 2018) and young people are increasingly subject to multiple demands in an information-enriched technological world. The pressures and demands on school students have caused a range of wellbeing and mental health issues (Shipley & Stubley, 2018). These issues have brought a renewed focus on current practices of how young people can be more effectively supported as they transition through and from school (Mann, Denis, Schleicher, et al., 2020). Longitudinal research studies have provided evidence of the positive impact of career-related learning and development activities in schools as a strategy to improve student experience and outcomes (Covacevich, Mann, Besa, Diaz, & Santos, 2021). These activities have provided evidence of an improvement in academic outcomes; improving the career readiness of students; developing their future social and economic prospects (Castellano, Sundell, Overman, & Aliaga, 2012; Holman, 2014; Hooley & Dodd, 2015; Jarvis, 2014) and improving their wellbeing and social-emotional learning skills (Yoder et al., 2020).

Career-related learning is an holistic education approach that centralised a personalised view of student development. It can prepare young people with the meta-awareness of self and skills needed to thrive in increasingly complex situations within a challenging world (Mann, Denis, & Percy, 2020). It can provide a protective factor for students as they aim toward economic independence in a world of accelerated change, technological enrichment, academic pressures, complex transitions and career uncertainty (Hughes & Carson, 2018; Sultana, 2018). While individuals begin to explore and shape their vocational identities from a young age (Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996) students in mid-adolescence start to develop the cognitive executive function skills, metacognitive and reflective processes needed for raising their awareness of the influences that shape their

identity (Burke & Stets, 2009; Westwell & Panizzon, 2011). The complexity of the process in developing understandings of work, career aspirations and vocational identity is highlighted through the complex interrelationships and interaction of systemic influences (Cournoyer & Lachance, 2019; Patton & McMahon, 2014). Despite the complexity of vocational identity formation and the evidence-base for positive outcomes there is inconsistency across secondary education systems in providing career-related learning and development experiences for students. This can impact on the support and opportunities that students receive to experience purposeful and meaningful learning to develop their vocational awareness and explore future aspirations. This can lead to inequity and students making decisions that are not in their best interests sometimes choosing unsuitable further education, training or work options post-school. The negative impacts are even more pronounced in students from lower socio-economic backgrounds compounding their disadvantage (Groves, Austin, O'Shea, & Lamanna, 2021).

This study aims to investigate students' perceptions of the career-related learning and development experiences that are shaping their journey through school. To understand the phenomena of experiencing career-related learning and development a narrative guidance approach was used as a way to elicit and make visible the processes that shape how an individual creates meaning and conceptual understandings of work, career development and vocation (Lengelle, Meijers, & Hughes, 2016; Meijers & Lengelle, 2012; Savickas, 2005) Narrative guidance is underpinned by a social constructionist approach that aims to co-construct data about individuals' experiences of phenomena (Schultheiss & Wallace, 2012). Narrative approaches can provide deep and textured insights into the lived experiences and perceptions of people experiencing the phenomena (Lengelle et al., 2016). A conceptual framework was developed based on the literature to guide the research study. The framework was underpinned by cognitive epistemology, systems theory, vocational psychology; and, personal career guidance theory and practice.

The research design was influenced by the conceptual framework seeking to make visible the deep and textured experiences of students experiencing career-related learning and development. A fit for purpose qualitative design emerged that combined elements of phenomenology, narrative research and case study approaches. These approaches were synthesised to focus on understanding the students' contextualised, chronologically arranged lived experiences of the phenomena. Methodological techniques of re-transcription against the career development reflective framework and re-storying of the

data were utilised and research findings were presented as 'phenomenarratives'. The findings provided an exploratory evidence base of thematic commonalities of experience in secondary students' lived experiences of career-related learning and development. A content analysis was undertaken of the phenomenarratives to categorise any common emergent themes to inform discussion of the findings. The findings were then discussed in relation to the key literature in the field to identify insights. The insights provide a broad set of recommendations that may inform how secondary schools and career guidance practitioners on how to develop more effective school structures, pastoral support and career-related learning pedagogy to assist students in the process of positive vocational identity formation and transitions beyond school.

This chapter includes discussion of the research issue and objectives followed by an overview of the research methodology. Further to this, discussion on the significance and limitations of the study as well as ethical considerations are included. Finally, the organisation of the thesis is presented, including the chapter content.

1.2 Research objectives, aims and questions

The vision and motivation underpinning this study emerged from being immersed in a career education and guidance role within a secondary school context. My own professional journey commenced as an English teacher in 2005. I was fortunate enough to be mentored by a senior teacher who was engaged in the career education space and one of the first programs I created was for dual assessment of school curriculum and Vocational Education and Training competencies. The focus of this program was to prepare young people with functional literacy and employability skills to assist them to transition from school into work or apprenticeships. It was very rewarding to work with engaged students who could see relevance in their education as a way achieving their future aspirations. My interest in this area continued to develop and I was fortunate enough to be selected for a specialised role as a career practitioner and educator in 2011. I have undertaken significant professional development relating to this complex role and as part of my ongoing professional learning I conducted exploratory action research into how young people experienced career-related learning and guidance. This knowledge and understanding allowed me to focus on gaps in existing knowledge and practices. The challenges adolescents are facing while living through a period of accelerated change, technological enrichment, academic pressures, complex transitions and career uncertainty

is making the process of career-related learning and guidance more complex. The increased demands on school career practitioners of firstly: being forced to negotiate time for career-related learning due to weak policy positions and competing value propositions with other school activities; and, secondly, the increasing complexity of assisting students to develop a positive vocational identity, knowledge, capabilities and wellbeing strategies to transition successfully into the future world of work led me to seek a more nuanced understanding of how secondary students experience career development. This understanding may improve processes and practices to ensure students are being prepared more effectively for their futures. A significant number of students struggle to articulate their career aspirations; to actualise elements of their vocational identity; and often make decisions that are not in their best interests sometimes choosing unsuitable further education, training or apprenticeship options post-school.

This research was designed to investigate the lived experience of secondary students as they participated in the career-related learning experiences that shape their vocational identities and aspirations. It was designed to explore any common themes that may limit or support the career development of students. Research into career development theory and vocational guidance counselling produced the conceptual framework to elucidate understanding of the complex recursive relationship between the individual and their environment; the role of narrative guidance approaches to improve self-awareness and self-reflection; and, the career guidance practice elements used within the co-reflection framework. The conceptual frame offers an approach to make visible the processes of career development and vocational identity formation. This study was designed to investigate whether these approaches could successfully make visible the complex interactions and provide deeper insights into the lived experiences of students. The core objective of this research was to investigate students' perceptions of their lived experiences of career-related learning and make visible the experiences that shape students' career development and vocational identity formation as they transition through senior secondary schooling. The secondary objective was to provide a preliminary understanding of whether using a narrative approach with a co-reflection framework within the career guidance counselling process could improve guidance practice.

The core research questions is:

1. What are students' perceptions of the career-related learning experiences that shape their career development?

The secondary research question is:

2. What are students' perceptions of using a narrative co-reflection process as part of their individual guidance and pathway planning?

1.3 Research methodology

The epistemological perspective underpinning the research methodology is situated within a social constructionist paradigm. Social constructionism is a poststructuralist approach that seeks to challenge taken for granted ways of knowing to uncover common assumptions and biases, leading to new and diverse ways of describing and explaining the world and the people within it. It is defined by critical approaches to understanding knowledge, language and discourse; seeing knowledge as a relative product of culture and history, dependant on social processes of communication, conflict, negotiation and rhetoric for generating meaning and shared cultural understandings. This approach seeks to make visible the lived experiences of people who are uniquely embedded within a range of socio-cultural contexts to uncover new perspectives of knowledge and ways of knowing. To investigate the lived experiences of secondary school students as they encountered career-related learning experiences that shaped their vocational identities and career development a conceptual framework that combined elements of cognitive epistemology, systems theory approaches and vocational guidance psychology was created to capture rich and textured data. This conceptual framework anchored the co-reflection and meaning-making process through the design of instruments including field texts and interviews. The use of the qualitative instruments to capture data ensured this complex process was not diluted or over-simplified. The research design combined elements of phenomenology, narrative research and case study approaches to construct phenomenarratives. The research data collection strategy involved collaboration with the participants to organise and complete reflection journals, audio interviews and feedback questions over the course of the research study. The data collected from the instruments were re-transcribed and re-storied into phenomenarratives used to make visible the many factors that shape a young person's understanding of work, careers and vocation. The findings were analysed for themes and commonalities of perceptions to provide insights into the experience of young people. These themes were then discussed more broadly in relation to the career-related learning and development literature.

1.4 Significance of the study

The study is significant as it provides a new perspective on the career-related learning and development experiences of secondary students. The methodological approach provided new insights through the development of a conceptual framework that guided the co-reflection and analytical procedures; making visible the career learning and development experiences of the young people participating in the study. The deeply contextual findings from this research can offer new ways of understanding adolescent career-related learning and development experiences during secondary schooling.

1.5 Limitations of the study

This study was designed as an in-depth investigation into three participants' perceptions of their career-related learning experiences and how they contribute to the shaping of the participants' career development journey. The conceptual framework and setting are highly contextualised to the individual cases and context. Furthermore, the nature of this study emphasised the importance of the researcher and participants establishing a strong relationship as part of the co-reflection process. The researcher could not be considered as an unbiased observer within this study and the relationship with the participants may have influenced the data collection and analysis. The findings of this study were never meant to be generalisable at a system-level but aimed at providing an exploratory evidence-base for further investigations and research designs.

1.6 Ethical considerations

There were ethical considerations relating to the research context and positionality of the researcher within this study. However, ethical decisions were made to ensure research standards around informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation and no potential for harm of participants were maintained. All participants and families were made fully aware via detailed information around the depth and nature of this study and the positionality of the researcher in a dual role as a professional and researcher. To avoid any inequitable power relationships the research study was introduced by the school leadership team, and it was highlighted to students and parents that participation in the study was voluntary and non-participation would have no negative consequences. There was no possibility of harm to the participants during this study with the activities they participated in accepted as part of school practice; or observing of natural school practice.

The confidentiality of the research data was maintained during the study. All references to names of students or teachers by the participants were also removed from data sets; however, participants were made aware that total anonymity could not be guaranteed and there was potential for investigative re-identification based on information within the public domain. There were no concerns of deception as the participants and their guardians were well-informed about the nature of the research.

1.7 Organisation of the thesis

1.7.1 Chapter one: introduction

This chapter includes a contextual overview and background of the study. It discusses the research objectives, aims and questions. A brief introduction to the research methodology and the significance and limitations of the study including ethical considerations is also discussed. Finally an overview of the organisation of the thesis chapters is introduced.

1.7.2 Chapter two: literature review

This chapter provides an overview of the pertinent literature to this study. It discusses the factors and influences that shape the modern world of work and provides a definition of career development. It also examines how the theories underpinning career-related learning and development have evolved through the significant changes in the world of work. The chapter then explores the elements of career-related learning including developing new work mindsets, transferable skills and career management skills for individuals to thrive in a world experiencing profound technological, social demographic and global change. It investigates the theoretical foundations of developing a vocational cognitive network through a cognitive-epistemological perspective on career-related learning and the systems of influence that impact vocational identity and aspiration formation, before discussing how work impacts personal wellbeing. The literature review then turns its attention to the process of career-related learning and development from a young age through to adolescence. This is followed by an overview of how school systems engage in the career-related learning and development process to prepare young people for their futures including providing career information, education and vocational guidance counselling. The practice of personalised vocational guidance counselling is then explored through discussion of broad elements of personal background, career planning and goals, influences on career development, career-related interest formation, career-related learning and development activities and life transitions.

1.7.3 Chapter three: conceptual framework

This chapter builds on the literature review by developing a conceptual frame to answer the research question. The conceptual framework combines perspectives from cognitive epistemology and systems theory approaches to career development into a model to make visible the career development process. This model is further developed through narrative guidance theory and vocational guidance psychology to detail the co-reflection process and career development elements of the conceptual framework.

1.7.4 Chapter four: research methodology

This chapter outlines the social constructionist foundational paradigm that forms the basis for the research design. It then provides an overview of the research design through the discussion of approaches to qualitative research including phenomenology, narrative research and case studies before introducing a fit for purpose design of combining elements of these approaches into 'phenomenarratives'. It discusses the research context including the positionality of the researcher. The data collection process is discussed including the use of field texts, interviews and surveys before a consideration of the two phases of data analysis including the phenomenarrative construction phase and thematic content analysis phase as well as the ethical considerations of the study.

1.7.5 Chapter five: phase one findings

This chapter includes the three phenomenarratives from Phase One of the data analysis. This Phase combined the raw data sources through the re-transcription process using the co-reflection elements to anchor the students' perceptions. The re-transcriptions were then arranged chronologically and re-storied privileging student voice to create a cohesive representation of the students' perceptions of the experiences that shaped their career development journey throughout Year 10, Year 11, Year 12 and immediately post-school.

1.7.6 Chapter six: phase two findings

This chapter includes the second phase of the data analysis: the thematic content analysis. The emerging themes arising from the student perceptions that arose from the phenomenarrative are organised using the co-reflection elements. The analysis is divided into two parts: firstly, a thematic analysis of the phenomenarratives; and secondly, an analysis of the student feedback data.

1.7.7 Chapter seven: discussion and future focus

This chapter contains discussion on the findings of this research and how they connect to the literature base in relation to significance and contribution. Firstly, the emergent themes arising from the phenomenarratives and how they connect and are situated within the literature are discussed; followed by a discussion of the student survey themes.

1.7.8 Chapter eight: conclusion

This chapter contains a summation of the research study including its contribution to the wider field, limitations and also a personal reflection by the researcher.

1.8 Summary

This introduction chapter provided the context and background for the study before outlining the research objectives and questions exploring students' perceptions of experiencing career learning and development and using a narrative co-reflection process as part of their individual guidance and pathway planning. It discussed the research methodology as a 'fit for purpose' design that combined elements of the methodological approaches of phenomenology, narrative research and case studies into a phenomenarrative research study. It provided commentary on the significance and limitations of the study as well as the ethical considerations before providing an overview of the chapter organisation and definition of the key terms.

Chapter Two presents an analysis of the literature to provide an overview of the key knowledge and understanding of career development and future work trends, career management skills, theoretical perspectives on learning and contextual systems, formation of a vocational identity, work and wellbeing, career development and young people and career development in schools. This overview situates the reader in understanding how young people engage with and perceive the career-related learning experiences that shape their career development. Further to this, an overview of personalised career guidance in practice is included to orient the reader to elements of theory that underpin the narrative co-reflection process that was used in the study as part of the participants' individual guidance and pathway planning.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a theoretical and practical overview of the concepts needed to provide context for answering the research question seeking to understand students' perceptions of the career-related learning experiences that shape their career development. It does this by providing an overview of the factors and influences that shape the modern world of work. It defines the term career development and how the theories underpinning career-related learning and development have evolved through the significant changes in the world of work. It then explores the importance of developing new work mindsets, transferable skills and career management skills for individuals to thrive in a world experiencing profound technological, social demographic and global change. It investigates the theoretical foundations of developing a vocational cognitive network through a cognitive-epistemological perspective on career-related learning and the systems of influence that impact vocational identity and aspiration formation, before discussing how work impacts personal wellbeing. The literature review then turns its attention to the process of career-related learning and development from a young age through to adolescence. This is followed by an overview of how school systems engage in the career-related learning and development process to prepare young people for their futures including providing career information, education and personal vocational guidance. The practice of personalised vocational guidance is then explored through discussion of broad elements of personal background, career planning and goals, influences on career development, career-related interest formation, career development activities and career and life transitions. This contextualises and provides understanding for the reader on individual guidance and pathway planning and provide a basis for the conceptual framework discussed in Chapter 3.

2.2 The world of work

2.2.1 Historical and political context

Work has been defined as a combination of action and purpose designed to produce goods or services that are useful for the worker or others. It normally has four elements including (1) effort from the worker(s) in converting physical or mental energy into productive activity; (2) the means to do so including the needed tools and/or resources; (3) the object of focus that is processed through either change of state or movement; and, (4)

the result of the worker(s) efforts often referred to as the 'product'. Ultimately all human production of labour has two resources: nature and human labour. While the purpose behind work may vary the value of this work was quickly realised by human society and value systems attached to work arose (Hofmeester & van der Linden, 2018). Work was divided within communities or traded for products of others' efforts. The earliest examples of wage payments for the completion of work were recorded in Mesopotamia 5000 BCE with wages paid in other products of value such as food and shelter. Labour markets emerged between 2000 – 1000 BCE, and with the invention of coins and monetisation in 600BCE, wage labour spread quickly. In India, around 300 BCE, workers were distinguished as slaves, bonded, corvee, casual or permanent labourers who worked for piece or time wages. Monetised wage labour and markets have continued to exist over time but have been subject to the socio-political, geographical and cultural climate they exist in (Lucassen, 2018).

Modern wage labour relations and economic markets have transformed with changes to government policy, legal frameworks and worker rights, urbanisation, industrialisation, globalisation and technological advances (Lucassen, 2018). These changes have created a complex interplay of social, economic, political and cultural phenomena that have impacted and shaped discourse, responses and future planning. In particular, embedded within many advanced nations' political and social agendas are a range of values that impact the lived experiences of citizens. These are often reinforced through cultural institutional structures and social discourse becoming ontologically naturalised as part of the everyday experience of life and often remain uncontested (Hooley, Sultana, & Thomsen, 2018). These policy decisions have had both positive and negatives impacts on workers across the globe. Developed nations have seen an increase in basic and median wages over time but also an increase in unequal distribution of capital. The cost-of-living pressures in these countries and the erosion of some worker rights highlighting the precarious position of many workers to make ends meet (Hooley et al., 2018). Furthermore, workers in developing nations still suffer hardships and poor quality of life despite advances in other countries.

2.2.2 Labour markets

While social and political perspectives shape economic planning and responses; there remains objective data and trends within each jurisdiction based on the quantity and type of work available to citizens. This contextual and local arrangement of participation in labour has significant influence on the work opportunities and career development of

citizens. These differences are significant across the globe with much discrepancy between advanced and developing economies in the shape of labour markets and worker opportunities. In Australia, where this study takes place, labour market changes are highlighted through comparisons over time. In the 1970s, 25% of the labour market participation was within the manufacturing industry (C. Clark, Geer, & Underhill, 1996). While at the commencement of the 2020s manufacturing makes up only 8% of the current Australian workforce (National Careers Institute, 2022b). While understanding the Australian labour market landscape nationally is important, each State and local jurisdiction also has different arrangements of industry and opportunities for participation in work. Although nationally 3% of the Australian workforce participate in the mining industry, in the Western Australian labour market this figure increases to 8%. This means Western Australia employs more than 50% of the entire Australian workforce within the mining sector (National Careers Institute, 2022b). Understanding how the geographical and economic landscape is arranged within local labour markets is significant in understanding the wage labour opportunities available for individuals. This impacts the career development process significantly. To engage in wage labour opportunities, individuals may need to make decisions around where to live including possible relocation and the types of employment conditions associated with different labour opportunities. These all have significant impacts on personal and family life as well as economic and financial goals. Further to this, digitalisation and globalisation also impact the type and location of work available.

2.2.3 COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated the digitalisation of work in many industries (PwC, 2020). In response to public health measures designed to inhibit community movement and interaction many technological services and tools that were once peripheral have now become ubiquitous in the world of work. This has transformed many established business processes and workflows out of necessity and accelerated much digital innovation (IBM Corporation, 2020). Online interaction and engagement has become normalised with working from home arrangements now considered normal in many industries that required full-time office attendance prior to the pandemic (McKinsey & Company, 2020). The use of these online engagement tools has also accelerated globalisation as it becomes easy to engage transnationally with experts and collaborators working on shared goals within their unique contexts. However, with this technological acceleration, it has further punctuated the uneven social equity with many disadvantaged

groups of people not able to access stable internet and often lacking computers and other resources (Roese, 2021). The world of work will continue to evolve and the shift toward greater engagement in technological work processes and global collaboration will impact on the range of career opportunities available to workers (Pew Research Center, 2021).

2.2.4 Future trends

The 21st century economy is changing rapidly driven by globalisation, technological change and a shift towards a knowledge-based economy (Pryor & Bright, 2011; Trilling & Fadel, 2009). The fourth industrial revolution is characterised by megatrends predicted to radically change the way we live, consume and work. These trends include: (1) digital disruption with the exponential growth in device connectivity, data volume and speed, 3D printing and machine learning (automation); (2) the shifting of population demographics with a focus on service industries; (3) platform economics that facilitate digital engagement by connecting large networks of people; and (4) shifting of employment trends in the labour market such as casualisation, multiple job roles, peer to peer employment, crowd-sourcing recruitment and more start-up and entrepreneurial activity (Berger & Frey, 2017; Chan, Voortman, & Rogers, 2018; Hajkowicz et al., 2016; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2015). There are predictions that many current job roles will disappear due to these trends and that new jobs not yet thought of will emerge (McCrindle, 2013; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2015). It is estimated, on average, that workers may have six different career foci over their lifetime and eighteen different job roles (Fell, 2022; Hall, 2019; Renton, 2022).

Some theorists have also speculated on different futures of work based on technological trends (Hooley, 2018). For example, a future such as a jobless society where technology continues to advance removing the quantity of jobs leading to technological unemployment has been proposed. Another future is one of harmonisation, where work is re-arranged to synchronise with technological advancements so human and technological labour combine. While a third future is business as usual; new jobs are endlessly created as others are lost and human labour adapts to new labour requirements (Peters and Means 2019). Implicit within these futures is a focus on the enduring relationship between education and labour and the way conceptions of work, labour and capital impact on our everyday ontological experiences; tightly woven into all aspects of our human experience (Hooley et al., 2018). Human capital education ideology is implicit in many global economic policies with the continued assumption of the capacity of formal education

institutions to continue to provide the human capital requirements demanded by technological change. Education is a central feature of most advanced economies' policies and directly impacts predictions around economic growth, employment and wages (Means, 2019). Discourses promoting digital skills, STEM and entrepreneurship education all arise from human capital education ideology as the solutions required to bridge the skills gap left by technological advancement. More radical perspectives on the future of work seek to question the dominant economic arrangements and hegemonic acceptance of the configuration of wage work and imagine a post-work future absent of waged-work that uses technological and knowledge capabilities to create the productive and distributive systems needed for equitable provision of basic goods and services as well as wide range of meaningful activities to support human flourishing and wellness (C. Arthur, 2019). These perspectives recognise the value of human labour but demonstrate that work and activities that sit outside of the traditional structures of wage labour for capital often provide enhanced opportunities for agency and a platform for the generation of human creativity, collaboration and positive community impact (Means, 2019).

While predictions around the future are inherently uncertain, these new realities of work mean that our work-world is less predictable than was once thought. With the new emphasis on disruption and change, the proposed knowledge and skills that individuals need to be successful in their careers and work is also changing. Combined with the expectation that individuals develop career management competencies (Miles Morgan, 2010) employers are now expecting workers with a lifelong learning mindset (Brassey, van Dam, & Coates, 2019) and a range of 'transferable skills' such as collaboration, creativity, complex problem solving and digital literacy alongside specific technical skills (Berger & Frey, 2017; Hanover Research, 2011; Kay, 2010; Lambert, 2017; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2006; Trilling & Fadel, 2009). While different countries have a range of different approaches to career and workforce development (Jarvis, 2014; OECD, 2004; Watts, Bezanson, & McCarthy, 2014) the onset of the fourth industrial revolution has provided a renewed impetus toward ensuring career development and lifelong guidance service systems are enhanced (Barnes, Brimrose, Brown, Kettunen, & Vuorinen, 2020; Munro, 2019; National Careers Institute, 2019; Sung & Freebody, 2017). These systems are integral in supporting existing workers and young people to develop career management capabilities to enhance decision-making and support transitions into new work opportunities or further education and training (Callan & Bowman, 2015; Musset & Kurekova, 2018). However, the feedback on the success of these systems is often

fragmented across sectors, multi-layered and includes short-term narrow metrics. A focus on how ecosystems of work, careers and employment can be transformed to be more effectively measured and administered to add support and value during the continuing complexity and unpredictability of economic changes has been recommended (Canadian Career Development Foundation, 2021). These recommendations include systemic approaches seeking to network all stakeholders across sectors through cooperation and coordination while still allowing local adaptations, oriented toward the individual user. Moreover, a focus on cohesive sets of evidence-based metrics across all sectors that include robust qualitative as well as quantitative measures together with multivariate analysis on influences shaping macro-level economics and the impacts of career guidance interventions over the longer term (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2022).

2.3 Career-related learning and development

2.3.1 Defining the term ‘career’

The term ‘career’ has evolved over time. Traditional definitions have used terms of career, occupation and vocation interchangeably with a focus on professional working life and advancement (McDaniels & Gysbers, 1992). However, there was a broadening of the understanding of career by Donald Super who proposed career to be a sequence of pre-occupational, occupational and post-occupational major life positions and work-related roles including student, employee, and retiree, together with vocational, familial and civil roles (Super, 1976). The ‘developmental’ and ‘lifelong’ aspects of careers have since become embedded in contemporary understanding. Gysbers (2008) defines career development as “self-development over a person’s life span through the integration of the roles, settings and events in a person’s life” (p.118). The Career Industry Council of Australia describes career as “the process of managing life, learning, work, leisure, and transitions across the lifespan in order to move towards a personally determined future” (Career Industry Council of Australia, 2019). These definitions broaden the traditional understanding of career beyond simply a sequence of jobs towards a holistic and lifelong process of participating in learning experiences that develop oneself in order to make progress towards personal, social and economic goals.

2.3.2 What has changed

Career development was once characterised as structured, linear and stable. Jobs were viewed as plentiful, life-tenured and expectations of full-time employment were the norm. Decisions about work were made without reference to other life areas or thoughts around personal progress or satisfaction (Miles Morgan, 2010). This stability allowed career guidance professionals to emphasise certainty and provide clients with routine and ubiquitous career advice with definite outcomes. This approach has become outdated as the speed of technological and global change has created uncertainty and unpredictability in the world of careers and work (Pryor & Bright, 2011). The traditional notion that career development is predictable, follows a neat trajectory that emphasises certainty and control is antiquated. Recent theory characterises career development as inherently uncertain, unpredictable and messy in which unplanned personal, social and economic events outside of our control can impact on our careers both positively and negatively (Mitchell, Levin, & Krumboltz, 1999; Pryor & Bright, 2011; Savickas, 2005). These chance events could range from personal relationship breakdowns, health or financial related issues impacting on an individual's focus and ability to work. They may also include social and community networking events that facilitate random conversations with others that provide opportunities for new work (Pryor & Bright, 2011).

Careers have now been proposed to be protean, boundaryless, hybrid and kaleidoscopic (Briscoe & Hall, 2005; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Protean career development places the individual at the centre of the career development experience so that the career is self-directed and driven by an individual's values. This person-centred goal-driven approach defines career success as psychological rather than through external metrics such as rank, pay or power (Briscoe & Hall, 2005). Boundaryless careers describe the forms of physical and psychological mobility of workers that exists in a digitised, globalised economic climate and the extension of connections beyond traditional insular and localised roles. This places greater emphasis on collaboration and on the individual to network and connect with others. Hybrid careers are characterised by the combination of traditional concepts such as: hierarchical management; clear promotion paths, longevity and security of work roles; a narrow definition of success; and, set retirement dates with protean and boundaryless concepts such as: distributed leadership; value of diversity of viewpoints; fluidity between set work roles; training that can be used for multiple roles within or beyond the organisation; the value of open, trusting and respectful work environments; and, the

importance of wellbeing (Boyd & Spurgeon, 2014; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Kaleidoscopic careers describe how individuals may arrange their relationships and roles in new ways to create infinite patterns based on the three motivational drivers of 'authenticity': being true to oneself; 'balance': striving for equilibrium between work and non-work demands; and, 'challenge': the need for stimulating work and career advancement. These parameters operate over the lifespan but shift in response to an individual's context by intensifying in the foreground or receding to the background depending on an individuals' life circumstances and goals (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009).

While the emergence of these new conceptions of protean, boundaryless, hybrid and kaleidoscopic careers highlight the increasing turbulence and changes to what is valued in the labour market they also provide insights into embedded neoliberal values; in particular, the 'responsibilisation' of the individual subject for wealth production and their own career success (Hooley et al., 2018). Often framing opportunities for wealth production as equal and based on freedom of choice rather than influenced by structural factors. Failure is often attributed to the individual rather than the opportunity structures available to citizens with negative connotations around welfare embedded within social and cultural discourse. Citizens are often marginalised and blamed for their work ethic rather than attributing their experiences as a derivative of their opportunity structure. Opportunity structures are formed through the interplay of social, cultural and economic factors including family background, education opportunities, labour market processes and employers' recruitment practices (Roberts, 2009). Other determinants such as place, gender and ethnicity can be added to the web of determinants that may impact individual success. The push and pull factors shape the pathways available to access particular learning and work opportunities. Push factors are mainly personal and socio-cultural including family background, values and expectations as well as interests and strengths; whereas, pull factors are economic, often shaped by geography that include the value placed on particular qualifications, experience, skills and knowledge by employers and the labour market (Roberts, 2009).

While market forces often influence the pull factors, government policy based on human capital theory have also impacted the opportunity structure. Often these policies seek to stimulate economic growth through increasing the level of human capital in society. Human capital has been defined as the qualifications, experience, skills and knowledge of people that can be utilised to engage in the world of work and generate economic output. These policies often aim to increase the quantity and quality of education available within

the economy to achieve increased economic growth. Various reforms such as legislation regulating the length of time required to be spent in school education or to attain other qualifications are practical examples. While these policies have achieved success based on their intended goals, the side effects have been the erosion of value at the lower levels of educational attainment (Roberts, 2009). There has been an increase to the baseline expectations of types of qualifications, experience, skills and knowledge that workers need. This directly impacts the opportunities available for groups in society who would traditionally look to access non-skilled work and not stay in education. This has also reshaped the pathways and opportunities available to young people to achieve access to secure and stable work and longer term career success (Roberts, 2009). An example of this is in Australia where students who do not complete secondary education or those who only obtain a lower level certificate qualification are more than four times likely to be unemployed than those who obtain post-secondary education qualifications (Centre for Education and Training, 2023). With the increasing levels of qualifications, skills and knowledge needed there also needs to be an increased level of appropriate support for young people to achieve these new demands. More emphasis needs to be placed on assisting those students at risk to develop capabilities for individual success. Moreover, while more targeted programs can support young people at risk, an increase in support for all young people could have a positive impact. Students who are provided with learning experiences to become self-directed learners, develop career agency and readiness will not only improve their labour mobility but also develop strategies for managing their wellbeing through work and life balance. It is becoming increasingly more important that all workers are supported to engage in lifelong learning and career development through career development services at all ages.

2.3.3 Career development and guidance services

There are a range of different approaches to supporting the career development of citizens. However, the elements of an effective guidance system include: strategic leadership involving coordination and cooperation between stakeholders; sustained commitment to funding services and resources; equity in access to services; training and qualification standards for professional practitioners; a shared understanding by stakeholders of the guidance process, content and outcomes; ways of assuring the quality of services and information being provided; ways of assessing the impact of the services; utilisation of information technology to enhance the cohesion and effective functioning of

the system (European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network, 2015). Career development support services for all ages and stages have been recommended (Cedefop, ETF, & European Commission, 2019) to provide a trusted interface between the individual and the economy.

Furthermore, while it is of significance that all stakeholders have a shared understanding of the guidance process, content and outcomes it is increasingly evident that career development theory has been influenced significantly from a Western perspective and assumptions around the nature and value of career development may have been susceptible to mono-culturalist perspectives (Hooley, Sultana, & Thomsen, 2019).

2.3.4 Cross-cultural understanding of careers

The dominant theoretical traditions within career development have arisen from a Western social, cultural and economic context. These mainstream theories have often been framed as 'universal' and 'official' in nature despite having culturally-specific assumptions embedded within them (Ribeiro, 2020). These theories have been imported and reproduced in new contexts or introduced with some adaptation to local context; however, often lose efficacy in practice. This incongruity between theory and practice has been termed as 'localised globalism' (Santos, 2014). New approaches that prioritise intercultural dialogue that co-constructs theories in situ with a focus on relevance to the context they are designed for have been suggested. For example, cultural assumptions around individualism and freedom of choice are embedded at the centre of Western psychological mainstream theories; whereas, in practice these assumptions conflict with local culture in places like Asia and Africa where socioeconomic factors, religious values, and duties to the family restrict the centrality of these suppositions (Ribeiro, 2020). This not only has implications for understanding of how theories are exported to other geographical contexts but also for the diaspora within Western countries.

For example, migrants from East Asian countries like China, Japan and South Korea often have deeply embedded cultural mores based on Confucianism. These values prioritise a collectivist mindset with a focus on integration and reciprocity as proper moral conduct in social relationships (Yum, 1988). This means dominant social communication practices often see relationships as obligatory, long term, with interactions particular to context, and with a focus on mutual dependence and maintaining group harmony. In contrast Western

individualism and values often see relationships as voluntary, short-term, with universally accepted interactions, and with a focus on what the individual receives. There is also a contrast to the way intermediaries or social connectors facilitate relationship opportunities (Yum, 1988). These embedded socio-cultural practices have implications for a range of career development activities such as the way individuals seek and engage with work opportunities including networking and job interviews. Theories based on individualist values may not achieve the same efficacy for a range of disadvantaged or culturally diverse populations living within Western countries.

2.3.5 Moving forward

The fourth industrial revolution and the COVID-19 pandemic continue to impact on the economic landscape in different ways. The shift toward a knowledge-based economy has raised the threshold of skills demanded by the labour market. Further to this the shelf-life of skills is also becoming shorter requiring a need for continuous renewal and updating of workers' knowledge and skills to ensure productivity growth, effective reallocation of human capital and innovation. These ongoing structural adjustments are also creating a polarisation of knowledge "haves" and "have nots" with early indicators that the distribution of learning opportunities is uneven between advantaged and disadvantaged groups. This has become evident in limited learning opportunities being available to those from disadvantaged backgrounds with lesser education, qualifications, and work experiences compounding over a working-life and widening the gap (OECD, 2007).

This is also evident in response to the COVID-19 pandemic with advantaged economies having access to vaccines before developing ones. Despite these challenges, adopting a more comprehensive view that covers all purposeful learning activity from the cradle to the grave can create a more resilient and adaptive workforce. Features of a more comprehensive approach to lifelong learning include a systemic view that all learning opportunities are connected as part of an overarching holistic ecosystem; aiming for education policy and reform to promote cross-sectoral collaboration and shared vision rather than division and the creation of 'patches'. The value of formal, non-formal and informal learning should all be recognised and qualification systems need to evolve to: increase flexibility and responsiveness, motivate young people to learn by connecting education and work, facilitate open access and clear pathways of achievement, diversify

assessment practices, and improve practices of management, funding and transparency to increase efficiency (OECD, 2019).

While improving the learning ecosystem is important, a paradigm shift toward the learner at the centre of the process is also required. Traditional learning systems focus on the supply side, for example the institutional arrangements needed for education rather than the demand side: meeting the needs of the learner through the curation and personalisation of learning to the individual's context. The current approaches across the learning ecosystem can create barriers to some learning opportunities through complex funding and delivery requirements. Often learners face many competing priorities, demands and value propositions and are not supported to navigate and connect to learning opportunities that will advance their personal ambitions. The bias toward the needs of the educational institutions rather than the individual learners may also impact negatively on motivation to learn as content is often not relevant to the individual; leading to both active and quiet disengagement (Anderson, Hinz, & Matus, 2017). Rather than a focus on 'content', a new lifelong learning paradigm could map a scope and sequence of 'learning to learn' metacognitive skills that creates opportunities for citizens to develop learning agency. Learning agency could provide more independent, self-paced, self-directed, on-demand and personalised learning to take place. Furthermore, a recognition that multiple objectives of education can exist for individuals that include personal, knowledge, economic, social and cultural developmental ambitions and priorities (OECD, 2007). The shift toward a culture of lifelong learning could also focus on developing new learning and career mindsets aimed at creating social and cultural value as well as economic.

2.3.6 New career mindsets

Individuals experiencing career-related learning who focus on accepting and embracing complexity may be more open to perceiving potential opportunities and more adaptive in the management of their learning. There are important mindsets that individuals can develop to respond positively to change and uncertainty. Individuals who develop an understanding that change is a continual process and to expect it as part of everyday life are more open to learning; often acknowledging their own limits of control and the consistent challenge to adapt as an important process of their own growth (Pryor & Bright, 2011). Control and certainty are not guaranteed in a world of constant change; the future is

unpredictable and human plans are limited in their capacity to manipulate reality. Individuals who focus on being responsive to the unexpected; recognising that the world of work is not linear or fixed; who are willing to work through details and take small steps outside of their comfort zone; and who develop an open approach to connecting with other through extended networks can create potential learning opportunities and possibilities for innovation (Mitchell et al., 1999).

A mindset that facilitates responsive behaviours and engagement with apparently minor and 'chance' events can have a significant impact on creating novel career development and learning opportunities (Pryor & Bright, 2011). Individuals can also prepare to expect radical change and phase shifts in their lives and aim to build awareness of emerging patterns of meaning evident over time to become more reflective and strategic when planning actions (Pryor & Bright, 2011). These mindsets may promote open mindedness and an exploratory attitude to develop key qualities of curiosity, persistence, flexibility, optimism and risk-taking to create and transform unplanned events into opportunities for learning. Individuals with 'curiosity' demonstrate a willingness to explore new learning opportunities; 'persistent' individuals commit to exerting effort despite set-back; Individuals with 'flexibility' have the ability to change attitudes and circumstances; 'optimistic' people willingly view new opportunities as possible and attainable; and, 'risk-taking' individuals commit to taking action in the face of uncertain outcomes (Mitchell et al., 1999). These qualities are similar to the career adaptability attributes of concern, control, curiosity and confidence proposed by Savickas (2005). 'Concerned' individuals think about what their future may be like, realise that today's choices shape their future, prepare for the future, become aware of the career and educational requirements and plan how to achieve their goals; individuals in 'control' keep upbeat, are willing to make decisions individually, take responsibility for their actions, hold fast to beliefs, can rely on themselves and will do what is right for them; 'curious' individuals regularly explore their surroundings, look for ways to grow as a person, investigate options before making choices; and, 'confident' individuals perform tasks efficiently and take care to do things well, learn new skills, take steps to grow and achieve ability, overcome obstacles and solve problems (Busacca, 2007; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

The development of new lifelong learning and career development mindsets within citizens may prepare them more effectively to navigate the new work world and manage their careers in an increasingly uncertain world. As the world continues to change more stress

and pressure on individuals is likely to occur as they attempt to manage their lives and careers. Understanding and support to develop new ways of thinking is important to have healthy and productive citizens. These new mindsets have been embedded into a range of life, employability and career management skills frameworks. Developing, practising and improving life, employability and career management skills given the predictions around changes to work, careers and technology will be essential not only for individual livelihoods but also for economic prosperity (Jarvis, 2014).

2.3.7 Life, employability and career management skills

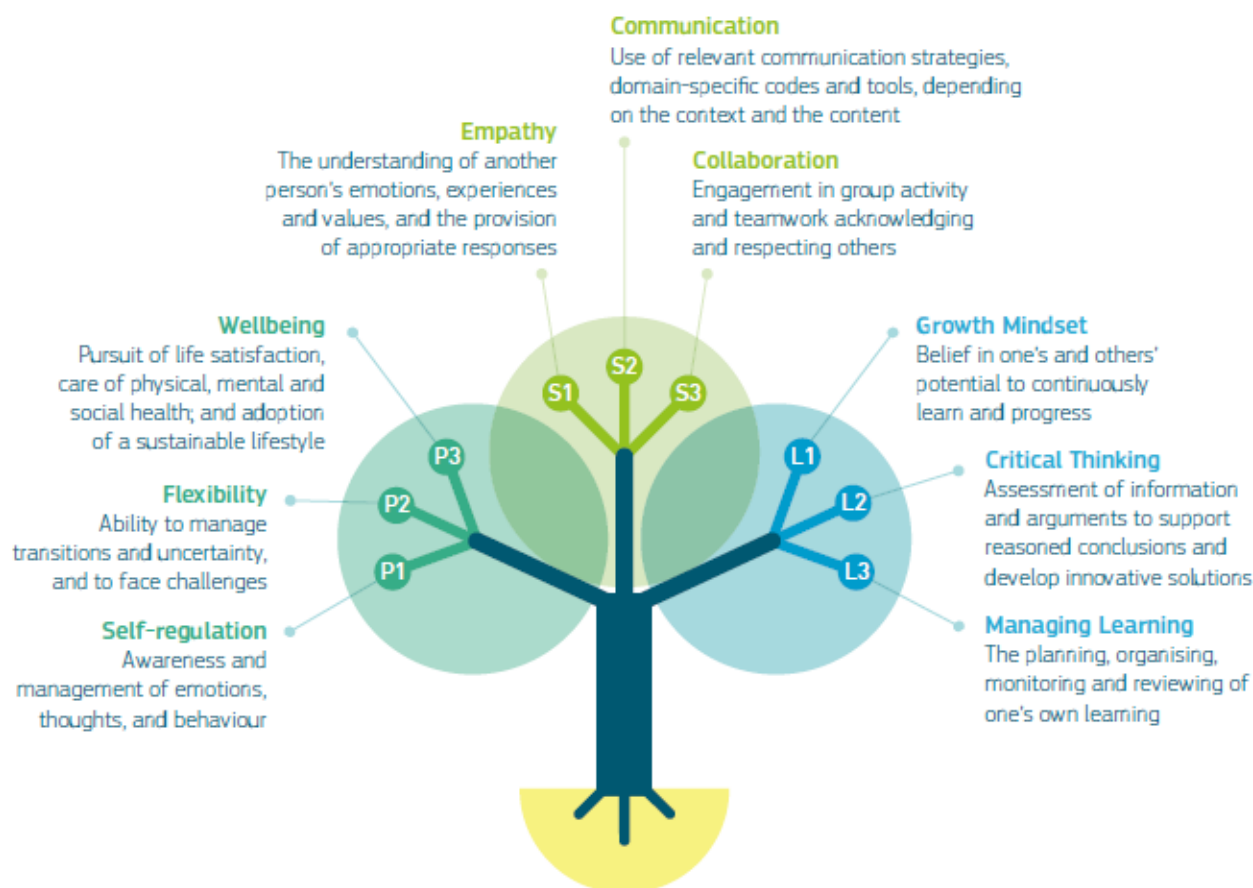
There are a range of developmental frameworks that seek to provide a taxonomy of the requisite skills needed to prepare for the challenges of an uncertain economic environment. The development of these frameworks provides opportunities to consider the value provided across learning systems within countries and whether there are options to reshape the opportunities available to citizens to develop key skills and capabilities.

Life skills.

The LifeComp framework in Figure 2.1 was designed to conceptualise the key competencies needed for lifelong learning through areas of personal, social, and learning to learn skills to guide education systems, students, and learners to develop key competencies needed to work, live and thrive in a changing world (Sala, Punie, Garkov, & Cabrera, 2020). The three focus areas are designed to empower individuals through the development of personal skills including: wellbeing, flexibility and self-regulation; social skills including communication, collaboration and empathy; and, learning skills including critical thinking, growth mindset and managing learning. While the development of these skills in all citizens will provide opportunities for individual agency this framework also indicates entrenched neoliberal perspectives of individual responsibility to navigate and respond to the economic headwinds around them in order to live a rewarding and satisfying life. For individuals unable to master these skills due to their opportunity structure and factors outside their control the future may be difficult to navigate.

Figure 2.1

European Lifecomp framework (Sala et al., 2020)

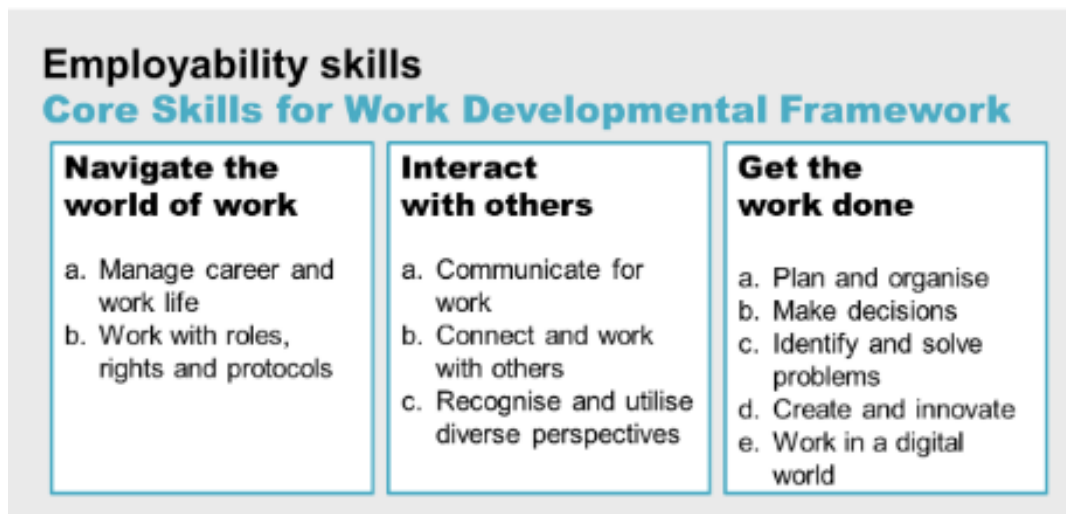


Employability Skills.

Two examples of employability frameworks include the Australian The Core Skills for Work Framework (Department of Education and Training, 2013) and the European Entrecomp framework (European Commission, 2022). These frameworks seek to provide a taxonomy of employability skills to improve opportunities for securing work. The Australian framework describes skills under headings 'Navigate the world of work', 'Interact with others', and, 'Get the work done' that provides a range of transferable skills need for success in work as seen in Figure 2.2. Embedded with in this framework are similar life skills such as communication, working with others as well as some cross over between empathy and diverse perspectives; critical thinking and making decisions and solving problems; and managing learning and managing career and work. This framework is specific to skills individuals need for employment. While still used extensively this framework pre-dates the pandemic and does not reference wellbeing or mental health at work that has grown in importance and significance post-pandemic.

Figure 2.2

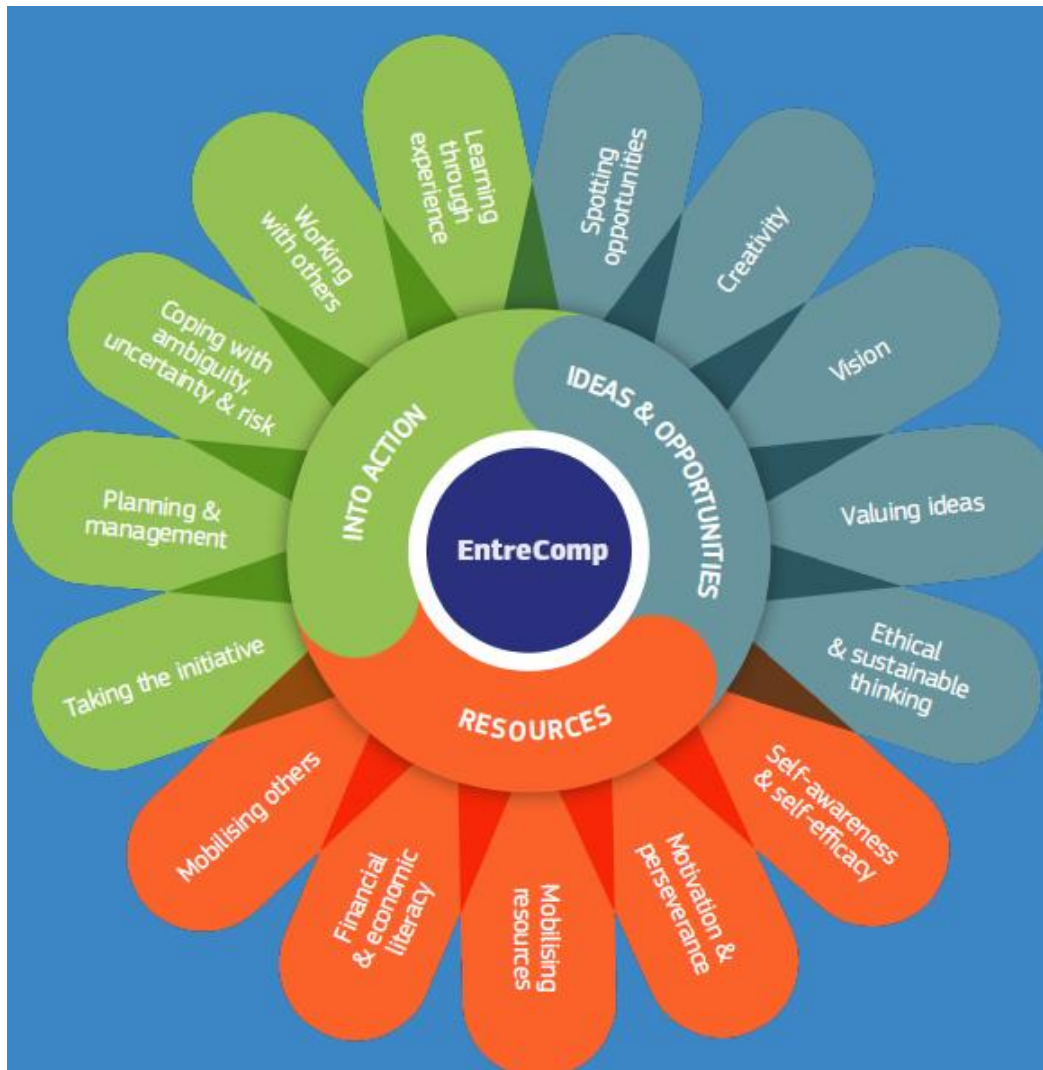
Australian core skills for work developmental framework (Department of Education and Training, 2013)



Further to transferable skills development the Entrecomp Framework focusses on the key enterprise skills needed to create opportunities for work described under headings of ‘Ideas and Opportunities’, ‘Resources’ and ‘Into action’ (European Commission, 2022) as seen in Figure 2.3. This framework does have reference to wellbeing skills including references to coping with ambiguity and uncertainty as well as perseverance. It also extends beyond individual skills to community engagement including mobilising others and mobilising resources. Both of these frameworks still maintain the neoliberal emphasis on the individual to learn employability and enterprise skills to respond to the economic situation created for them often through a combination of factors outside of their control including their opportunity structure and government policy decisions impacting the economy. Despite the entrenched neoliberal perspectives these frameworks offer clear developmental benchmarks that can enhance the opportunities for individuals to secure work and create economic value within society.

Figure 2.3

Entrecomp framework (European Commission, 2022)



Career Management Skills.

More specifically frameworks outlining Career Management Skills (CMS) have also been developed. CMS is the broad, overarching term used for a broad range of competencies, aptitudes, abilities and attitudes that help individual's manoeuvre within the socio-cultural and organisational contexts to exercise varying degrees of agency over the development of their careers. Similar to the other frameworks the emphasis is on the individual to respond to the economic conditions rather than to rely on changes in policy or government intervention despite policy decisions impacting the economic conditions that many find themselves in. These frameworks are designed to provide a resource on the type of career management skills the general labour force should be supported to develop.

To exercise agency an individual needs to consider the interrelationship of their knowledge, skills and aspirations with the potential opportunities that exist in the world around them. The development of these skills can help individuals influence their career development in personally advantageous ways and provide them with adaptive strategies and resilience in cases of unexpected change (Neary, Dodd, & Hooley, 2015).

Table 2.1 outlines the focus areas across the Australian, United Kingdom and European frameworks acknowledging further similarities in the Canadian and United States frameworks. These focus areas include: personal and social development; exploring and learning about careers and work; and, skills to navigate and engage with the labour market. (Career Development Institute, 2020; Kraatz, 2015; LEADER Project, 2016; Miles Morgan, 2010; National Careers Institute, 2022a). These skills also cross over with some of the life, employability and enterprise frameworks.

Research on the benefits of investing in career development services that support the development of these skills has proven to have a positive economic impact (Hooley & Dodd, 2015; Jarvis, 2014). However, further research is needed on the effective utilisation of these frameworks within specific contexts and the outcomes that they deliver. In particular, discussion around the appropriateness of the learning theory that underpins the frameworks and sequences of learning development have been raised (Hooley, Watts, Sultana, & Neary, 2013). These considerations have provided guidance for the recent refresh of the Australian framework clearly referencing Kolb's experiential learning theory and providing a clearer developmental sequence of phases (National Careers Institute, 2022a). Learning theory supported by evidence that underpins the development of these frameworks can have positive educational outcomes. Understanding how individuals experience learning and growth is important to ensure the design and facilitation of career-related learning experiences and interventions are effective in developing CMS.

Table 2.1

Comparison Of CMS Frameworks

Broad themes	Australia	United Kingdom	Europe
personal and social development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build and maintain a positive self concept • Interact positively and effectively with others • Change and grow throughout life • Manage wellbeing, mental and physical health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Self-determination • Self-improvement as a learner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal effectiveness • Managing relationships
Exploring and learning about careers and work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in lifelong learning supportive of career goals • Locate and effectively use career information • Understand the relationship between work, society and the economy • Understand the changing nature of life and work roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring careers and career development • Investigating work and working life • Understanding business and industry • Investigating jobs and labour market information (LMI) • Valuing equality, diversity and Inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the world

<p>Skills to navigate and engage with the labour market</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure/create and maintain work • Make career enhancing decisions • Maintain balanced life and work roles • Understand, engage in and manage the career building process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making the most of careers information, advice and guidance • Preparing for employability • Showing initiative and enterprise • Developing personal financial capability • Identifying choices and opportunities • Planning and deciding • Handling applications and interviews • Managing changes and transitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding and accessing work • Managing life and career
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As the world of work continues to change the focus on the development of transferable life, employability, enterprise and career management skills provide conceptual guidance to governments, educators employers and workers on what their citizens will need to take advantage of opportunities around them. More robust research on application of these frameworks in real contexts will provide further evidence and feedback on their efficacy (Hooley et al., 2013; Israel, 2022; Neary et al., 2015; Sala et al., 2020) As individuals develop their personal and social capabilities, explore and learn about the world of work and build skills to navigate and engage with the labour market it transforms their conceptual schema and mental networks through lifelong learning and cognitive growth.

2.3.8 A cognitive-epistemological view of learning

In seeking to understand how career-related learning and development takes place it is important to understand theoretical positions on learning. Discussion on the formation of a learner's conceptual networks and their systems of organising and categorising knowledge can provide additional context. An individual's conceptual metasystem develops through their experiences of recursive interactivity with their environment, forming basic syntactical and semantic elemental units (Taylor, 1989). These elemental units become components of larger, related classes called schemata. Conceptual schemata are developed by the individual through extended recursive engagement across a broad range of experiences where similarities and differences can be reviewed and categorised (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). The webs of concepts linked by shared characteristics, relations and essential attributes become cognitively structured clusters of information used to perceive, interpret and represent the world in order to shape meaning of lived experiences (Alexander, 2006). These meaning-making clusters need to be coherent and in equilibrium in order to organise the continual interaction between the individual and their environment (Magolda, 2002). Schematic cognitive clusters are iterative and recursive in nature and are arranged in organisational networks that consist of theories, scripts, taxonomies, models and paradigms that make sophisticated interpretations of sensory input; create complex connections; and, organise concepts together in order to maintain coherence of our experiences (Nickerson, 1990).

Organisational networks within an individual's conceptual metasystem arrange schematic cognitive clusters that make and shape meanings around related concepts. An example of this is the interlinking network of concepts related to work, career and vocation. This

network includes generalisations of what work, career and vocation is with a range of related supporting declarative facts, sub-concepts and value propositions; dispositions toward work, career and vocational learning and development experiences; procedural knowledge and skills including how to engage in work, career and vocational learning and development; and, conditional knowledge and skills including when and why to engage in work, career and vocational learning and development (Good & Brophy, 2003). The work, career and vocation organisational network also connects schematic clusters of personal identity and self-concept interwoven with a socio-environmental repository of templates, frames and edifices used to engage with and represent abstract ideas and sensory experiences related to understandings of identity and the world. The network includes cognitive schemata of related facts, generalisations, rules and principles that are accepted as valid ways of interpreting work, career and vocational learning and development experiences; a set method of investigation used for career exploration as well as rules for evaluating career-related evidence (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). The complexity of understanding within this network of knowledge requires significant focus and support to facilitate the organisation of concepts and assist with cognitive cohesion.

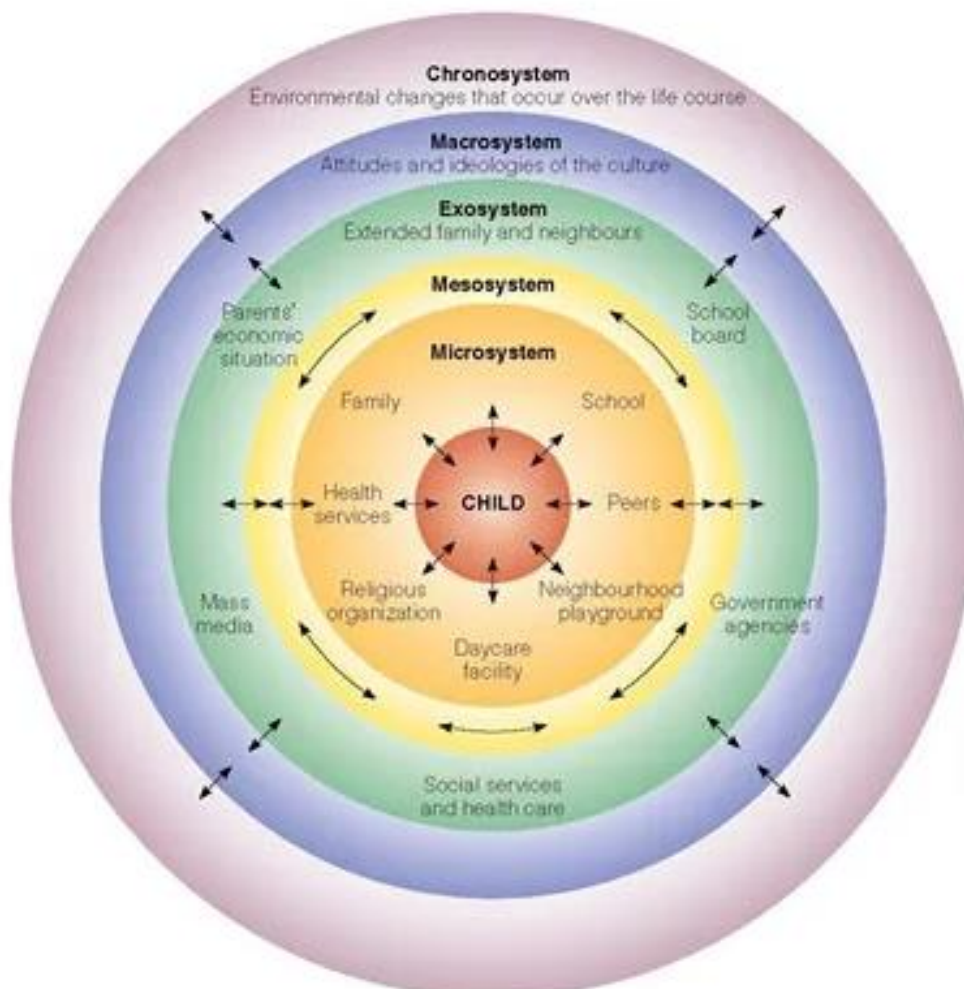
The revision of the schematic clusters and the organisational network of work, career and vocation is in response to new information and is called cognitive-conceptual change (Ormrod, 2006). The three phases of cognitive-conceptual change are: accretion; tuning; and restructuring. Accretion is the simplest phase and involves any elaboration or enrichment of already existing knowledge structures. Tuning is the adjusting of knowledge structures that cannot accept information which is contradictory or anomalous (Alexander, 2006). Restructuring of clusters and the related network occurs when cognitive dissonance motivates people to resolve conflicting ideas within the system of representation, often restructuring their controlling ideas or beliefs related to understandings of work, careers and vocation (Long, 2000). Individuals may undergo more radical restructuring that can involve simultaneous changes in multiple networks of connected knowledge (Good & Brophy, 2003). This sometimes causes a transformation in the individual's perception of reality through an ontological shift or decentering of core epistemic beliefs (Alexander, 2006; Popkewitz, Pereyra, & Franklin, 2001). The complexity and ongoing transformation of an individual's work, career and vocational organisational network and schematic clusters is influenced by a range of career-related contextual and environmental factors.

2.3.9 Systems of influence

A range of contextual forces influence and exert pressure on the lived experiences of individuals. Bronfenbrenner (1986) delineates five systems of interaction as indicated in Figure 2.1. The 'microsystem' includes family, peers, school and work interactions. The 'mesosystem' includes the interactional relationships of family, peers, school and work in different settings. The 'exosystem' includes interactions between non-individual elements such as parent employment, parent social circle, school and government policies, and community facilities. The 'macrosystem' is the overarching cultural and social context including attitudes and values, labour market and economic backdrop and political landscape. The 'chronosystem' involves changes over time (Counoyer & Lachance, 2019).

Figure 2.4

Bronfenbrenner's (1986) ecological systems model

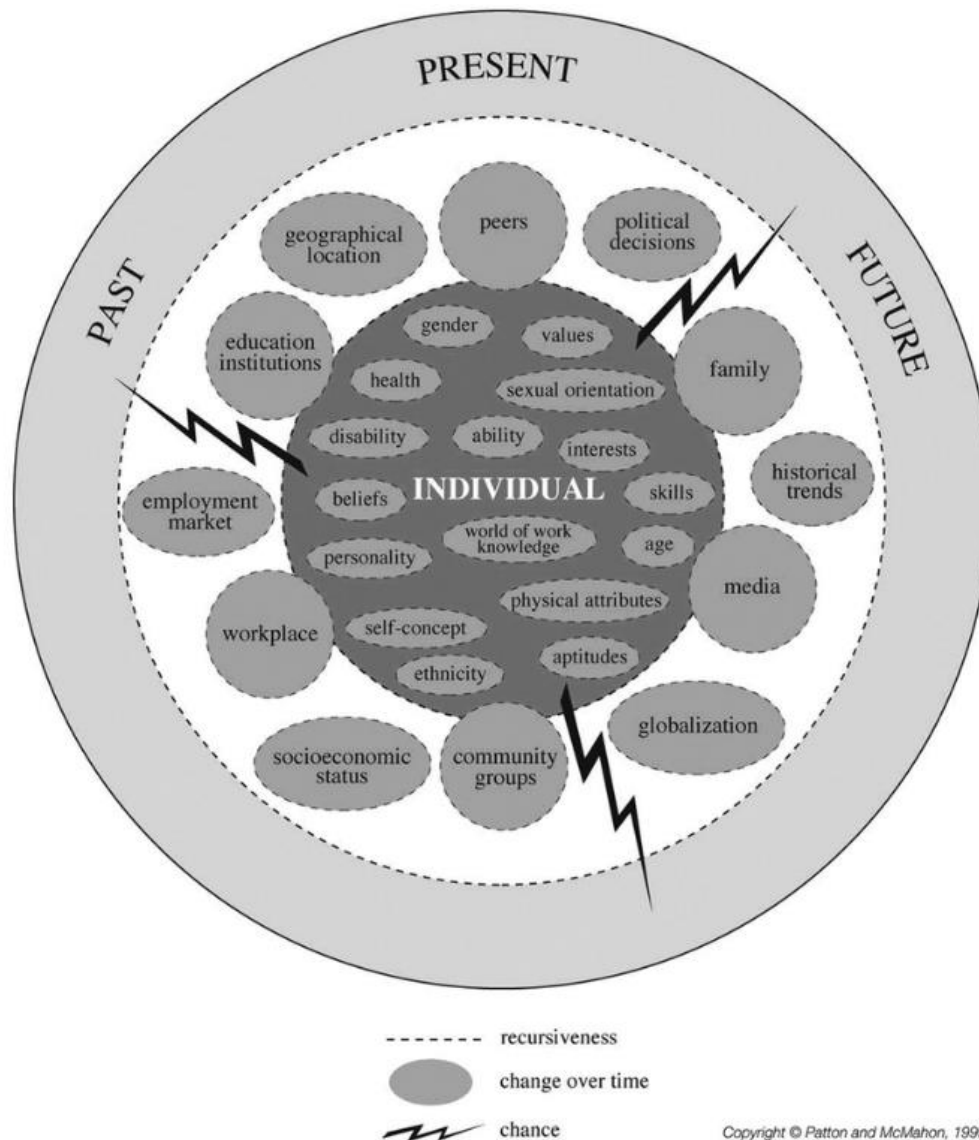


Note. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model. From <https://study.com/learn/lesson/bronfenbrenner-chronosystem-concept-impacts-examples.html>

These initial conceptions of the interplay of systems has been further developed in the Systems Theory Framework of Careers, a meta-framework for understanding contemporary career development as seen in Figure 2.2. This Theory outlines the two key systemic influences as the individual's 'intrapersonal' internal system such as values, personality and interests; and, the individual's external contextual systems including social and environmental-societal. However, the focus is not on the reductionist elements of the systems but on the recursive nature of the interaction between the individual and their contextual systems (Patton & McMahon, 2014). This continual interactivity is very complex and nuanced and plays a central role in shaping an individual's existential ontological experience. Recursiveness describes the multidirectional relations existing between the systemic elements that can influence and shape one another. Although the person-context relationship occurs at a point in time the contextual elements influencing the ascribed 'snapshot' can transcend space and time as meta-temporal and meta-relative influences converge recursively through the processes of introspection, extrospection, retrospection and prospection (Corballis, 2014).

Figure 2.5

Systems Theory Framework (1999)



Note. Patton and McMahon's Systems Theory Framework

https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Systems-Theory-Framework-Note-From-Career-Development-and-Systems-Theory-A-New_fig1_27483233

This relational tension can also exist between elements of 'being' and 'doing' such as biographical tension between life course and personal actions and interactionist tension between contextual forces and adjustment strategies (Counoyer & Lachance, 2019). The liminal space of recursive interaction is never truly resolved and the process of iterative ascriptivity defines and guides an individual's sense of everyday being, doing and knowing. This recursive interaction zone provides a threshold space for interactivity with the socio-environmental setting enabling the evolution of an individual's cognitive-conceptual system and the formation of identity.

2.3.10 Forming a vocational identity

As we aim to make the learning process visible a discussion on the impact of learning and experience on identity formation can provide a more in depth understanding. The formation of identity is a complex, reflexive, multi-faceted and inter-related process influenced by a range of different factors. Identity is a self-structure that serves as a conceptual frame to help individual's interpret personal experiences and guide processes to cope with demands and problems of daily life (Stets & Burke, 2000). A vocational identity helps define how we undertake work roles, how we relate to colleagues, how motivated we are and the levels of responsibility we accept (Attwell et al., 2019). Theories of identity formation focus on areas of 'social', 'group', 'role' and 'personal' identities, identity 'styles' and 'statuses' as well as 'narrative' identity. 'Social' identities are the meanings individuals claim as members of a social category such as female or Australian with the purpose of identification. 'Group' identities are meanings that emerge in interaction with a specific set of others such as family, work or volunteering associations. Social and group identities involve individuals displaying meanings comparable with the perspectives and actions of other members to receive recognition, approval and a sense of value and acceptance. 'Role' identities are sets of meanings that individuals attribute to themselves while performing a role such as student, worker, friend or spouse. If the individual displays the correct behaviours and performance standards that they correlate with the role they feel a sense of accomplishment. 'Personal' identities are unique sets of self-meanings that characterise the individual in distinct ways separate from others such as personality, values and morals (Stets & Burke, 2000).

Style-based theory describes three distinct styles of 'informational', 'normative' and, 'diffuse-avoidant' that delineate differences in the way individuals approach identity-relevant tasks and problems. Informational style types engage in problem-focused coping, are open to new information, critical toward their self-concepts and willing to revise aspects of their identity when challenged to integrate new discrepant information. Normative style types rely on norms and expectations of significant others and define themselves against collective considerations of religion, family and nationality. They have strong self-control but inflexible value systems and often preserve their cultural identity and values when challenged to integrate new discrepant information. Diffuse-avoidant style types avoid personal issues and decisions preferring situational demands to dictate their behaviour. They often have low levels of active information processing and problem

solving with high impulsivity and define themselves in terms of social attributes like reputation and popularity (Berzonsky, 2011; Duriez, Luyckx, Soenens, & Berzonsky, 2012).

Status-based theory proposes four main statuses of vocational identity as 'achieved', 'foreclosed', 'moratorium', and 'diffused'. Achieved status is when an individual has made a choice and committed to a career pathway based on exploration-evidence; foreclosed status is when an individual has made a choice and committed to a career pathway without any exploration; moratorium status is when an individual is still exploring various options but has not made a choice or career pathway commitment; and, diffused status is when an individual does not have a sense of choice, has not explored options and is unwilling to make a commitment to a career pathway. These statuses are subject to the degree of career learning and development undertaken by the individual and the influences and levels of support received by significant others (Marcia, 1993; Porfeli, Lee, Vondracek, & Weigold, 2011; Taber & Blankemeyer, 2014).

Narrative-based identity theory assumes narratives are the key schemes in which individuals express their life themes to make their experiences meaningful and understand their ontological temporality. Identity is conceived as a dynamic multiplicity of positional voices within the self that imagine possibilities and guide sense-making of the world. Vocational identity shapes understanding of vocation and career to allow individuals to navigate their engagement with and transition through the world of work (Meijers & Lengelle, 2012). Vocational identity has a strong influence on an individual's perceptions of experiencing career-related learning and their career and life aspirations.

2.3.11 Career aspirations and vocational circumscription

Within all of these conceptions of identity formation, aspirations direct the individuals toward action. Aspirations are the hopes and dreams that an individual has for the future; the goals one would like to achieve. A hopeful attitude can be the catalyst to empower one to achieve their goals (Niles, Amundson, & Yoon, 2019). The capacity to aspire and to actualise one's career hopes is tempered by a range of sociocultural factors such as the social, racial, cultural and economic capital one has access to; and their archives of experience. The identity constructs that significant individuals use to frame their feedback to others can directly influence perceptions of self-concept and influence habitus. The relational process in which individuals form an inaccurate sense of their own or other

individual's value, worth and capability is called 'misrecognition' (Archer, DeWitt, & Wong, 2014; Rao & Walton, 2004). Feedback needs to be constructive and supportive to encourage positive vocational identity formation and self-efficacy.

Vocational aspirations are formed through the process of circumscription in which individual's seek occupations and work through a combination of congruence with their self-image and their level of knowledge and experience of the world of work (Gottfredson, 2005). Often, a large number of perceivably 'inappropriate' vocational alternatives are eliminated based on an individual's intrapersonal understandings of their own personality, interests, abilities, values as well as their own beliefs about their 'place' in society (shaped through factors including gender, cultural and socioeconomic background) and their socio-environmental knowledge of occupations and the world of work (Cochran, Wang, Stevenson, Johnson, & Crews, 2011). Individuals who are supported to develop a deeper and more salient sense of self; and, awareness of the factors shaping their circumscriptive processes are empowered with more opportunities and vocational decision-making capital; improving their career readiness (Mann, Denis, & Percy, 2020).

Further to this, individuals who are provided with more exposure to exploratory experiences and direct encounters of the world of work will also have more knowledge to inform their circumscription process (Turner, 2020). Individuals who have a strong network of supporters who help them to develop clear aspirations based on salient intrapersonal and socio-environmental understandings of the world of work have more chance to achieve meaningful and purposeful careers in an increasingly complex world (Charania & Freeland Fisher, 2020). Having clearly defined aspirations and a sense of direction and purpose can promote positive wellbeing and mental health outcomes. Positive mental health and wellbeing is an important factor in supporting career-related learning and development.

2.3.12 Work and wellbeing

There is growing recognition of the importance of mental health and wellbeing. Research has connected that ill-mental health has a negative impact on both individual livelihoods and economic prosperity (OECD, 2015). Further to this effective career learning and development has been connected to positive mental wellbeing (Redekopp & Huston, 2020) suggesting governments need to prioritise health-related factors in economic policy decisions (Robertson, 2019). A holistic understanding of wellbeing is essential to

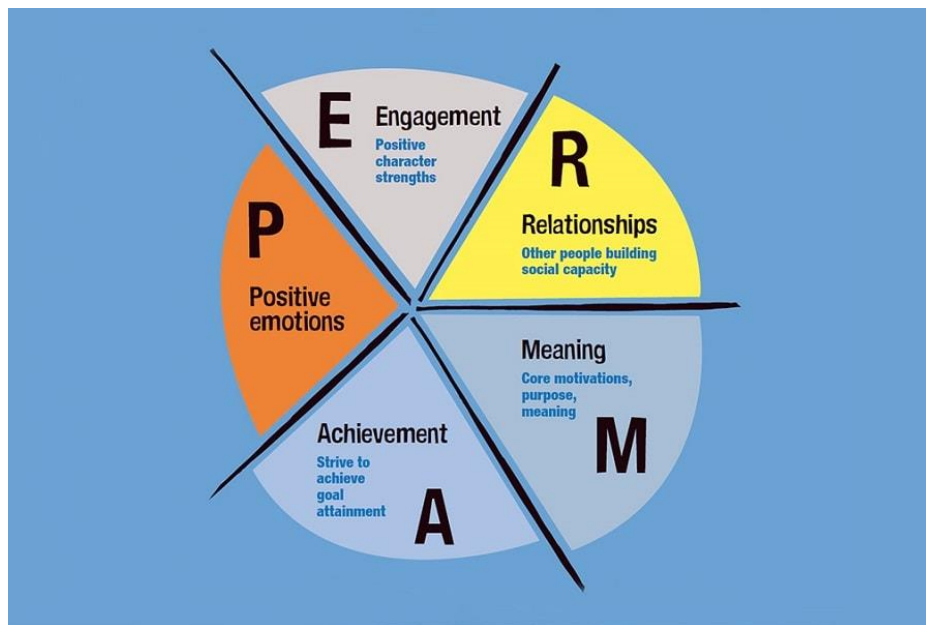
cultivating healthy and productive workers. Seligman's positive psychology model has gained much traction to promote all citizens to enhance their wellbeing rather than a traditional focus on psychology as a response to negative experiences. The positive psychology model overlaps with contemporary career learning and development theory in areas of personal development and management. The model PERMA proposed by Seligman consists of five main focus areas as outlined in Figure 2.3:

- Positive and negative emotions;
- Engagement including elements of strengths, balance and absorption;
- Relationships;
- Meaningfulness with elements of purpose and community; and,
- Accomplishment with elements of achievement, self-efficacy and goal setting.

Additionally, health such as nutrition, sleep and exercise have been added to the model as PERMA+ for a holistic understanding of how individuals can positively engage with the world around them (Seligman, 2011). The positive development of these central elements can directly improve an individual's mental health and how they engage in their work and life. Research on contemporary work design has also suggested the design of work itself can achieve positive outcomes for employers and employees through mitigating illness, preventing harm and promoting thriving environments for optimisation of capabilities. Work design should be stimulating and relational, encourage mastery and agency balanced with tolerable demands (Centre for Transformative Work Design, 2020). Positive wellbeing is linked to individuals forming and maintaining positive identities. Identity formation and understandings of the world of work develop from a young age.

Figure 2.6

Seligman's (2011) PERMA model



Note. Seligman's PERMA model. From

<https://schools.au.reachout.com/articles/building-a-positive-learning-environment-through-positive-psychology>

2.4 Career-related learning and development in young people

2.4.1 Early years career development

The process of engaging in career-related learning and development commences from a young age, as early as four years old (Cahill & Furey, 2017; Howard & Dinius, 2019; Kashefpakdel, Rehill, & Hughes, 2018). Children actively explore their world and use 'play' to help them express their hopes and dreams. As they experiment with the world around them they experience risk-taking, problem solving, decision-making, planning, transitions and change, and overcoming obstacles and setbacks. These foundational experiences shape their meaning-making and are gradually woven into schemas of understanding as their brain architecture develops in complexity. (Cahill & Furey, 2017). In the early years children envision themselves in a variety of roles that connect their understanding to the present and future. (Howard & Dinius, 2019). Early engagement with the world is influenced by personal and contextual factors such as relationships with family and significant others, self-awareness, learning and education, interests, hopes and cultural values. Children are by nature curious and have an awareness of family and significant others' work roles (Kashefpakdel et al., 2018). This broadens with age. Children care

about the world around them and are excited by exploring more about the work adults do. Children's sense of control over their future is supported by positive role models and experiences (Cahill & Furey, 2017).

As children begin to develop self-identity, interests and skills they envision themselves in various work roles. Gendered understanding of work is a common framework used to understand occupations with young children first learning and associating concepts around what is a 'boys' job and what is a 'girls' job (Gottfredson, 2005). These foundational concrete conceptions help to develop a more sophisticated career identity schema in young children. However, if these ideas are not further progressed through planned learning and education experiences to broaden, challenge and develop the initial framework conceptions of gender and work, they may exert undue influence on an individual's career decisions at later points in life (Volodina & Nagy, 2016). Similarly, many children are exposed to only a small number of occupations and if this limited scope of understanding of work and careers is not developed further in young people through planned education then they are limited in their aspirations (Chambers, Kashefpakdel, Rehill, & Percy, 2018).

Children follow a developmental trajectory of three stages when understanding careers and work and developing their career identity schema (Howard & Dinius, 2019). The 'Association' stage is characterised by the use of fantasy and imagination. At this stage children understand that an occupation exists. They may even be able to describe clothing, accessories and basic tasks that link with the occupation. For example, a construction worker may wear a hard hat and build things. The second stage is 'Sequence'. Children become aware that participation in activities, events or situations can lead to types of work and future careers. They become increasingly aware of their own interests and abilities and attempt to align their engagement with learning and education to match pathways to job attainment. The third stage is 'Interaction'. As children mature into adolescence, they have the ability to reason more abstractly and become aware of the constellation of factors that influence occupation and career attainment. They start to connect their own interests and aspirations to environmental and societal factors such as the labour market and become clear on the steps needed to achieve their career goals (Howard & Dinius, 2019). Career learning and development commences from a young age but the traditional focus on planned career education has been centred on adolescents.

2.4.2 Adolescent career development

Adolescents are categorised in their own distinct ‘stage’ of career-related learning and development. Super et al (1996) depicts all adolescents to be in the “exploratory” stage of development. This is a time when students develop their vocational identity through crystallising their career aspirations and goals, selecting a career pathway and training for credentials in that career to gain employment. Similarly, Miller-Tiedeman (1999) categorises adolescents in the “anticipation” stage of career development where students collect feedback, recognise patterns in the form of alternatives and consequences and prepare to enter an occupation. Furthermore, Gottfredson (2005) outlines that adolescents enter an “orientation” stage of circumscription whereby career development becomes more of a conscious process. In this stage students are beginning to eliminate choices and implement career decisions, becoming increasingly aware of the availability of training, education and job opportunities (Juntunen & Even, 2012).

Adolescent career development is amplified through growth of cognitive executive function skills. These skills are also referred to as cognitive “stop and think” processes and include planning, prioritising, problem solving, sustaining and switching attention, multitasking and initiating and monitoring actions. The three core executive functions that underpin these cognitive processes are impulse inhibition, working memory and cognitive flexibility. Together, they allow an individual to escape from the press of the moment by taking control of their thoughts and actions to think more effectively about the future, where they want to go and plan how to get there (Westwell & Panizzon, 2011). As adolescents develop their executive function they start to connect concepts of self and the world of work more cohesively. Adolescents in the orientation-exploratory stage of career development are prone to rapid cognitive-conceptual change and fluctuation of concepts within their cognitive networks. A range of neurobiological and social factors influence the time course over which individuals develop the executive function skills needed to amplify engagement with career-related learning and development concepts and the reflective processes that shape their vocational identity (Bransford et al., 2000). Furthermore, research has indicated that physical structures within the adolescent brain connected to executive function do not all develop in sequence; rather, development is unique to each individual with different brain areas evolving at different times and sometimes in a different order (Blakemore, 2018).

From about fifteen, working memory, inhibitory control and the ability to sustain and appropriately shift attention are close to adult levels; however, young people are less sensitive to the disadvantages associated with particular strategies and actions, giving greater focus to the potential advantageous outcomes instead (Center on the Developing Child, 2015). Adolescents also rely on more “online” self-reflective processes rather than a more longitudinal self-referential process which means they make decisions based mainly on their view of themselves at that specific moment; a decision made on one day may be quite different to a decision made on the next (Westwell & Panizzon, 2011). As adolescents’ executive function skills continue to develop, a more salient concept of career identity is reified in the schematic cognitive cluster and the cognitive organisational networks become more longitudinally self-referential. As adolescents develop the ability to “stop and think” it allows them to peer into the future and take control by planning, prioritising and making informed decisions. It allows escape from the moment and to overcome the natural impulse for an immediate gain on our pressing desires (Lee, Bull, & Ho, 2013). Responses are more considered and measured; there is an increased ability to bear in mind past information and experiences more readily; as well as build an understanding of future-selves in the future-world (Westwell & Panizzon, 2011). These cognitive processes allow individuals to inhibit impulses favouring actions for short-term gains in favour of long-term prioritised benefits. However, despite cognitive growth within the brain structures that can improve future thinking and decision-making, the adolescent experience remains fixated on social belonging and inclusion that may override cognitive logic and decision-making processes (Blakemore, 2018). Effective strategies to engage and motivate adolescents should consider the social context they are positioned in and utilise techniques including metaphor, visualisation and role play to creatively engage and coach adolescents at this stage of development (Hambly & Bomford, 2018).

While adolescence has been the traditional focus of career learning and development in schools the evidence-base suggests it is critically important for countries to prioritise a planned scope and sequence of career education and guidance activities within schools from a young age. When young people engage in quality career learning and development programs and services it positions them for future success and economic prosperity.

2.4.3 Career-related learning and development in schools

Career-related learning and development commences from a young age but approaches to career education in schools have been inconsistent and under-prioritised globally

(Musset & Kurekova, 2018). All countries have mandated curriculum for functional literacy and numeracy development as fundamental skills needed to engage successfully in life and work; however, only a limited number have mandated curricula in place to support the positive development of an individual's vocational identity. The improvement of career education in schools is limited by the quality assurance processes that countries adopt. Often career education is voluntary not obligatory as outdated mindsets around career-related learning and development theory are embedded in policy. The collection of data to inform policy often provide an intermittent or uneven snapshot rather than a cohesive landscape that can inform future improvements. Much of the stakeholder feedback from students, parents, school administrators, teachers and career guidance practitioners is ad hoc rather than systematically integrated and informing policy and practice. Many programs and services are fragmented in their approach and are often sector or school specific rather than a part of a comprehensive lifelong guidance strategy. As inputs are easier to measure than outcomes there is unreliable evidence on the quality of interventions. Quality is often assumed based on inputs rather than assured based on outcomes. This has become the norm as the complex nature of career-related learning and development means it's difficult to disentangle how specific interventions link to successful outcomes (Sultana, 2018). Furthermore, where benchmarks do exist, the generic audit standards attached to them are often inflexible and cannot be tailored to individual contexts. Despite these challenges many countries are working on improving career education in schools through defining clear quality indicators and setting standards and benchmarks as part of a nationally consistent and cohesive framework (Careers New Zealand, 2014; Department of Education and Training, 2019; Mann, Denis, & Percy, 2020; National Centre for Guidance in Education, 2017; Office of College and Career Readiness, 2012; Student Development Curriculum Division, 2012).

Governments can prioritise career-related learning and development in education through four main areas: 'legislate' to guarantee young people the right to career-related learning at all age and stages; 'regulate' standards, guidelines and inspection processes for career education in schools; 'stimulate' through policies designed to engage all community stakeholders in dialogue and action; and, 'compensate' by intervening where there is evidence of failure in the process of career education in schools. Countries can move toward improving quality in career-related learning in schools by creating a nationally consistent evidence-based framework to map inputs, processes and outputs against achieved outcomes that informs all stakeholders and users feedback to improve quality

(Hughes & Carson, 2018). Recent longitudinal research has also provided statistically significant indicators of career readiness that can inform policy for governments. These include thinking about the future indicators such as career certainty, career ambition and, career alignment; exploring the future indicators such as career conversations, occupational short course participation, career expos and workplace visits; and, experiencing the future indicators such as part-time work and volunteering. (Mann, Denis, & Percy, 2020) Participating in career readiness activities improves employment outcomes beyond school. Sometimes these indicators for effective school to work transitions are embedded within school career-related-learning and development although broad analysis found significant opportunities to improve school career guidance systems (Mann, Denis, & Percy, 2020).

There are three broad areas of career-related learning and development currently occurring in schools to varying degrees including the provision of career information; planned learning through career education; and, personalised career guidance counselling.

Career Information.

Career information refers to information students receive about the world of work. It could include electronic, print, personal contacts and other resources that assist students in the process of career-related learning and development. It comes from a range of different sources, not only school. In fact, other information sources such as family, peers and media sometimes have more influence than the information provided in schools. Information typically includes industry, labour market and occupational materials, education and training pathways and social or economic information relating to the world of work. As information is readily available in the digital age there has been a turn toward a self-service model of career-related learning (Career Industry Council of Australia, 2014).

However, many students do not have the career management skills to sift through and select relevant and reliable information or make use of data in ways that inform and shape their aspirations and goals in a positive way. Many students become overwhelmed and confused in how to make sense of the volume of information and connect it meaningfully to themselves and their vocational identity. This model relies on engaged and proactive students that have capacity to navigate and decipher complex information with much statistical labour market information from government departments not presented in user

friendly or developmentally appropriate ways. It also assumes information provided to students is impartial and unbiased with no underlying agenda.

Career information online can be fragmented, duplicitous and scattered and not brought together in a cohesive way that is meaningful for students; often rendering them as passive consumers rather than active participants. There is often no diversity or cultural sensitivity in tailoring information to young people as information is presented in ways that reproduce and reinforce stereotypes based on class, gender and ethnicity (Sultana, 2018). Despite these limitations and issues the self-service model of career-related learning remains popular as it is the most cost-effective intervention for governments and schools in providing career development to young people. Some websites of significance that aim to simplify and organise career development information in a cohesive and accessible are included in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2*Career information websites of significance*

Country	Website	Description
United States	https://www.bls.gov/k12/students/	Section of the US Bureau of Labor Statistics website aimed specifically at K – 12 education that contains career-related games and quizzes, resource guides, exploration activities and videos
Canada	https://alis.alberta.ca/	The Government of Alberta website for all ages and stages including career planning, education and training information, job search, tools and resources to improve motivation and success
New Zealand	https://www.careers.govt.nz/	A government website to assist citizens with career development that contains planning, job profile, career tools, job search, resources, study and training
Australia	https://myfuture.edu.au/	A website from Education Services Australia funded by each State government aimed at students, teachers and parent including tips, tools, tools, career profile. quizzes, occupation and industry information, articles, stories, courses, education and institution information
Singapore	https://www.myskillsfuture.gov.sg/	A government website providing a range of personal career quizzes, information on the world of work and an education guide on opportunities available

These self-service websites contain a range of information and activities that can assist individuals; however, the organisation of information and activities into a pedagogically planned sequence of learning contextually tailored to a specific individual or cohorts' needs is lacking. Embedding some of the website information and activities into planned sequences of learning tailored to the needs of specific learners provides a more supportive and engaging experience for young people.

Career education.

Career education refers to the scope and sequence of planned learning experiences in schools to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to assist students in making informed decisions about their future study and work options and enable effective participation in life. There are three main approaches to career education in schools including: stand-alone curriculum offerings; cross-curricular embedding; and, non-curriculum activities.

Stand-alone curriculum offerings have their own syllabus content and often have scheduled timetable allocation. Formal career education refers to ‘vocational learning’ that aims to build awareness of self-identity, develops general career management and employability skills and explores work-related content such as occupations and industry. However, in recent years many countries are offering ‘vocational technical education’ to school age students to assist in the career development process and provide effective transition pathways to the labour market. Technical education is ‘industry-specific’ training to develop workplace skills and is often assessed through competency-based standards rather than traditional grade rankings. Examples of vocational learning / career education curricula can be found in Canada, Australia, the United States and Singapore (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2020; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013; Perry et al., 2014; Province of British Columbia, 2020; Student Development Curriculum Division, 2012).

In British Columbia, Canada, career education is provided from Kindergarten through to Year 12 with developmentally appropriate career-related learning content and activities aimed at ensuring all student graduates have experiences in order to achieve outcomes such as: recognise the need to be adaptable, resilient, and flexible in order to meet the ever-changing opportunities and challenges of today’s world; understand how ongoing purposeful career-life development contributes to the success and well-being of individuals, communities, and society; build personal career-life development capacity to effectively learn and grow new interests, knowledge, skills, and competencies throughout their lives; develop awareness of their personal strengths, competencies, values, and passions, and use this self-knowledge to inform career-life choices; communicate and interact collaboratively with others, valuing diversity of people, perspectives, worldviews, ideas, and opportunities; explore a range of experiences, roles, and opportunities in

personal, educational, and workplace contexts to advance their personal career-life journeys (Province of British Columbia, 2020).

Examples of how technical vocational training is delivered to school age students can be found in the United Kingdom, Germany and Western Australia (British Council, 2015; Department of Training and Workforce Development, 2014; Federal Ministry of Education and Research, 2019). In Germany, the dual system is a central element of the VET system allowing school students to leave general education after Year 10 to train in a vocational school combined with an industry placement in a company. The success of this system is in preparing young people for VET-based careers relies on a range of factors including: the cooperation of government and industry including shared funding arrangements; the development of employability skills through a combination of real-world learning and school-based training; quality standards to guarantee certifications lead to employability, workforce mobility and have social value; qualified teaching and training staff skilled in integrating school and vocational pedagogy; and, ongoing research into education and labour market trends to ensure the adaption of system to meet technical, economic and social development requirements (Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training, 2021).

Cross-curricular approaches provide an overarching framework or quality benchmarks to embed and map career-related learning into existing curricula. This is often a whole-school approach that involves multiple teachers rather than a single specialist career educator. Examples include the Gatsby benchmarks in England, Ireland's whole-school Guidance Framework, New Zealand's Career Education Benchmarks and the Australian Blueprint for Career Development (Careers New Zealand, 2014; Miles Morgan, 2010; National Centre for Guidance in Education, 2017; The Career & Enterprise Company, 2018). In England, schools are required to embed the Gatsby benchmarks for quality career guidance into their programs. The elements of the standards that each school needs to demonstrate include elements such as: a stable careers programme; learning from career and labour market information; addressing the needs of each pupil; linking curriculum learning to careers; encounters with employers and employees; experiences of workplaces; encounters with further and higher education; and personal guidance (The Career & Enterprise Company, 2018).

While the cross-curricular approaches aim to embed career-relating learning into existing curricula many benchmarks also involve non-curriculum elements. Important non-

curriculum elements include whole school leadership and career strategy planning; community and industry partnerships; parent and carer engagement; and, career education professional learning for general teachers and career specialist roles (Ithaca Group, 2019; The Career & Enterprise Company, 2018). In Australia, to assist schools with understanding the complexity of the interrelated elements for career education a school audit tool is available. It contains quality descriptors in the following areas: school leadership; learning for life beyond school; work exploration and employer engagement opportunities; individual student needs addressed; awareness of various pathways; and career advice and information (Australian Government, 2021).

Across all of these approaches typical activities include general career pathway and subject planning, creating a portfolio of skills and achievements, engagement with industry, further education and training through incursions, excursions and work experiences. The participation of secondary students in a range of these career-related learning activities is designed to facilitate their career development through the acquisition, application and personalisation of career management competencies and employability skills. While effective career education becomes a whole-school responsibility the career-related learning and development process can be further enhanced through personalised and customised guidance from a trained career guidance specialist.

Personalised career guidance.

Personalised career guidance is a vocational counselling process that provides the individual with impartial, tailored and unique information, guidance and advice. The counselling is conducted by a qualified career guidance practitioner in a one-on-one or small group setting. The counselling process emphasises self-awareness and facilitates individuals to develop a career pathway plan to direct their learning, work and transition decisions and actions. The plan should be satisfying and meaningful by connecting the unique socio-cultural context of the individual to learning experiences that help them develop their knowledge and capabilities to engage successfully and effectively with the labour market. Through the guidance counselling process individuals should develop mindsets and capabilities to manage their responses to changing work and learning environments over the lifespan (Sultana, 2018).

Career guidance practice has evolved through a number of paradigms. The early field of vocational guidance developed as a response to the rapid and dramatic change early in

the 20th century when industrialisation replaced a largely agrarian society. Guidance practice followed a trait and factor matching approach that followed a formulaic, linear sequence that centralised the career counsellor as the expert and the individual as an observable subject that could be assessed, diagnosed and counselled. This 'test and tell' career matching approach still dominates some career guidance practice (Briggs-Myers, 1973; J. Holland, 1973) despite a move to a more client-centred approach to counselling (Rogers, 1951). Nevertheless, promising guidance practices have arisen that recognise the complexity of career development and see guidance as a transformational and continuous process of learning and growth that aims to empower the individual to successfully know themselves and engage with their world (McIlveen & Patton, 2007; Pryor & Bright, 2008; Savickas, 2005).

Many schools employ career guidance professionals to counsel students. The career guidance role is varied and complex and has a different focus depending on the cohort of students the counsellor is engaging with. Guidance counsellors may work with disengaged or disadvantaged students through to gifted and talented students to help them understand their unique strengths and abilities, recognise opportunities and engage in purposeful learning experiences that will help them to grow and make progress with their lives. Students engaging in the career guidance process should develop individual career plans to assist with their career-related learning, decision-making and life transitions. Individual career plans are instruments used in career guidance counselling to help people to plan and organise key information to assist them in making career development decisions (Gysbers, 1983, 2008). Career plans often contain a self-profile including personal characteristics such as interests, values, strengths, personality traits, family background, role-models, and textual / media influences; investigations of occupations of interest including job descriptions, daily tasks and employment prospects; exploration of educational pathways and course requirements; broad, longer-term career goals and targeted short-term goals with a focus on barriers, strategies and assistance that may be available (Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2012; Miles Morgan, 2010). While personalised career guidance should be conducted by a qualified professional (Sultana, 2018) many exploratory elements of individual career-related learning can be developed through career education programs and activities in schools in readiness for further more personalised guidance.

2.5 Personalised career guidance in practice

The process of participating in personalised vocational guidance is complex with many elements. The guidance practitioner needs to customise and adapt the counselling to the needs of the individual. This adaptive process often takes a constellatory approach seeking to recognise the unique assemblage of elements that influence and configure an individual's way of experiencing the world. The broad elements that guidance practitioners can consider when adapting the counselling process to fit the needs of the person include an individual's personal context and background, their career goals and life aspirations, the individual's spectrum of influences, an individual's career-related and vocational interests; an individual's participation in career and social development activities; and, an individual's transition through significant career and life experiences.

2.5.1 Personal context and background

Individuals' cultural contexts and identities shape their worldview and impact on the meanings ascribed to their vocational identity and their career development concerns. Intersecting dimensions of culture and identity often combine to shape meanings of a person's position in society related to gender, social class and ethnicity and the opportunities and barriers that individuals may experience in relation to this. The understanding of a client's personal background through direct and indirect inquiry can reveal hidden and complex influences on an individual's cultural identity and context (N. Arthur, 2019). Career guidance counsellors who develop a sociological perspective will improve their cultural sensitivity and build awareness of how their own personal background influences meaning-making within the guidance process. This can improve the guidance process by ensuring positive and respectful relationships are formed and impartial guidance is provided in a culturally responsive way (Brimrose, 2019).

Furthermore, Relational-cultural Theory proposes that that all career decision-making, development and work roles are intricately tied to interpersonal relationships and relational processes. Relationships and connection are central to an individual's growth as learning happens with and in-power with others rather than through a process of isolated individuation; separation or power-over others. Connection is defined through mutual empathy and empowerment that leads to personal learning, growth and wellbeing. Disconnection results when individual's feel hurt from not being seen or understood, leading to withdrawal, disengagement and marginalisation. Reconnection can occur when

authentic attempts are made to be with another in their experience to provide personal and relational growth. Individuals are in a constant flux of relational connection, disconnection and reconnection. Although disconnection is a natural part of experiencing relationships it can be damaging when embedded through a power-over relationship that facilitates inequity based on gender, social class or ethnicity. Developing strong relational connections has been shown to improve an individual's wellbeing, enhance their career decision-making and employment opportunities as well as build strong networks of role models and mentors (Popadiuk, 2019).

Understanding and empathising with an individual's personal background is essential in the guidance counselling process. Understanding and connecting with personal context can also provide insight into the social capital available to the individual including the quantity and quality of relationships that can provide opportunities for development and support; the structure of social networks including reliability and diversity; and, and the ability an individual has to mobilise relationships including the mindsets and skills needed to activate relationships (Charania & Freeland Fisher, 2020). Understanding an individual's personal context can provide insight into how their aspirations have been shaped and opportunities to assist them to achieve their career goals.

2.5.2 Career aspirations, goals and planning

Aspirations are the hopes and dreams that an individual has for the future. The achievement of life aspirations is closely linked with the achievement of career aspirations as the opportunities for social mobility and advancement are improved through positive work and labour market outcomes. Career development and work aspirations can be achieved through careful planning and strategic goal setting (Arthur, Khapova, & Richardson, 2017). Career planning is more than simply making a choice or decision about the type of work to participate in; rather, it is about optimising resources within the individual's ecosystem to identify vocational goals that will have positive impacts and benefits while also calibrating the sustainability of efforts made to maximise the chances of achieving the goals (Tang, 2019). Individuals who set specific and challenging career goals are more likely to make successful progress to achieve them. Specific goals enable the individual to monitor their progress and adjust their performance if needed. Challenging goals produce high levels of motivation and require new strategies that can enhance performance. Goals that promote effort and the use of strategy to achieve the desired outcomes have positive effects on individual career development. Individuals with

higher levels of self-efficacy and those who set approach goals rather than avoidance goals increase their chances of success. Self-efficacy is the confidence that an individual has in achieving mastery of the goal and leads to greater levels of commitment. Approach goals are those that focus on opportunities for improvement and progress; whereas, avoidance goals focus on minimising failure or seeming incompetent.

Individuals who engage in more proactive career behaviours also enhance their chances of achieving career goal success. Career behaviours such as career planning, skill development, career consultation and network building also improve the chance of accomplishing career goals (Clements & Kamau, 2018). Understanding the 'living systems' that influence how individuals construct their career goals can assist in understanding the behavioural patterns individuals exhibit when engaging in processes to accomplish their goals. The uniqueness of a person-in-context, immersed in a 'living system' that wants to achieve a goal can be represented as a behaviour-action episode that is context-specific, goal-directed, and unfolds over time. Although a goal directs every behaviour-action episode the person may or may not be explicitly aware of it. The behaviour-action episode only ends when the goal is either achieved; revised then achieved; the goal and efforts are delayed; or the goal is abandoned (Vondracek & Ford, 2019). Episodes include observable behaviours that manifest when carrying out actions; internal processes including the subjective thoughts and feelings experienced while carrying out actions; and, social meanings including the interpretations and explanations provided when describing the actions to others (Domene & Young, 2019). Goal setting episodes involve a range of feedforward and feedback process that indicate to what extent the goal has been achieved, whether the goal should be revised or if the goal should be abandoned. Over time an individual experiences a range of unique behaviour-action episodes that are stored and categorised in schemas to assist in future goal setting episodes. Existing behaviour-action episode schemas are reviewed and selected based on how closely related they are in guiding toward the achievement of any new goals. Behaviour-action episode schemas are not fixed; rather they are adaptive, flexible frameworks that are constantly modified as people elaborate on pertinent existing episodic schemas to achieve specific goals such as learning new discipline knowledge or developing technical or transferable skills. Challenging goals often require individuals to disrupt and augment their existing behaviour-action patterns to achieve the goal. Individuals may not have the pre-existing experiential schemas to guide them and will therefore require support from others who can guide and share strategies to achieve their goals (Vondracek & Ford, 2019).

Further to this, individuals typically engage in multiple goal-directed actions, sometimes extending over months or years. Long term goal-setting with multiple goals and conjoined behaviour episodes can be seen as undertaking a goal-setting 'project' (Domene & Young, 2019). Projects may include broader meta-goals and a range of more specific-goals to guide the project. Broader meta-goals may have an open-ended temporal focus, be values-driven and have systemic complexity that engages multiple sub-goals to achieve the overall project. Projects are often meta-contextual and may engage a kaleidoscope of personal, social, career and life objectives in a complex system of entanglement. Individuals that are trained to develop proactive behaviour-actions to engage in processes to plan career projects and goals, develop mastery of knowledge and skills, seek wide support and guidance through consultation with experts; and build diverse and rich networks to connect to opportunities will enhance their chances of successfully navigating and engaging with the labour market (Strauss, Griffin, & Parker, 2012).

Career guidance support that assists people in disentangling broad career and life goals into a clear career project that includes a taxonomy of goals and planned sequence of behaviour-actions improves career development outcomes. Without appropriate support and training individuals are more likely to abandon their goals and career projects. Individuals who continually abandon goals may suffer from reduced self-efficacy and this may impact negatively on their career and mental wellbeing. Often, repeating learned behaviour-action schemas related to goal abandonment may have a negative impact on an individual's career success and their future participation in the labour market (Domene & Young, 2019). Understanding the career goals and projects that people are aspiring to achieve is essential in supporting a person's career development. There are many influences that shape an individual's career goals.

2.5.3 Influences on career development

The unique contextual forces that make up an individual's subjective and intersubjective experiences significantly influence the trajectory of an individual's life course. The access to resources, support and opportunities that an individual has impacts on the quality of decision-making and actions one undertakes (Cournoyer & Lachance, 2019). The complex interplay of the contextual forces that exert influence is unique to the individual. The Systems Theory Framework of Careers, outlines the contextual forces as broad systems of influence including the individual's internal intrapersonal system; and, the individual's external contextual systems. The internal system includes influences such values,

personality, interests, abilities, gender, self-concept, skills, age, ethnicity, physical attributes, work knowledge and aptitudes. The external system includes social influences such as family, community groups, peers, education institutions, workplaces and media as well as environmental-societal influences such as socioeconomic status, employment market, historical trends, globalisation, technological advancements, geographical location and political decisions (Patton & McMahon, 2014). The external system elements including the employment market and social opportunity structure that the individual is positioned within can exert significant influence on the individual's perceived goals and ambitions.

Influences have also been framed as intrinsic, extrinsic and interpersonal factors. Intrinsic factors such as personal interests, self-efficacy, outcome expectations and opportunities for career development are all influential; as are, extrinsic influences such as financial remuneration, professional prestige, job accessibility and job security. Interpersonal factors include the influence of family members, teachers and educators, peers and social responsibilities (Akosah-Twumasi, Emeto, Lindsay, Tsey, & Malau-Aduli, 2018). While it is important to identify the relative degree that individual contextual forces may influence the trajectory of a person's life course it is more important for the individual to improve their understanding of themselves in order to engage in proactive and positive career development actions.

Savickas Life Design counselling (Savickas, 2015) approach seeks to enhance an individual's self-narratability to help them understand what they already know and then to know what must be clarified to enhance their ability to decide and act. The career construction interview seeks to uncover the complex interplay of contextual influences through storied discussion on role-models, characters and settings that people are naturally drawn to through the cultural texts they engage with. This process of self-clarification seeks to empower an individual to develop confidence in achieving their goals, curiosity to seek new learning experiences, positive concern to reflect and engage in the planning process and control of their life course and direction (Savickas, 2012). Influences can have an impact on the career development process. A key influence that motivates a person to action is personal interest.

2.5.4 Formation of vocational interests

Identifying a person's interests has always been a key facet of personal guidance counselling (Parsons, 1909). Early practices evolved using trait and factor theory to

measure an individual's attributes and interests to match them to suitable job roles. The greater congruence between the individual and job (the person-environment fit) leads to better performance and productivity in the workplace (J. Holland, 1973). Vocational interest categories are still used as a framework in career guidance practice today. The categories of: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional provide a typological inventory to connect interests to work. While many research studies have supported Holland's categories there has been criticism that the categories are a product of the economic times they were conceived in and are not as reliable when applied to a broader representation of society including gender and ethnic sampling (Patton & McMahon, 2014). Furthermore, the vocational interest categories are not aligned with the future of work. Recently a framework of vocational interest categories including: generators, artisans, carers, coordinators, designers, informers and technologists has been proposed based on current labour market data and factors shaping the world of work such as automation, globalisation and collaboration (Foundation of Young Australians, 2017). While the categories themselves could be refined the underpinning theory of person-environment fit is still widely accepted amongst career guidance professionals.

Understanding an individual's interests and connecting their interests to education and labour market opportunities is seen as a key role of career guidance practice. This is demonstrated in initiatives such as the Bullseye posters (Australian Government Department of Education Skills and Employment, 2013) and the Career Clusters resources (United States Bureau of Labour Statistics, 2015) that utilise a student's interest in school subjects to connect them to job roles and industry opportunities. Interests can form from a range of experiences. They lead people to engage with particular objects, activities or ideas over others. Interests are not simply another trait but often contain an emotional response. Emotions motivate a person to engage in particular activities to achieve competence; as well as resolving internal action conflicts by prioritising possible actions over others (Silvia, 2001). Engagement with particular objects, people and ideas can provide meaningful feedback and help to develop an individual's sense of connection to the world.

Interests are formed through a sense of curiosity combined with positive experiential feedback in three main ways: magnification; transformation and appropriation. Magnification occurs when an individual's engagement in an experience provides a positive outcome and the individual seeks to engage in similar experiences providing a

developmental cascade effect. Transformation is when an individual combines different experiences based on positive outcomes into a new combination of interest activity creating a unique interest area; and appropriation is when an individual uses others' experiences as feedback to engage in new interest areas (Silvia, 2001). In particular, vocational Interests are developed when individuals view themselves as competent in the activity and anticipate that continuing to perform the activity will produce positive and valued outcomes (Blustein, Murphy, Coutinho, Catraio, & Backus, 2011; Healy & Bourne, 2011).

Vocational interests are created through a causality of intricately linked variables of self-efficacy; outcome expectations; and personal intentions. Self-efficacy is the confidence one has in achieving their goals; it is linked to personal experiences, accomplishments and the successes and failures an individual has when engaging with specific tasks; outcome expectations are the beliefs individuals have around the likely results of their choice to engage in activities. It foreshadows how much effort an individual will make and degree of persistence they will demonstrate. Individuals are more likely to choose to engage in an interest when they see their involvement as leading to valued, positive outcomes; personal intentions help to organise and guide behaviour and sustain endeavours despite setbacks or lack of positive feedback. Intentions help to guide an individual's interests and choices based on environmental factors and performance feedback (Lent., 2005; Volodina & Nagy, 2016)

Understanding the factors involved in vocational interest formation can assist guidance professionals to not only identify interests but also to curate learning experiences to enhance interest development. However, it is important to understand that decision-making based on vocational interests is not always rational. Cognitive processes of anchoring; representativeness; and availability can create bias in the auto-perception and deliberate reasoning process. Anchoring refers to the first understandings of a concept and how the foundational edifice influences further conceptual understandings disproportionately. Representativeness describes how prior knowledge impacts judgement and often works to simplify decisions by cutting corners in the deliberation process. Availability refers to an individual's access to common ideations and thoughts; the volume and frequency of these ideas in the mind rather than the quality of the deliberation creates a selective bias that more frequent thoughts must be correct (Healy & Bourne, 2011).

Integral in vocational interest formation process are the activities that individuals participate in.

2.5.5 Career development activities

Engagement with the world around us is fundamental to the process of learning as individuals adapt to their experiences and environment. Environmental stimulation affects brain development across the lifespan. An individual's brain develops and is shaped by their own unique set of experiences and environmental influences that provide opportunities to develop brain connectivity and more sophisticated representations of knowledge through generalisation, categorisation and problem solving strategies (National Academies of Sciences Engineering and Medicine, 2018). Participation in a broad range of activities can assist in the developmental process. Participation in activities that require active engagement during direct experiential encounters can facilitate career-related learning and development. The principles of experiential learning are that learning: is a process not an outcome; is iterative not fixed; requires resolution of dissonance in perceptual interpretations; requires holistic and integrated adaptation to the environment; results from synergetic transactions between persona and environment; is the process of creating knowledge. The four modes of the experiential learning cycles include: concrete experience; reflective observation; abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation (Clark, Threeton, & Ewing, 2010; Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

Although all activities can provide a platform for vocational identity formation; activities such as work exposure, work exploration and work experience can have a positive impact on the career-related learning outcomes of students (Turner, 2020). For example, activities that provide opportunities for work exposure through direct encounters with employers can reduce risk of unemployment and can increase total salary earnings over a lifetime; address gaps in employability skills development; broaden career opportunity horizons and raise aspirations of students; and, improve engagement with academic learning through connection to the real world. Activities that provide opportunities for work exploration can improve understanding of up-to-date labour market information to improve career development decisions; improve student career planning skills; and, strengthen networks. Evidence also demonstrates activities such as work experience support students to develop and practise career management and employability skills; improve business, organisation and labour market understandings; gain important insights into their career interests and values; improve labour market opportunities and extend networks; provide

valuable experience that all potential employers value highly (The Career & Enterprise Company, 2018). The participation in career-related learning activities can improve life transitions.

2.5.6 Career and life transitions

Transitions in career development are normally thought of as points that align with age, stage or unexpected change. However, recent theory suggests individuals are participating in social pathway transitions and career development in an iterative and ongoing process (Riverin-Simard & Simard, 2018). In schools, students have always received transition support when entering and exiting school; but are now seen as needing continuous transition support 'through' school (Careers New Zealand, 2014). This change in theoretical position has been driven by the increased complexity, diversity and mobility of social identities, roles, and pathways.

Life Course Theory proposes two parallel key ideas of life trajectories and social pathways. Life trajectories are the individual movements of people through their life course; whereas, social pathways are the networks of sequenced opportunities that individuals are permitted to participate in that allow for movement and progression from one social role, position or status to another one. Social pathways may involve family, education and career pathways. Individuals may hold multiple social positions or be transitioning through multiple pathways that are each represented by acceptable social interactions, rules and behaviours. Roles provide individuals with cultural identity and meaning (Bakshi & Fialho, 2018). Factors that influence an individual's transitions through their social pathways can be the number of roles they hold; the variety of roles; the quality of the role; the accessibility of the role; the extent and speed of social mobility of the role; directions in which mobility occurs; connectivity and reach of the role, the open-endedness or set conditions of the role; the prestige as opposed to stigma attached to the role; the intrinsic or extrinsic rewards the role provides; and the responsiveness to individual initiative that the role allows (Elder & Shanahan, 2006).

These factors combine to influence roles and pathways differently for everyone as socio-cultural background, identity characteristics and locational differences generate a diversity of social pathway flows and outcomes. This uneven and convoluted transitioning process may advantage some individuals and not others. Three distinct types of cumulative patterns that may characterise social transition pathways include: duration; cumulative

continuity; and, reciprocal continuity. Duration refers to the length of time spent in a positional role that can be both associated with elevated risk or benefit; cumulative continuity refers to the chain of positions or like environments connected to the role that can lead to cumulative advantages or disadvantages over time; and, reciprocal continuity is characterised by the escalating action and reaction exchanges within the role that can ingrain the direction the pathway will follow. Although these factors can influence social pathways; life trajectories can sometimes offset or overturn cumulative patterns creating opportunities to switch roles or directions (Bakshi & Fialho, 2018).

There are five main principles underpinning the life course interactions including lifespan development; human agency, timing, linked lives; and, historical time and place. Career development is seen as a lifespan process with transitions through roles and pathways as a continuous process. Individuals are not regarded as passive recipients; rather they have agency to engage in actions and choices based on the opportunities and constraints of their historical and social context. While social pathways provide the transitional routes for individual life trajectories; life trajectories can create new social pathways or change existing ones. The timing of social pathway life transitions, events and behaviours is individual not societal; albeit, some institutional patterns such as schools provide age-graded transitional experiences. There is an acknowledgement of the co-constructed and interdependent nature of human relationships that influences the life trajectories of a range of close relationships. Individuals may travel in a 'convoy' or 'caravan' on a similar pathway intertwined with a significant other's journey. Finally, individual 'choices' and action reflect the varying amounts of freedom they have based on the prevailing historical, sociocultural and geographical contexts and circumstances an individual is positioned within (Elder & Shanahan, 2006).

Understanding life course transitions can assist professionals in providing better support to individuals. Following the four-step process examination process of: situation, self, support and strategies may provide the counsellor with a way of understanding the complex array of transitional issues a client may be facing (Schlossberg, 2011). Each individual may be experiencing a unique set of circumstances; therefore, understanding situational factors such as precipitating trigger events; the timing of changes and contextual expectations that may be contributing any transitional stress; whether any significant social role or positional changes are impacting the individual; whether the client has had experiences through a similar transition trajectory or if there any cumulative patterns evident; and, if there any

concurrent transitional pathway or identity roles that are impacting negatively on client wellbeing.

Further understanding of an individual's 'self' through factors such as demographics, psychological resources, emotional awareness and resilience may also impact how a client may navigate transitional experiences. Support for an individual may be provided by significant others including family and peers, professionals, institutions, community groups or even memory of positive events. Individuals may lose support or forget it is there during stressful transitional periods. It is important all individuals are provided with appropriate assistance during periods of significant transition. Furthermore, three types of strategies have been identified as those that: change the situation; change the meaning of the situation; and, manage the stress of the situation. While the easiest strategies are those that eliminate any negative transition experiences this is not always possible. Being able to reflect on the meanings ascribed to experiences and the emotional response to those meanings can help individuals develop more awareness and clarity to promote health and wellbeing. Finally, the explicit teaching of activities to promote positive emotional stress management should be considered. Emotional management skills are not always taught in schools but have been shown to assist all individuals to better navigate their transitions and life course events (Goodman, 2018).

Further to this, with the ever-changing nature and dynamism of the world of work a set of core transitional management competencies have been proposed for individuals to master. These four key competencies should be acquired and perfected for continuous career development to be successful. According to the Continuous Participation Model the skills needed by individuals include: understanding of self-environment fit to choose appropriate socio-vocational projects to participate in; understand the recursive relationship influences when managing the project; anticipating and planning one's socio-vocational participation path; contextualising the participation project including the people, work environment, socioeconomic context and present moment. By mastering these competencies individuals can transition successfully through their life course with more meaningful and motivating work experiences (Riverin-Simard & Simard, 2018). Continuous transition support can enhance and improve career development outcomes.

2.6 Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the literature to give context and understanding of career-related learning experiences and development. It discussed influences and factors that shape the modern world of work before defining the key term of career development. It discussed how the theory of career development has been impacted by changes in the world of work and explored the way forward for individuals and society to thrive in a world experiencing significant technological, social and global change through the developing of new work mindsets and career management skills. It investigated the theoretical foundations of a cognitive view of career learning and the systems of influence that impact forming a cognitive career network and vocational identity. The impact of work on personal wellbeing was also highlighted. The literature review then turned its attention to exploring the process of career development from a young age through to adolescence. An overview of how school systems engage in the career development process to prepare young people through the provision of career information, education and personalised guidance counselling was also presented. Finally, a review of personalised guidance in practice was explored through discussion of broad elements of personal context and background; career aspirations, goals and planning; influences on career development; formation of vocational interests: career development activities; and, career and life transitions. This literature review provides the theoretical and practical discourse that underpins the conceptual framework discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3 builds on the foundations of the literature review to develop the conceptual frame for this study. The conceptual frame seeks to answer the research question by developing a context for understanding students' perceptions of the career related learning experiences that shape their development. The conceptual framework also develops an understanding of narrative co-reflection process as part of their individual guidance and pathway planning.

Chapter Three: Conceptual Framework

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the conceptual framework used for the research. The conceptual framework develops the career literature further to provide a practical framework for answering the research questions. The central research question is “what are students’ perceptions of the career-related learning experiences that shape their career development?” The secondary research question is “what are students’ perceptions of using a narrative co-reflection process as part of their individual guidance and pathway planning?” The development of the conceptual model provided a cohesive edifice to organise the students’ perceptions of the career-related learning experiences and answer both research questions. It provides a framework to provide understanding of the phenomena of having a career-related learning and development experience. The conceptual model was created supported by perspectives outlined in the literature.

Perspectives including a cognitive-epistemological view of learning interrelated with a socio-environmental systems approach suggested the zone of recursive interactivity connecting the individual’s cognitive metasystem to their environment could offer deep insights into the essence of career-related learning and development experiences. To engage in a deeper level with the student-participants, a narrative guidance counselling approach was selected. This approach was chosen to provide a medium for deeper reflection and to raise the participants’ self-awareness of the complex interconnectivity of the recursive influences that shape their vocational identity formation and career development. This approach was designed to be used in the career guidance counselling process as part of the individual participants’ pathway planning. A narrative approach was also selected as a basis to organise the participants’ career-related learning and development experiences into a narrative form.

Due to the complex meta-temporal and meta-relational elements within the recursive interaction zone, broad career development elements were included to assist in the organisation of the participants’ perceptions. These elements were drawn from the personalised career guidance literature and included: personal context and background; career aspirations, goals and planning; influences on career development; formation of vocational interests; career development activities; and, career and life transitions. These elements were not selected in a reductionist or delineative manner but were abductively

designed to capture overlapping and complex experiences of the participants' engagement with their world. These elements provided an anchor for the narrative co-reflection process that students engaged in during their individual guidance and planning to make visible perceptions of the career-related learning experiences that shape their career development.

3.2 Understanding the career learning and development experience

The experience of career learning and development is a complex process of recursive interactivity that interconnects an individual's cognitive metasystem with their socio-environmental setting through the recursive interaction zone. Figure 3.1 outlines the features of the conceptual model of this study to highlight the interactivity between an individual's cognitive metasystem and their socio-environmental setting through the recursive interaction zone; including the co-reflection and guidance process as a supporting mechanism.

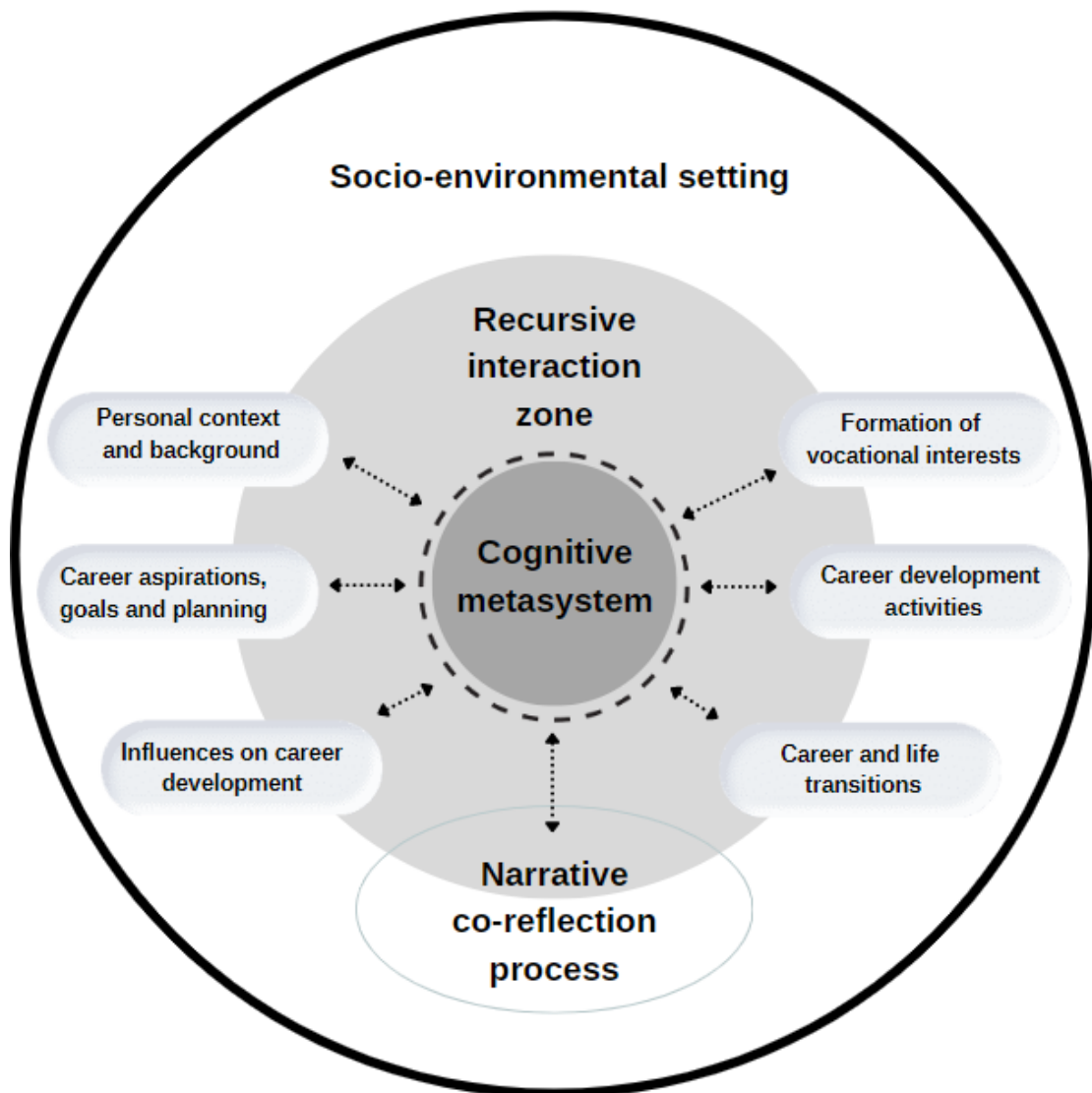
3.2.1 Cognitive metasystem

An individual's cognitive metasystem includes a range of interrelated networks that continually evolve through the formation and refinement of cognitive schematic clusters (Alexander, 2006; Magolda, 2002) Individuals ascribe concepts related to work, careers and vocation to a range of schemas of understanding relating to vocational identity; work and career knowledge and skills. The schematic cluster is interwoven more broadly with the organisational networks of personal identity and worldview. It develops through accretion, tuning and restructuring as the individual makes meaning from engaging with the world around them (Bransford et al., 2000). A schematic cluster with concepts relating to work, careers and vocation forms from a young age as children learn through experimentation, role-play and observation of others to build awareness of identity, social roles and behaviours of value. The development of schemas of understanding are influenced by a range of personal and contextual factors that shape, broaden and interconnect to the more established schematic clusters and cognitive organisational networks within the metasystem (National Academies of Sciences Engineering and Medicine, 2018; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2013). As children move into adolescence the complexity of their understanding increases as they crystallise their identity and orient themselves to future opportunities through the process of vocational circumscription (Gottfredson, 2005). This study seeks to engage and make visible the developmental

process within the participants' cognitive metasystems. The engagement with and feedback from their socio-environmental setting is critical in developing a salient understanding of work, careers and vocational identity within the cognitive metasystem.

Figure 3.1

Conceptual model



3.2.2 Socio-environmental setting

The socio-environmental setting includes a range of contextual systems that interact continually with the cognitive metasystem. Relations with family, peers, school, work and community through a range of socio-cultural discourses; as well as wider economic, geographical, political and religious institutional systems all interact and shape an individual's cognitive networks and schematic clusters (Patton & McMahon, 2014;

Vondracek & Ford, 2019). This study seeks to make visible the array of socio-environmental influences that the participants are interacting with. The complex interplay of an individual's work, careers and vocational schemas of understanding with the socio-environmental setting occurs at a psycho-molecular level within the recursive interaction zone.

3.2.3 Recursive interaction zone

Recursiveness is the multi-directional and meta-temporal process of engagement between the individual and their environment that creates meaning. This process is iterative and continual and is a melting pot of learning that shapes an individual's understanding throughout their life journey (Corballis, 2014). The symbiotic connection between an individual's cognitive metasytem and their socio-environmental setting creates relational intersective tension and can impact a person's sense of everyday being, doing and knowing (Counoyer & Lachance, 2019). This study proposes that the recursive interaction zone is a space for conceptual interchange and 'epistemogenesis' that can provide insights into the participants' experiences of career learning and development. The epistemogenic development of a learner is lifelong and complex; with information constantly being filtered, scoped, coded, connected, validated, shaped and reshaped according to the meta-epistemological parameters within an individual's Recursive Interaction Zone.

3.3 Making the career learning and development process visible

The psycho-molecular level of the recursive interaction zone means that the complex interactivity of the phenomenon is not easily visible. To understand the perceptions of the students' experience of career learning and development an approach that focuses on developing self-awareness and reflection was used. Narrative career guidance is a process that has demonstrated deep levels of engagement with an individual's understanding of the development of their own vocational identity. It goes beyond the transactional, technocratic function of "test and tell" approaches to career guidance that aim as function of matching emerging labour capital with the economic market. Narrative guidance approaches support an individual to understand their own social context and empower them through agency. The outcomes of narrative approaches may have a positive impact from both a social justice perspective: seeking to improve the mobility and opportunity of disadvantaged individuals (Hooley et al., 2018); and, also emancipatory,

providing a deeper understanding of how an individual may exercise their own political and social freedom (Hooley et al., 2019). This is achieved through the co-reflection and framing of experiences through self-storying.

3.3.1 Narrative guidance

The process of storytelling can help explain why an individual makes decisions and illuminates the meanings that guided those decisions. Career stories “tell how the self of yesterday became the self of today and will become the self of tomorrow” (Savickas, 2005, p. 58). Stories do not determine the future; however, they do play a role in helping understand how an individual adapts their identity when working on tasks, undergoing transitions, and coping with trauma. This is evident in the way individuals evaluate resources; identify personal traits and limitations; and apply their abilities (McIlveen & Patton, 2007). Narrative counselling intervention has been demonstrated to enhance an individual’s ability to reflect on and narrate their life events (Reid, 2005; Savickas, 2012). It can assist to focus the individual on their career aspirations and provide a tangible framework for extending their ideas into the future. This process often helps a person ‘hear’ what they already know through the rearrangement of what they know into a relatable and simple sequence. This helps a person to clarify their ideas and enhances their ability to decide and act (Savickas, 2012).

Narratives are often not neat and tidy renderings; rather they are complex stories interwoven with perceptions of life events and personal actions extending through past, present and future with many interpretations that produce meaning and an ongoing construction of self (Polkinghorne, 1990). Importantly the role of narrative is to organise sequences of events and bring order to disorder through a chronological structure; establish individual agency and provide a connected understanding of causal links and influences; and, facilitate a reflective way of referencing self as distinct from others and across time (Murray, 2003). Recent studies on narrative counselling have pointed to some promising results including an improvement on participants’ ability for self-reflection and reflexivity. (Lengelle et al., 2016; Maree, 2016). Research findings demonstrate that participants are more willing to engage in new action steps, actively explore solutions to problems, develop coping behaviours to deal with existent obstacles and search for further information about problems (Di Fabio, 2016).

The development of self-reflection and reflexivity can help individuals toward a deeper awareness and engagement with understanding their vocational identity and promoting more adaptive and resilient behaviours. These adaptations are key to developing the career management competencies needed for success in the fast-paced 21st century economy (Reid, Bimrose, & Brown, 2016). The engagement in self-reflection also improves the awareness of the recursive relationship an individual has with their environment; improving connectedness and imbuing confidence in meaning-making, learning and agency (McMahon & Watson, 2012). The process of storytelling can help explain why an individual makes particular choices and explicate the meanings that guided those choices. The phenomenon of 'career development' is a complex, meta-systemic process. Narrative counselling aims to help an individual articulate their story, creating a reflective and transformative space through developing awareness of the interplay of factors that shape personal experiences. It can provide insight into deeper emotions and personal life themes connecting to personal career aspirations and goals (Savickas, 2015). Narrative guidance approaches may also assist in cross-cultural understanding as the use of story and narrative is universal and utilised even by the most vulnerable populations to make sense of their life trajectories (Ribeiro, 2018). Narrative approaches offer a focus beyond the guidance interview toward understanding the complex positioning of the individual within their context and community; encouraging narratability and psychosocial discourse through openness and shared understanding and relational ontology created through the guidance relationship (Ribeiro, 2018).

Within the career guidance process individuals undertake career planning to build their self-awareness around their personal context, aspirations, interests, influences and the activities that they participate in. Understanding how their personal background shapes and influences the formation of vocational identity assists in the career pathway goals and transition plans within their life journey. This study seeks to utilise a narrative guidance approach to provide a mechanism to enhance participants' reflection and understanding.

3.3.2 Co-reflection process

The application of a narrative guidance approach within the personalised guidance and career planning process can enhance self-awareness and reflection. This process focuses on working with an individual to think about and reflect on their career learning and development experiences. It aims to make visible the individual's perceptions of their learning through organising them into relatable sequences of understanding integrated into

their career, work and vocation schemas of understanding. The process enhances awareness of the complex influences and interrelated factors shaping an individual's life, learning and career development journey and iteratively improves engagement in understanding career learning and development experiences through the application of a more nuanced and salient understanding of the individual's vocational identity. The Recursive Interaction Zone is a complex melting pot of meta-temporal and meta-relational interconnections; however, this research proposes that this space can be made visible through anchoring and organising the interconnections around the broad phenomenological elements of personalised guidance practice identified in the literature. The elements of career guidance practice used to assist with the co-reflection process were explored in the literature and are summarised in Table 3.1 and discussed below. The reflective elements will assist with the organisation of students' perceptions of their career-related learning development experiences within the Recursive Interaction Zone. The conceptual elements are summarised in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Summary of career development reflective elements

Career development reflective elements	Summary
Personal context and background	The socio-cultural factors that underpin how an individual creates meaning in their lives and engages with the world at large
Career aspirations, goals and planning	Planning of actions and behaviours to assist in the achievement and realisation of learning and career aspirations
Influences on career development	The complex systemic web of internal and external factors shaping an individual's vocational journey and identity formation
Formation of vocational interests	The formation of career and work-related areas of attraction
Career development activities	Participation in encounters that provide opportunities for learning, reflection and refinement of career and work understanding

Career and life transitions	The developmental journey of individuals through their educational and career learning phases
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3.4 Summary

This chapter has built on the broad literature review in Chapter Two that outlines career development theory by detailing a conceptual model that can be used to investigate and analyse the participant experiences of the career-related learning that shape their career development. The conceptual framework arises from perspectives on cognitive epistemology, systems theory and vocational psychology. The literature on narrative career guidance was used as a basis for the development of the co-reflection process utilised to assist in making visible the participants' narratives anchored through the career guidance elements of personal context and background; career aspirations, goals and planning; influences on career development; formation of vocational interests; participation in career development activities; and, career and life transitions to create an investigatory edifice to capture the perceptions of the participants' career learning and development experiences.

The next chapter discusses the research methodology including the research paradigm of social constructionism and the qualitative research design incorporating elements of phenomenology, narrative research and case studies to create a 'fit for purpose' design to capture and organise the participants' perceptions of the career-related learning experiences shaping their career development into phenomenarratives. The instrumentation and data procedures are discussed including the two phases of data analysis: (1) restorying and re-transcription of the field texts and interviews into the phenomenarratives; and (2) a thematic content analysis of the phenomenarratives to make visible emergent themes. Further to this, there is a discussion on the collection and analysis of student feedback data on participating in the career narrative co-reflection process.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology used in this study including the paradigm, design, instrumentation and procedures. The research methodology aims to answer the key research question: 'what are students' perceptions of the career-related learning experiences that shape their career development?' The research methodology arises from the paradigm of social constructionism. This study uses a qualitative research design incorporating elements of phenomenology, narrative research and case studies to create a 'fit for purpose' design to capture and organise the participants' perceptions of the career-related learning experiences shaping their career development into phenomenarratives. The design of the instrumentation including field texts and interviews is discussed followed by the data collection procedures. Phase One of the research involved the re-storying and re-transcription of the field texts and interviews into the phenomenarratives. Phase Two of the research was a thematic content analysis of the phenomenarratives to make visible common themes. Further to this, there is a discussion on the collection and analysis of student feedback data on participating in the career narrative co-reflection process as part of their individual guidance and pathway planning to answer the secondary research question.

4.2 Research paradigm

The epistemological perspective underpinning the formation of this research is situated within a social constructionist paradigm. Social constructionism is a poststructuralist approach that is defined by critical approaches to understanding knowledge, language and discourse. It seeks to challenge taken for granted ways of knowing to uncover common assumptions and biases, leading to new and diverse ways of describing and explaining the world and the people within it. Knowledge is seen as a relative product of culture and history, dependant on social processes of communication, conflict, negotiation and rhetoric for generating meaning (Schultheiss & Wallace, 2012). Language and discourse scaffold and sustain the shared cultural understandings that shape patterns of social action while excluding others. Knowledge is conceived as a culturally-bound view of the world that provides discursive power to define identity and shape accepted social rules and subsequent interactions. This perspective suggests the goal of research is no longer to uncover truths; rather, to identify new ways of understanding with the potential to generate

social change. New knowledge is generated through relationships and reflective practice; shifting away from questions around the nature of people or society towards an investigation of how forms of knowledge or experience of phenomena are generated through the social interaction of people. Knowledge becomes something that is created and understood together, relative to the social situation it was generated in (Schultheiss & Wallace, 2012; Stead & Bakker, 2012).

It is important to note the similarities and subtle differences between constructionism and constructivism. Both deviate from the positivist perspective that knowledge is purely objective and provides fundamental facts and truths about the nature of reality; towards a view that knowledge is constructed by individuals to represent reality and is never free from the individual biases that shape the representation. However, the main distinguishing factor is one of emphasis on the site of knowledge construction: constructivism has a focus on the internal mind and cognitive processes; whereas, constructionism has a focus on the social processes that shape and engage with the internal mind (Young & Popadiuk, 2012). Despite the subtle distinction, there is much similarity in the epistemological foundations of constructionism and constructivism. The value of switching focus to both sites of knowledge construction and the recursive spaces of engagement between the internal and external worlds may provide a broader, more nuanced understanding through the generation of multi-perspective insights across the spectrum of constructivist discourse. Typically, social constructionism asserts that knowledge is constructed through the interplay of social interactions and the discourses, institutions and practices that guide them. People's interpretations of the world produce shared understandings of concepts, roles, identities, norms, institutions, conventions and rules that influence the construction of social reality. Central to the construction processes of social reality are concepts including: typification, objectification, internalisation, institutionalisation, legitimation.

- Typification involves the process of using a schema of types to engage with and understand social reality. These schemas become increasingly more abstract along a continuum that separates the sensory 'here and now' toward an augmented social construction of reality;
- Objectification refers to the process where human activity or its product is manifested through language, social norms and codified rules;

- Internalisation is the process of structural adjustment that transforms the external world into an individual's subjective consciousness rendering the individual as a 'product of society';
- Institutionalisation is the process where the typification of habitualised social actions is reciprocated to empower actors and control accepted conduct;
- Legitimation is the process where the institutional order is explained and justified.

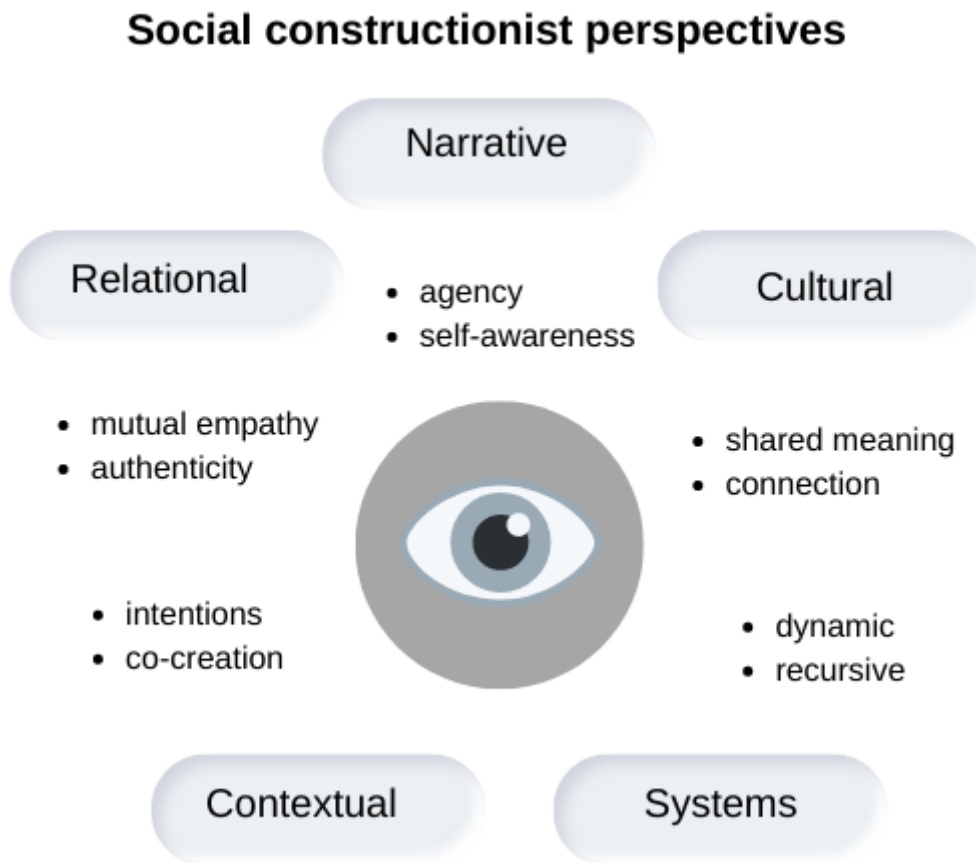
These five processes construct and sustain the shared social realities that individuals experience. Examples of these processes are often evident in the conventions that underpin the formation of legal and governance frameworks as applied to all facets of civic life, including education (Flum & Cinamon, 2012). When applying a social constructionist lens to the discourse of career development and vocational psychology within education and guidance systems, hidden and taken for granted assumptions can be made visible. Assumptions around the purpose of education and work point to embedded ideologies of neo-liberalism and capitalism (Hooley, 2022). These assumptions are entrenched in a range of concepts such as the hegemonic definition of 'career' being monocultural and shaped by the influences of Western, individualistic, male, ethnocentric and middle-class values. Education as a competitive endeavour, ranking participants against other students in the 'market' based on academic achievement. The centrality of the 'market work role' as necessary to living a successful life and that all individuals have the same definitions of career and work success. Assumptions that all individuals have the freedom to make choices about the types of education and work they want to participate in and that all individuals have a level playing field to achieve their education, work and career choices irrelevant of access to levels of social and economic capital. Assumptions that the 'vocational self' and its traits can be conceived of as a holistic and internal construct that can be 'discovered' and matched to occupations. Also, that deeply embedded and often invisible processes use a pathologising discourse that aims to correct the individual as a patient through prescribing courses of treatment to those suffering symptoms of learning, education, work or career deficit and those who deviate from the work 'norm'. These processes may overtly impact and create an imbalance in power relationships within the guidance and education systems. (Young & Popadiuk, 2012). These imbalances may disenfranchise participants as they seek to engage in a system that is perceived to be weighted against them and doesn't legitimately engage with them to understand their unique context and needs. These lived experiences may lead to disconnection, disengagement and an erosion of trust in the system and have a negative impact on

wellbeing and mental health. These assumptions may be explored and challenged through a social constructionist perspective to provide a counterbalance and encourage diversity when considering the prevailing and hegemonic assumptions embedded within the current education discourse.

Research from a social constructionist perspective should seek to provide clarity and transparency on how discourses may be impacting on individuals, groups and society as a whole. Within the social constructionist paradigm there are recognised perspectives that organise and shape thinking about career development and vocational psychology including: narrative, relational, systems, contextual action and cultural perspectives (Young & Popadiuk, 2012). Narrative approaches include a focus on the individual, agency and self-awareness as they create meaning through one's experience anchored through ideas of characterisation, setting, plot, themes and journey. Relational approaches centralise relationships and connection as a way of making meaning, seeking mutual empathy, empowerment and authenticity in the process. They aim to contextualise work across diverse cultures and social realities to focus on an interconnected web of social relationships that create value in people's lives. A systems perspective provides a broad, contextualised view of overlapping systems of influence dynamically related to each other and characterised by recursiveness, change and chance. The complex interplay of these multifaceted systems shapes how individuals create meaning in their lives. A contextual action perspective views all human behaviour as goal-directed and intentional; often goals and actions are jointly constructed through social engagement with others (even if not physically present). While some actions are short-lived many are repeated to achieve longer term project goals. Meaning is made from understanding the social influences shaping decision-making and social actions. A cultural approach seeks to use language, communication and relationships to critique and understand social and cultural conceptions such as career. Meaning is made from deconstructing the essence and social assumptions embedded within taken for granted concepts (Schultheiss & Wallace, 2012; Young & Popadiuk, 2012). This research recognises the deeply complex social theories of career development and vocational psychology and seeks to use social constructionist perspectives as a basis to construct shared meaning and understanding within the research design. A summary of the key elements of social constructionist approaches is included in Figure 4.1. It includes the five key social constructionist perspectives of narrative, relational, cultural, contextual action and systems and the key ideas underpinning the way knowledge is constructed through each perspective.

Figure 4.1

Social constructionist perspectives



4.3 Research design

Based on a social constructionist perspective, qualitative research was selected as the basis for designing this study. Qualitative research uses a naturalistic approach, seeking to study real-world situations as they unfold naturally with the setting and researcher as direct sources of data collection. Qualitative data are collected in the form of words rather than numbers, seeking to capture deep and detailed descriptions of individuals' personal experiences and perspectives. Qualitative research is concerned with the process of how things happen; understanding that change is constant and that dynamic systems have complex interdependencies that are not easily reducible to discrete, linear cause and effect relationships. Immersion in the details and specifics can provide qualitative researchers with a platform for inductive analysis that offers an open approach to exploring categories, dimensions and interrelationships of the phenomenon being studied (Cohen,

Manion, & Morrison, 2017; Fraenkel, Wollen, & Hyun, 2019). Qualitative research values the participants' personal perspectives, assuming that each case is unique and contextually sensitive. The research is often conducted through direct contact with the people, situation or phenomenon being studied. While qualitative research theory has broadly defined operational approaches such as narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, case studies and ethnography; there remains a strong advocacy for a 'fit for purpose' approach to research design rather than a strict adherence to a single purist methodology. Qualitative researchers may combine elements of different approaches depending on what is being studied. The focus should be on the research questions and objectives and how particular methodological approaches allow for salient data to be collected (Cohen et al., 2017; Fraenkel et al., 2019).

The research focus for this study seeks to broaden and deepen the understanding of how secondary school students experience career development. This research seeks to collect data on students' perceptions and lived experiences of the social phenomenon of 'career development'. A 'fit for purpose' design for this research combines elements of phenomenology, narrative research, and case study approaches organised into 'phenomenarratives'. The first phase of the data analysis used a re-transcription and re-storying method to compile the participants' phenomenarratives from the raw field texts. Further to this, a content analysis approach is utilised for the second phase of the data analysis to categorise and discuss the emergent themes.

4.3.1 Phase one

Phase one of the research combines elements of phenomenology, narrative research, and case study approaches.

Phenomenology.

Phenomenology is the study of events and interactions of the individuals engaging in them to understand the commonalities of their perceptions (Slavin, 2007). A phenomenological approach advocates for a study of direct experience and sees behaviour as determined by the phenomena of experience rather than by external reality. A phenomenological approach seeks to uncover the essential characteristics or 'essence' of the phenomenon being studied to understand 'common sense knowledge' and how everyday experiences are perceived and sustained by those experiencing them. The most distinctive feature is a focus on subjective experience through the individual and social construction of reality.

Detailed descriptions, authentic 'lived experiences' and complexity of meanings are the hallmarks of a phenomenological approach. The detailed descriptions are analysed to identify and cluster common perceptions of experience into themes (Cohen et al., 2017; Fraenkel et al., 2019). In this research design the phenomenon being investigated is the participant's lived experience of career-related learning and development. The conceptual framework provided phenomenological elements based on the literature to scaffold and anchor meaning of the lived experiences of participants.

Narrative research.

Narrative research describes the lives of individuals through the collection of field texts and writing of narratives about individual experiences (Clandinin & Rosieck, 2012). Narrative researchers focus in-depth on an individual's experiences in order to construct an understanding of how individual history and past experiences impact on and shape present and future experiences (Cresswell, 2012). The narrative researcher focusses on the participants' thoughts, feelings, ideas and stories about his or her experiences to develop a chronological perspective of individual experiences (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). This emphasis on sequence differentiates narrative research from other forms of research (Cresswell, 2012). The researcher analyses raw data from field texts to identify key elements, a process called 're-transcription'. The researcher chronologises and re-writes the key elements into a sequence of events, known as 're-storying' (Ollerenshaw & Cresswell, 2002). Narrative researchers identify key themes during the re-transcription step and incorporate these themes into the re-storying process (Cresswell, 2012). The setting or context of the individual is central to their story. Re-storied accounts may begin with a description of the setting before the researcher conveys the events in the story or in other cases it may be woven into the narrative (Cresswell, 2012). In narrative research, the inquirer actively involves the participant in the inquiry as it unfolds. This collaboration involves the negotiation of relationships to lessen the potential gap between the narrative reported by the participant and the one told by the researcher (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In this research design the researcher and participants collaborated through active discussion of the student's perceptions of their career-related learning and development experiences. The perceptions were recorded and used to create a chronologised sequence of ideas to understand the participants' perceptions of experiencing career learning and development. However, while traditional narrative research uncovers themes as the research progresses and utilises narrative elements such as character, setting and plot to organise these themes into a chronological sequence, this design utilises the pre-

identified phenomenological career development elements from the co-reflection framework as the anchor for the re-transcription and re-storying process. Table 4.1 illustrates the different methodological process. Further to this, emergent themes within the students' narratives will be identified, discussed and related back to the literature.

Table 4.1

Methodological differences between narrative and phenomenological research

Process	Narrative research	Phenomenological narrative research
Data collection	Field texts, interviews	Field texts, interviews
Re-transcription	Identifying themes of importance and organising content around themes	Mapping content to pre-identified phenomena-based elements
Re-storying	Shaping narrative for chronological cohesion using narrative elements of plot, character and setting	Shaping narrative for chronological cohesion using phenomena-based elements
Co-reflection	Participant input on themes of importance and their representation within the narrative	Participant input on content linked to phenomena-based elements and their representation within the narrative

Case studies.

Case studies are detailed, in-depth examinations of specific and real-life instances in action that are particularly complex and bounded by context. Case studies provide unique examples of real people in real situations and can work to complement abstract theories or principles by creating a practical context in which they fit together. Case studies can penetrate situations deeply to understand the many variables and implications of how these variables interact. They aim to create rich and vivid illustrations of chronological events that blend descriptions with analysis to seek understanding of perceptions to highlight relevance of experience within the world of those involved in the research. A key feature is the rejection of a single reality in favour of multiple, multivalent realities operating in the situation. Reflexivity is central to the process of data collection. This research study

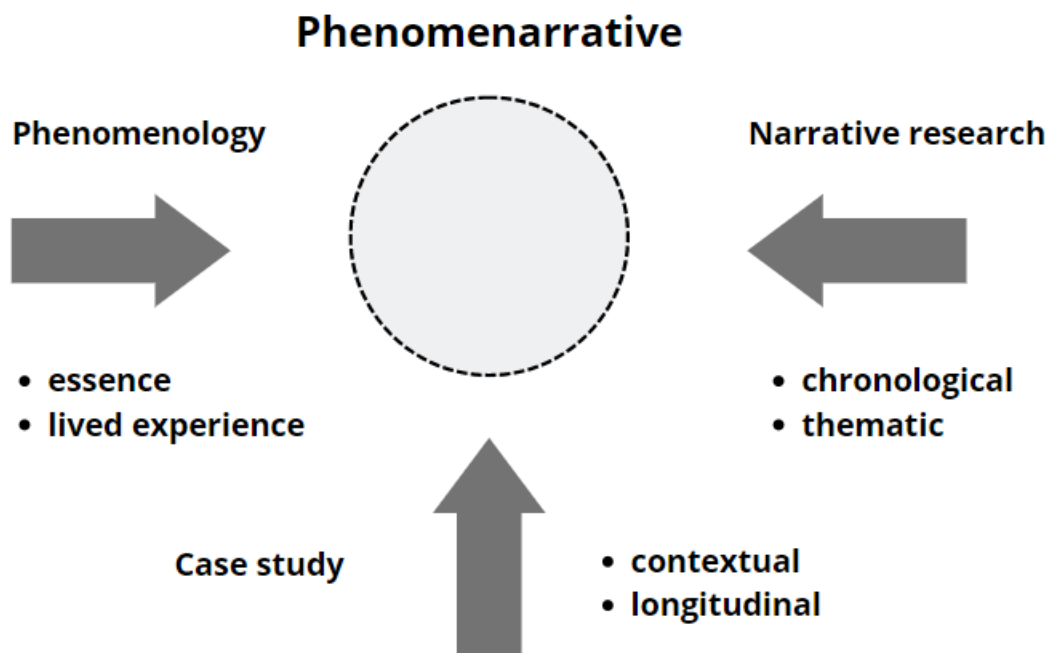
is classified as instrumental: examining a particular case to gain insight into a phenomena; and, longitudinal: to observe diachronic changes over time by working with the same cohort of participants in a sustained process to provide a sense of the dynamics of evolving situations (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013; Stake, 2005). This research design involves the study of three cases bounded by and situated within the context of understanding the personalised perceptions of how students experience career development throughout the final years of their secondary schooling.

Phenomenarratives.

Through combining particular elements of the methodological approaches mentioned above this study has created as a 'fit for purpose' design that approaches answering the research question in a unique methodological way. The findings of this research are structured as 'phenomenarratives' to create deep, multiple and interconnective layers of participant voice. The focus is on the interactivity between the characterisation and setting through the essence of experience. Traditional narrative sequences focus more on the events and plot with a beginning, middle and end that seeks to resolve conflict through rising and falling action. A phenomenarrative, in contrast, seeks to provide a rich tapestry of perception through the co-narration process to help the participants 'come to know' the phenomena they are experiencing in a deeper and more defined way. The story is iterative and ongoing; creating a sequence of 'narrative snapshots' as part of the process of understanding the transformational space of connectivity between characterisation and environmental setting. The narrative development is an exploration of the melting pot of recursive interactivity that connects the internal and external worlds of experience. The elements of the phenomenarrative are outlined in Figure 4.2. The phenomenarrative design combines elements from phenomenology, narrative research and case study approaches to make visible the participants' experiences of career learning and development. It seeks to capture the essence of the participants' lived experiences over within a chronological and contextualised sequence of events, over a sustained period of time, to provide insight into emerging themes of experience. Phase two of the research analyses the emerging themes of experience.

Figure 4.2

Elements of a phenomenarrative



4.3.2 Phase two

Phase two of the research study used a thematic content analysis approach.

Content analysis.

Content analysis is a technique to analyse texts containing human communications. The characteristics of content analysis include coding the descriptive information into categories based on the prevalence and frequency of the content to formulate themes (Fraenkel et al., 2019). The themes arise from a combination of manifest content and latent content. Manifest content refers to the surface level content such as words that can be tabulated for frequency of occurrence. Latent content, on the other hand, refers to the underlying meanings that arise from the manifest content. This requires more subjective analysis by the researcher to interpret the data and look for words and phrases or their syntactic synonyms that can be clustered together to indicate themes at a deeper level (Fraenkel et al., 2019). In this research a combination of coding and categorising the manifest and latent content was used to organise the emerging themes arising from the phenomenarratives. The themes were discussed to provide more insights into the

perceptions of the lived experiences of the students and the career-related learning and development experiencing shaping their vocational identity. This approach was also utilised in the analysis of the student survey feedback.

4.4 Instrumentation

The career experience conceptual model and the narrative co-reflection framework outlined in Chapter Three provides the basis for the design of the instrumentation used in this study.

There were three methods used to collect data within this study. They included field texts, interviews and surveys.

4.4.1 Field texts

Field texts are unique data-collection instruments created 'in situ' to collect specific research data. They are highly sensitive to the context of the research, the specific participants, and the relationship between the researcher and the participants (Maxwell, 2013). Field texts may include field notes, observations, artefacts or other documents. In this research there were two field instruments created including the career development reflection journal (CNJ) and the career goal setting table (CGT). The career development reflection journal was designed to collect participants' thoughts, feelings and ideas of their career development experiences. The journal was structured using the narrative co-reflection framework to collect data on student perceptions of how their backgrounds, goals, influences, interests, activities and life transition experiences shape their career development and journey through secondary school (see Appendix A). The career goal setting table was designed to organise the participants' career development goals including the type of goal and some of the strategies available for achieving each of the goals (see Appendix C).

4.4.2 Interviews

Interviews are defined as interchanges of views between one or more people on a topic of interest. They enable participants to discuss their viewpoints and experiences of the world to explore complex issues in depth and provide insights on how and why people frame their ideas and make connections between them. It is a social and interpersonal encounter; rather than simply a data collection exercise (Cohen et al., 2017). There are

four main types of approaches to interviews including: informal-conversational, interview guide, standardised open-ended, and closed fixed response. In informal-conversational interviews there are no predetermined topics and questions emerge from the context in the natural course of things; an interview guide approach has specified topics to cover in advance; however the sequence, and wording of questions is decided during the interview; during standardised open-ended interviews all interviewees are asked the same basic questions in the same order but elicit open responses; and, in a closed, fixed approach questions and response categories are fixed and the respondent chooses from among these (Fraenkel et al., 2019). In this research design an interview guide approach was used. This type of interview allowed the researcher to set topics to discuss based on the career co-reflection framework that allowed for deeper reflection and reflexivity within the interviews. There were two types of interviews conducted during the study including career narrative interviews (CNI) and individual pathway guidance (IPG) interviews. The career narrative interviews involved in-depth discussion of the career narrative journal field text to provide rich and deeper insights on the participants' perceptions of their career development experiences. This interview allowed a safe space for reflecting on the experiences that were shaping the participants' career development (see Appendix B). Career planning and goals were co-created using the career goal setting table based on the experience of 'coming to know' shared by the researcher and the participant. This reflexive and constructive approach created a foundation for career development goals to be set. The individual pathway guidance interviews followed a more traditional approach to the guidance method through a review of the participants' career development goals within the career goal setting table as a starting point and then discussion on the strategies being used to achieve them (see Appendix D).

4.4.3 Surveys

Surveys are instruments that collect information by asking questions of the members of the group being studied. The information collected can be used to describe the members' personal characteristics, opinions or knowledge of particular topics or issues (Fraenkel et al., 2019). The survey instruments (see Appendix E) in this study were designed to capture information from the specific participants on their experiences of being involved in the study. The data were collected to answer the research question of understanding students' perceptions of using a career narrative co-reflection process as part of their individual

guidance and pathway planning. Surveys were used on three separate occasions so that participants could provide their views on their participation and experiences.

- Survey One: This survey collected qualitative feedback on participating in the career narrative interview (Nov 2017)
- Survey Two: This survey collected qualitative feedback on the participation in the research process (Nov 2018)
- Survey Three: This survey collected qualitative feedback on the participants' final thoughts after completing the study (Feb 2020).

4.3 Research context

It is important to understand the unique context of the research study to understand the decision making in relation to the research design and procedures.

4.3.1 Career education policy in Western Australia

In Australia there is a shared responsibility for funding education between the Federal and State governments. The Alice Springs Declaration provides a commitment from all States to create a “world class education system that encourages and supports every student to be the very best they can be, no matter where they live or what kind of learning challenges they may face” (Education Council, 2019). Likewise, each State has committed to the National Career Education Strategy to ensure “every school student will have access to high quality career education (Department of Education and Training, 2019).” However, in practice, each State has its own legislation, policies and Departments that are responsible for education. In Western Australia the Department of Education is responsible to the Minister for providing Education policy, resourcing public schools and regulating non-government schools while the School Curriculum Standards Authority is responsible for curriculum regulation and compliance. The Department of Education has published and promoted guidelines for career education in schools (Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2012; Department of Education Western Australia, 2015). While these guidelines exist and are actively promoted the responsibility lies with individual schools to implement career education and there are no quality standards or regulations in place to ensure students have access to quality career education in every Western Australian school. In practice, this means that career professionals in schools are constantly negotiating with multiple stakeholders to bargain for resources and time within

the curriculum and school calendar. This context is not unique to WA with research indicating other Australian jurisdictions have similar environments, suggesting career education in Australia is an area that could be improved to ensure consistent access to quality career education for all Australian students (Bennett et al., 2022; Ithaca Group, 2019; Urbis, 2011).

In the school where this study was conducted the career education professional had tenure of six years and had negotiated for and successfully implemented a Year 10 Career Education elective that provided opportunities for career-related learning and work experience placements. There was no support from other school stakeholders for a whole year group timetabled program of career education in Year 10 as this would have taken time away from other school subjects. However, during the study the career educator secured additional time from other academic departments to develop a four-day program for all Year 9 students to participate in once they had completed all other curriculum requirements. This context means that much of the career-related learning and development of students throughout their primary school and lower secondary school journey was organic and unplanned.

During this study, the Labor Government in WA was returned to office. There were a range of positive re-election commitments made in relation to career education in schools including funding for the training of career practitioners, the development of a career taster program in Year 9 and the creation of career education resources accessible to every school (Department of Education Western Australia, 2021) although no commitment was made to investing in a system-wide approach to quality standards.

4.3.2 Selection of the sample

In this design, a combination of factors including accessibility, policy requirements for research in schools and available resources influenced the decision to conduct the research within one school. Within the school where the research took place, the sample of students selected to participate in the research were drawn from a purposive sample. A purposive sample is selected based on prior information known about the population and an expectation that the participants selected have the necessary expertise to provide the information required (Fraenkel et al., 2019). In this research all students participating in the Year 10 career education elective had the foundational knowledge and understanding of career development language and theory to participate within the study. They had also

made a commitment to their own career development by selecting the elective. Students in Year 10 in WA are 15 years of age.

Students within this elective completed a career identity investigation during Semester One that provided them opportunities to reflect on their external social influences, internal personal influences and local labour market information as well as develop job search skills in identifying suitable industries and organisations for their work experience placements. These formation activities were important so that the participants had the foundational knowledge and understanding to communicate their perceptions of career development as required in the study. It was important, that with their parents, they were able to make an informed decision on participating in the study. As this research was designed to follow the students' lived experiences over an extended period it was important that the sample of students who participated had the commitment and inclination to engage fully throughout the entirety of the study. The study was only advertised to parents through school channels by the senior leadership team on one occasion with students and parents provided information on the depth and personal nature of the study and the ongoing time commitment. The Dean of Studies then provided this information in person directly to the students. No further promotion of the study was undertaken to avoid any perceived conflict of interest as the researcher was also the students' teacher during the launch of the proposed study. The balancing of unequal power relationships and the dignity of students within this study was of paramount importance and due care and consideration were given at all times within the study.

Out of the 63 students invited to participate in the study only three students, in consultation with their parent carers, decided to commit to the study. Due to the instrumental and longitudinal nature of the cases being studied (Fraenkel et al., 2019) a sample size of between 3 - 6 participants was aimed for. While a wider sample size including more diverse demographics in relation to gender and study pathways would have been preferred, the minimum threshold of three was reached and a decision to commence with the study was taken.

4.3.2 Positionality of the researcher

The researcher undertook this study as a professional commitment to improve the quality and standards of career education within WA schools. This study was aimed to shine a light on the lived experiences of students to understand the nature of their journey and

empathise with their experiences to see how we could improve and support them. Given the nature and context of this study there was some overlap between the professional and researcher roles although there was clear delineation between the time used for the research study and the type of personalised guidance practice utilised within the study.

Professional role

For the first 6 months of the study, the researcher was the participants' teacher. However, during Year 11 and 12, the researcher was not the participants' teacher but still remained the participants' career practitioner, with responsibility for the career education and development of the participants and also the 917 other students at the school (2019 enrolment figure). The professional responsibilities of the role included a teaching load of Year 10 career education classes, management of the Vocational Education and Training Department, coordination of the Trade Training Centre, administration of the Workplace Learning program as well as personalised career guidance sessions. Therefore, given the volume of students and time constraints the personal career guidance services at the College followed a triage approach (Career Industry Council of Australia, 2014) with focus on Year 11 and 12 pathways and subject selections or referral in younger years due to disengagement from academic learning. The personal career guidance sessions with students within the professional role were often ad hoc, truncated and transactional in nature with a focus on specific outcomes such as how to access external education and training programs suitable for the student. Time was utilised as efficiently and effectively as possible to benefit the students with the nature and context of the professional role and formal job description.

Researcher role

The nature of this study was in depth and personal, extending beyond the traditional context of career guidance services within the secondary school of this size and with the resources available. While it may be conceived that advanced professional practitioners with significant time and financial resources could undertake a similar guidance approach across all students as part of routine practice it was certainly an extension beyond the conventional practices within the school and similar schools in WA. The research study existed outside of the formal career development services provided at the school. Out of school time including after school and school holiday sessions were utilised for interviews and research activities. This provided a clear delineation between the research study and research role in comparison to the professional role.

4.5 Research procedures

The research study commenced in July 2017 with three students in Year 10 confirming their participation. During the launch of the study the school distributed forms including the description of the study and consent information for students and parents. Consent was provided and returned by the parents of the three students who decided to participate. The study commenced through an introductory session where the Career Narrative Journals were distributed. The researcher worked with the participants to check understanding of all areas of the Journal. The students completed some of the questions and then took the Journal with them for more reflection and consideration.

4.5.1 Data collection

The data collection commenced in October 2017 when students submitted their completed journals. The journals were reviewed by the researcher in preparation for the first Career Narrative interviews. These interviews took place in November 2017 and offered robust insights and perceptions as the researcher and student discussed and elaborated on the journal content. Based on the discussions and perceptions of the students a career goal setting table was co-created for each participant. Each of the three career narrative interviews were recorded and transcribed. A feedback survey was also distributed and collected.

In April 2018, a follow up interview was conducted with each of the students to provide an update on how they were going with their career goals and to collect more perceptions of their career-related learning and development experiences. These interviews were recorded and transcribed. Participant J needed further time than was allocated and the interview was extended over two additional sessions. During June 2018 students were provided with a new career narrative journal to complete at their own pace. These were collected in August 2018 and another set of career narrative guidance interview were booked in. The Year 11 journals were discussed in depth during the interview which was recorded and transcribed. A new goal setting table was co-created. Students were provided with a draft of the phenomenarratives curated from Year 10 data collection activities to review and provide feedback on. A follow up individual pathway interview was booked in November 2018 at the end of the school year so students could provide insights and perceptions on their Year 11 journey. A second survey was distributed and collected as well.

In 2019, during the final year of the participants' studies an individual pathway interview was booked in once during first term and then twice during second term at the request of the participants who wanted to discuss their experiences prior and post examinations. As well as examinations, the student's career-related learning and development experiences were discussed. In June, a final career narrative journal was distributed to the students and collected for the final set of career narrative interviews in September. Students were also provided with a draft of the phenomenarratives curated from combined Year 10 and 11 data collection activities to review and provide feedback on. Due to student final examinations and travel arrangements no further interviews could be booked during 2019.

The final individual student interviews were conducted in February 2020 and the last feedback survey was distributed and collected. This was the end of the data collection activities and Table 2.4 outlines a summary of this. In September 2020 students were provided the final copies of the phenomenarratives including the combined Year 10, 11, 12 and post-school data to review and accept as an accurate representation of their journey.

Furthermore, a description of data sources is outlined in Table 4.3 that describes the instruments used to collect data. The templates for all source types are located in the Appendices. Table 4.4 is a catalogue of raw data sources and their usage within the research study. As each of the data sources were collected they were itemised and catalogued for access during the data analysis process.

Table 4.2*Data source collection dates and activities*

Date	Description
Term 3, August 2017	Research introduction session and distribution of Career Narrative Journal-1
Term 4, October 2017	Collection of CNJ-1
Term 4, November 2017	Booking, conducting, transcribing CNI-1 and co-creation of CGT-1
Term 4, November 2017	Distribution, collection of S-1
Term 2, April / May 2018	Booking, conducting, transcribing of IPG-1 and review of CGT-1
Term 2, June 2018	Distribution of CNJ-2
Term 3, August 2018	Collection of CNJ-2
Term 3, August 2018	Booking, conducting, transcribing, CNI-2 and co-creation of CGT-2
Term 4, November 2018	Booking, conducting, transcribing, IPG-2 and review of CGT-2
Term 4, November 2018	Distribution / collection S-2
Term 1, February 2019	Booking, conducting, transcribing IPG-3 and review of CGT-3
Term 2, April 2019	Booking, conducting, transcribing IPG-4 and review of CGT-4
Term 2, June 2019	Booking, conducting, transcribing IPG-5 and review of CGT-5
Term 2, June 2019	Distribution of CNJ-3
Term 3, August 2019	Collection of CNJ-3
Term 3, September 2019	Booking, conducting, transcribing CNI-3 and co-creation of CGT-6
Term 1, February 2020	Booking, conducting, transcribing IPG-6 and review of CGT-6
Term 1, February 2020	Distribution, collection of S-3
Term 3, September, 2020	Feedback review on final phenomenarratives

Table 4.3*Data source descriptions*

Source type	Description
Career Narrative Journal (CNJ)	A field text organised using the co-reflection framework to collect students' perceptions of their career development experiences
Career Narrative Interview (CNI)	A personalised guidance interview to reflect on and discuss the Career Narrative Journal. An audio transcription of these interviews was collected.
Career Goal Table (CGT)	A goal setting framework that was co-created during the Career Narrative Interview
Individual Pathway Guidance (IPG)	A personalised guidance interview to reflect on the students' Career Goal Table and career learning and development experiences. An audio transcription of these interviews was collected.
Survey (S)	A feedback survey to collect the perceptions of students on the process of participating in the co-reflection process

Table 4.4*Data source references and usage*

Source type	Raw text reference	Data source usage
Career Narrative Journal (CNJ)	CNJ-1A, CNJ-2A, CNJ-3A	Re-transcribed CNJ texts into draft phenomenarratives A, J and S.
	CNJ-1J, CNJ-2J, CNJ-3J	
	CNJ-1S, CNJ-2S, CNJ-3S	Draft content was re-storied
Career Narrative Interview (CNI)	CNI-1A, CNI-2A, CNI-3A	Re-transcribed CNI texts into draft phenomenarratives A, J and S.
	CNI-1J, CNI-2J, CNI-3J	
	CNI-1S, CNI-2S, CNI-3S	Draft content was re-storied
Career Goal Table (CGT)	CGT-1A, CGT-2A, CGT-3A	Re-transcribed CGT texts into draft phenomenarratives A, J and S.
	CGT-1J, CGT-2J, CGT-3Ji, CGT-3Jii	
	CGT-1S, CGT-2S, CGT-3S	Draft content was re-storied
Individual Pathway Guidance (IPG)	IPG-1A, IPG-2A, IPG-3A IPG-4A, IPG-5A, IPG-6A	Re-transcribed IPG texts into draft phenomenarratives A, J and S.
	IPG-1Ji, IPG-1Jii, IPG-1Jiii, IPG-2J, IPG-3J, IPG-4J, IPG-5J, IPG6J	
	IPG-1S, IPG-2S, IPG-3S IPG-4S, IPG-5S, IPG-6S	Draft content was re-storied
Survey (S)	S-1A, S-2A, S-3A	Content analysis of raw survey texts were conducted
	S-1J, S-2J, S-3J	
	S-1S, S-2S, S-3S	

4.5.2 Data analysis

The data analysis process in this study was conducted in two main phases. Firstly, the analysis of the raw field texts using a re-transcription and re-storying method to compile the participants' phenomenarratives. Secondly, to analyse the findings within the phenomenarratives to identify a range of key themes for discussion that can help to answer the research questions.

Phase one: phenomenarrative construction.

During the first phase the raw field texts were re-transcribed using the career development elements of the co-reflection framework. The raw texts included the career narrative journals, the career narrative interview transcripts, the individual pathway guidance interview transcripts and the goal setting tables. The process of re-transcription commenced and data were combined from the source texts and organised into phenomenological categories of personal context and background; career aspirations, goals and planning; influences on career development; formation of vocational interests; career-related learning activities; and, career and life transitions. Once the data were organised and re-transcribed using the co-reflection elements the process of re-storying commenced. The re-storying process re-organised the raw data into a chronological sequence of experiences to highlight the longitudinal development of the participants' journey through the final years of secondary schooling. The re-storying involved the organisation of the broad elements into a chronology of Year 10, 11 and 12 experiences. The re-storying process focussed on maintaining participant voice to ensure the accuracy of the students' perceptions of their career development experiences. The raw data were organised into a relatable sequence privileging student language and discourse. The re-storying process focussed on sequencing, linking, cohesion and readability while maintaining the way the key ideas were represented. The continuity and participation of the researcher in the co-reflection process during the interviews was critical to maintain the accuracy within the re-storying process. It allowed for a more cohesive and nuanced understanding of the student's perceptions throughout the study. Finally, the draft phenomenarratives were provided to the participants to review and offer feedback on iteratively throughout the study. The final phenomenarrative versions were provided to students at the end of Phase One and the students provided feedback that the phenomenarratives were an accurate representation of their perceptions and journey. As students were 18 at the time of the final phenomenarrative review they provided final

consent on their stories being published. Further to this, the student feedback surveys were also collected and the data were collated and chronologised in the findings.

Phase two: thematic content analysis.

In the second phase of data analysis the phenomenarratives were analysed and the emergent themes were identified. The themes were identified to provide insights into the research question of understanding the students' perceptions of experiencing career development during school. The phenomenarratives were coded and categorised through the mapping of the manifest and latent content. The themes were selected for discussion based on the frequency of occurrence and also the commonalties of experiences in all three phenomenarratives. The themes were discussed though the inclusion of quotes from the phenomenarratives and the discussion of the students' perceptions of their career development experiences. This phase also included the analysis and discussion of the student feedback surveys to provide perspectives on the secondary research question seeking to understand the students' perceptions of using the narrative co-reflection process as part of their individual guidance and pathway planning.

4.6 Ethical considerations

As outlined in Section 4.3, understanding the policy context, sampling selection and positionality of the researcher are significant when understanding the ethical decisions made during this study. The areas are further discussed using an established ethical framework:

4.6.1 Informed consent

Whenever possible research should be carried out with study methods that do not require deception. This is easier in naturalistic situations where the phenomena being studied can be observed relatively frequently (Fraenkel et al., 2019). In this study there were no concerns of deception as the participants and their guardians were well-informed about the nature of the research. All participants and families were provided with detailed information sheets around the depth and nature of the research. As the participants and families already had foundational knowledge and understanding by selecting the Year 10 Career elective subject they were well-informed to make a decision to participate. No deception was needed as the phenomena of experiencing career development is ubiquitous within

the socio-cultural context of the society in which this study takes place. A copy of the consent form and parent information letter is contained in Appendix G and H.

4.6.2 Voluntary participation

All participants within a study are volunteers and should always have the right to withdraw from the study or request that data collected about them not be used (Fraenkel et al., 2019) As discussed within the sampling selection it was important that the participants within this study were volunteers and there was no coercion or expectation for participation. The participants involved in the study had an established relationship with the researcher and to avoid any inequitable power relationships, the research study was introduced by the school leadership team. It was highlighted to students and parents that participation in the study was voluntary and non-participation would have no negative consequences. The study was promoted on one occasion only to provide the required information but to avoid any conflict of interest due to the researcher being employed in a professional role at the school. This was the normal process for any opportunities to participate in external research.

4.6.3 Anonymity and confidentiality

All participants within a research study must have assurance that any data collected from or about them will be held in confidence. Where possible, they should be de-identified and anonymised; however, sometimes it's important in a study for a researcher to be able to identify the subject. In this case a robust linkage system with careful safeguards must be put in place (Fraenkel et al., 2019). The confidentiality of the research data was maintained during the study by the researcher. All references to names of students and teachers by the participants were removed and data were codified. A robust system of coding allowed for participant data to be de-identified; however, due to the nature of the study the researcher was implicitly aware of the identity of participant's data so total anonymity was not possible. This was necessary as the researcher was co-reflecting with the participants and embedded within the context of the lived experiences of the students. This was a strength of the research in collection of rich and textured data but also a weakness when considering participant anonymity. Participants and their families were aware that they were de-identified within the data sets and the research findings; however, participants were also made aware that they were not anonymised from the research team and that due to the context of the research and the personal description and presentation

of data that total anonymity could not be guaranteed. At any time during the study, participants were able to withdraw from the study or request that their data not be used.

4.6.4 Potential for harm

It is a fundamental responsibility of all researchers to do everything within their power to ensure participants within their study are protected from potential harm (Fraenkel et al., 2019). Within this study there was no possibility of psychological or social harm to the participants. The activities that participants were involved in were designed based on educational and career development theory. While the form of content within the activities was different; the activities themselves including completing reflection journals and participating in personal guidance interviews were accepted as part of standard school pedagogical practices; or observing of natural school practice.

4.8 Summary

This chapter discussed the methodology used in this study including the paradigm, design, instrumentation and procedures. The approach to this research was based on answering the key research question of understanding students' perceptions of the career-related learning experiences that shape their career development. This was answered through a fit for purpose design combining elements of qualitative approaches in narrative research, phenomenology and case study methods. Combining these approaches provided an opportunity for the findings to be represented as phenomenarratives to create multi-layered and contextual visibility of student perceptions. The phenomenarratives were created in Phase One of the data analysis through the re-transcribing and re-storying process. In Phase Two, the phenomenarratives were analysed to uncover common themes. Further to this, a description of the collection and analysis of student feedback data on participating in the career narrative co-reflection process as part of their individual guidance and pathway planning was discussed to answer the secondary research question.

Chapter 5 includes the participant phenomenarratives as the findings from Phase One of the research. The reflection journals and the participant's career-related and development experiences were discussed during the interviews and further data were collected through interview transcripts. The raw data sources were then re-transcribed and re-storied into chronological and relatable sequences of 'student voice' to answer the key research question; seeking to understand students' perceptions of the career-related learning

experiences that shape their career development. Students then reviewed and provided annual feedback on the draft phenomenarratives in an iterative co-creation process as the study progressed. Once Phase One of the study had finished, the final copies of the phenomenarratives were reviewed by the participants and accepted as an accurate representation of their journey.

Chapter Five: Phase One Findings

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the student phenomenarratives as the first findings of this research study. Raw data sources were combined through re-transcription and re-storied into chronological sequences. The process of re-transcription combined data from the source texts and organised into phenomenological categories of personal context and background; career aspirations, goals and planning; influences on career development; formation of vocational interests; career-related learning activities; and, career and life transitions. Once the data were organised and re-transcribed using the co-reflection elements the process of re-storying commenced. The re-storying process focussed on maintaining participant voice to ensure the accuracy of the students' perceptions of their career development experiences. The raw data were organised into a relatable sequence privileging student language and discourse. The re-storying process focussed on sequencing, linking, cohesion and readability while maintaining the way the key ideas were represented. The continuity and participation of the researcher in the co-reflection process during the interviews was critical to maintain the accuracy within the re-storying process. It allowed for a more cohesive and nuanced understanding of the student's perceptions throughout the study. The phenomenarratives are deep, layered and interconnected accounts of the perceptions of students on the career learning and development experiences that shaped their secondary school journey. They are chronologised longitudinally commencing in Year 10 (15 years of age) then following through to Year 11 (16 years of age), Year 12 (17 years of age) and post-school (18 years of age). These findings seek to make visible the perceptions of students' lived experiences of career development.

5.2 Student A Phenomenarrative

Student A phenomenarrative was constructed through re-transcribing and re-storying 15 raw data source texts. It includes a collection of chronologised perceptions of the participant during Year 10, 11, 12 and post-school organised using the co-reflection process.

Year 10

Personal context and background

I was born in Tacloban City, which is a small provincial but much urbanised city in Philippines, and from what I know of, all my family members are Filipino. I live with my parents and my sister who is one year younger than me. All of my family members were also born in Tacloban City. We moved to Australia in 2009. My parents moved to Perth first in 2008 so I stayed in the Philippines with my sister living with my grandparents for a whole year. I think we were too young to really know what was happening. We would say that we missed my parents but we didn't know how far they were or when the next time we were going to see them. I completed school in the Philippines until Year 1 then I moved here in Year 2. I remember enjoying school from the first time I went there. I was excited and happy when I went to school for the first time. But moving countries was a big thing. I remember on the day we were flying to Australia we were all crying but the months and weeks before that they were exciting because moving abroad is a really big thing in the Philippines.

It was only after three years that we got to travel back home in 2015 that we got to see our relatives again celebrating Christmas with them. This is hard because we don't have any relatives here as well. So all of my girlfriends and family are in the Philippines. We do a lot of FaceTime on Facebook and stuff to keep connected. When I started school here things were different. When I went to school in the Philippines for a few years there was a lot of competition, so they would rank us from one, two, three, four, five and so on the whole year. I think that's ingrained into me that I have to be at the top. Whereas, here in Australia you can get rewarded on behaviour and stuff like that; but in the Philippines it's very different in that way they don't really care about whether you're being good - they still are good but not as much importance is placed on it.

In the Philippines they are definitely a lot shyer and they're not as open. They're really well-mannered. They automatically behave so there is no need to focus on rewarding them for it. But they're not just as open here, they're also a lot louder. When we went to the Philippines last year we were with my cousins. My older cousin, she was turning 18 and we're very close to them and she was having her 18th birthday. That's also a big thing there the 18th birthday it's kind of like a Sweet 16, so they have a whole dance. Her and her other friends have to do a ballroom dance thing. My sister and I were included in that because we were around the same age and we were close with her. Usually here if you have a whole big group of friends and you go out to eat. They're not really shy here, it's like, "Yeah. I'll just take the food and stuff." My mum was paying for them but instead of

taking the food they were like, "Oh no, it's okay." They were really shy in accepting the food and stuff.

Family is definitely important there. I remember my sister's first birthday, and it was at a restaurant with our whole extended family. I remember being in one of the cubby houses and playing; a pink cubby house playing by myself with a few other children around me. I felt really excited and happy, much more than I get excited today. It felt like I was in such a positive environment and I just felt so carefree. I also remember my grandpa teaching my sister and I how to swim. Not a lot of people really know how to swim in the Philippines, so because my grandfather was into the sports and stuff he always wanted us to at least know how to do it. Along with all of our cousins he wanted us to at least not drown in the pool. We're not all the best swimmers but we can swim. I remember us in a kiddie pool and my grandpa teaching us how to breathe and to kick in the water before eventually teaching us freestyle. Although he was seriously teaching us, we were also always mucking around and having fun. It felt really fun and I felt so much joy in that moment. Family is important and they set a good example.

My mother is a registered nurse at an aged care home, but before she used to work at hospitals and a mental institute. Currently my father works as metal sheet fabricator. My grandparents on my mum's side, were both teachers at a university, but my grandma also used to work as a manager at a water district, and my grandpa was later a director at the Philippines Sports Commission, then the Leyte Sports Academy, which he is still a consultant for today. On my father's side, my grandpa was a policeman whilst my grandma was a housewife. On both sides of the family, many of my uncles, aunts and other distant relatives have a profession and they always encourage further education. In my extended family, the uncles and distant uncles I know of some are policemen, a bookkeeper at a bank, one works at a social welfare department, doctor, business owner and seaman. The aunts and distant aunts I know of many are housewives but also one owns a little store; one is a Principal working at Department of Education; and one is a policewoman.

Career aspirations, goals and planning

In regards to my future as a student, I want to go onto the ATAR pathway and hopefully get into universities such as UWA or Curtin. Hopefully I can get into courses such as Medicine or some other course that looks at Human Biology. I think I'm just really nervous because I don't really know what I really want to do. I like the idea of Medicine and Human

Biology, but I don't know if that's the thing that I'm really into. I often think that if I do go into it that it may be too hard and I won't get through. At this stage I'm really unsure of whether I really want to go into it or not. Even for Year 11 I'm really unsure of all the courses I'm doing. I've selected to do Maths Methods. I put in Maths Specialist as one of my reserve subjects because I've selected to study Human Biology, Modern History and Chemistry, and I wasn't really sure that I wanted to do Specialist or not. But I know for sure that I'm going to be shuffling around subjects next year because I don't really know what subjects I want to do. My plan is to go into the subjects next year and see if I really like it or not and move if I need to. I think in order to be successful I need to become more determined at school. I need to make more time for school and study instead of my job or other extra-curricular activities. Although doing other activities is also good, I need to be able to manage my time better to balance all of them.

Influences on career development

One of my role-models is definitely my Grandpa. I spent a lot of fun times with him, especially when he was teaching my cousins and I to swim. He always bought us food after school and always spoilt my sister and me. He always needed to be really early to any event, was very hard working and always encouraged me to do really well in school. My older cousin, Bea, was also a role-model. She is four years older and is the only older girl cousin I have. We are the oldest ones out of all my cousins. She was like the instigator of all the mischief and my sister and I always followed her. She is quite down to earth but also really fun to be around. Hopefully, after she finishes her university studies in the Philippines she will look to migrate to Australia. We're hoping of encouraging her to come over here. She's studying Architecture at the moment but once she's finished she will want to come here or maybe to another country.

One other role-model I had growing up was Sam from the TV show *Totally Spies*. Sam was considered to be the smart and logical one of her three person friend group and was always being responsible. Although she is quite serious in the show, she's also chill and fun. Some other shows I like include *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* because it's funny but also sometimes discusses real issues about oppression and I like all the characters. I also like *How to Get Away With Murder* because it's a good thriller and I find Viola Davis' character amazing. She's smart and has so many secrets. I like *Lizzie McGuire* too as the show has funny characters and is a relatable pre-teen show.

My favourite story at the moment is *Looking for JJ* by Anne Cassidy. It is a young adult novel about a teenage girl who was convicted of murder as a young child. After years of living in the shadows of a different identity because she had to run away from her past, she finds a journalist who was looking for her past identity. She gets scared of being found out and tries to escape from her current job, relationships and life. I don't really have a favourite character in the book because I find all of the characters interesting. I like the book because of how the storyline is mysterious and thrilling. In every chapter there was always some sort of cliff-hanger; the whole book even ends on a cliff-hanger. My favourite motto at the moment is "Just go with the flow".

Another eye-opening experience that really influenced me was when the Typhoon Haiyan hit my hometown in 2013. It made me realise that I should get into an important job that could help other people. I experienced a lot of sadness and fear that the hometown I grew up in was destroyed and that my whole family could have been taken away. It was during November, so it was just before the Christmas period. Usually around that time it's our stormy season in the Philippines. The typhoon hit my hometown and we were madly calling people and trying to communicate with them but we didn't have any signal. We were looking on the news where they reported that up to 10,000 people may have died. We were very worried and looking for signs that people were still alive. There was a lot of news of people looting and it was chaos there.

We were very worried so on that day we decided to fly to the Philippines. My whole family flew to Cebu which is the next closest main city to Tacloban. That's also where some of our relatives were too. We arrived there with the intention to go to Tacloban as well. We were thinking we could maybe all go but it was too dangerous to do that with me and my sister as we were only 11 and 12 years old. My dad decided to go by himself and he met a friend who also went. They couldn't get onto the helicopter because it was for the injured people in the town, so they decided to go by ferry and bus. When he went it was unsettling because we didn't know what to expect. But when they arrived in the town it wasn't chaotic, it was just really dirty and there were dead bodies everywhere. Because it's a coastal town all the bridges were gone and he couldn't even recognize the place when he got there. There was no chaos though as there basically wasn't anything happening so there was lots of fake news about it being dangerous.

My dad found our family and he managed to transport them back on the ferry to Cebu. That's where we rented a big house with them until they could go back to Tacloban when it was all rebuilt. Most of my relatives survived except for one of my dad's cousins who died. But all of my close relatives survived. My grandparent's house was still there, but my two Uncle's houses were washed away. One of my uncle's houses had their neighbour right in front of them washed away as well and the family inside had died. It was one of the children that my cousin used to play with and he was upset by that. There was a lot of rebuilding and we have continued to help them by sending money from Australia to help support them. I think this was an important experience because it influenced me to look at life from a very different perspective and appreciate my life more.

Formation of vocational interests

I have two favourite subjects that I am currently studying. I like Maths because I like solving equations. But not the more practical side of it like financial Maths or statistics. I definitely don't want to become an engineer. I do pretty well in Math though. Since Year 7 all of my Math grades have been A grades and I have received the Math award every year at Presentation Night. I like the subject because there isn't a tonne to memorise and I can rely mostly on thinking about the questions and equations. I also like that there's only one right answer most of the time. I enjoy Specialised Sports Skills (SPK) class because it is a fun and doesn't require too much effort. It's the same as PE but with less people and it doesn't get marked as harshly as PE does. SPK does a lot of the sports I like and I do pretty well in and the marking in the class is easy. I like the class because I get to do sports without much effort.

An extra interest I have is playing the piano. When it is the holidays I play the piano at home and try to finish learning a new song. I like to play piano because although it can be mentally challenging, it's a good way to keep me distracted and I always enjoy challenging myself. The skills involved in playing piano require a lot of thinking but also through physical practice. When I was younger, around the age of 10, I did tutoring at school. The specialists would come in and teach a whole group of us. I did it two years but it wasn't really intensive piano learning but more like the basics. After that I switched over to clarinet so I kind of lost the feel of it. But after I quit clarinet I went back to piano, but just for myself. Rather than having a tutor I get to play my own songs. When I was doing piano and clarinet I kind of got bored of the songs that they were teaching us. Then sometimes I

was really unmotivated to do it because there was everyday practicing. Usually when it's holidays I get more motivated to do it, because it's been a while and I'm more engaged to learn something new.

Career development activities

I am a volunteer on the Student Representative Council (SRC) which is supposed to be the 'voice of the students'. We are a student leader group who hope to make improvements to the school but most of the time we just organise socials. We use a lot of team skills to complete our tasks. I like being in the SRC because it gives some perks to school life. But it would be good if we could develop more leadership skills. From what I've experienced it's more like working together as a team with other people rather than actually going out and leading anyone. It's more putting together ideas and plans. We don't really have anything to do that involves leading everyone. We're mostly putting together socials and organising the school activity cup competition. I suppose when you're doing that it has some leadership skills as you have to learn to work with other people. But I want to learn about real leadership so I can use it after school. There are no subjects that teach leadership.

I also have a part-time job at McDonalds. I work in the McCafe and make coffee but occasionally I help out the front counter and drive thru. Working for McDonalds needs a lot of initiative because it is fast-paced work. I have worked with some good people there who are efficient and hard working. However, I have also worked with some really lazy people who just don't care at all, making everyone's job even harder. At really busy times, the work environment can be really stressful. However, when you work with the right people, you can work really efficiently and still find it a happy work environment. I actually do like my job because it's not too mentally stressful and it gives me a good amount of money.

One experience that really did open my eyes and challenge me was the Cambodia immersion. I think the hardest part was going into the genocide museum, S21, and also going into the killing fields. It was at the start of the journey where we saw the history. It's one of the reasons why Cambodia is like it is today. It was one of the biggest impacts for me visiting there because a lot of people don't see the terrible history. We went over to provide food and help for the disadvantaged children but not really to learn the history; that is why it was so impactful as it was unexpected. It gave more understanding of why the people in some of the developing countries are like that today because of past war and

suffering. We did meet kids our age as well and we got to interact with them by playing games and to help them with learning English. We also did volunteer work helping to paint and varnish their doors. There was a lot of interaction with people our age and it was mostly having fun. We went to visit a township where the poor people live and we were able to see their daily lives. It was amazing that just because they're poor and don't have the same standards of living as other that they're still happy and friendly. Even though they were poor they still had aspirations and wanted to become doctors, engineers or nurses. Some of the community were really proud that their older students were able to go away to the capital to study at university. So although they were poor they had some opportunities. They obviously don't have the same opportunities as here in Australia but it seemed like they were more motivated to make the most of their opportunities. They're always talking about school and finding work and wanting to go to other places and travel the world. I think compared to us they had more aspirations to really be more than they were. They were more confident in wanting to better themselves. In Australia kids don't have as much confidence to do things and sometimes doubt themselves by always looking at the bad side of it.

Career and life transitions

I was slightly scared and nervous for subject selection because the subjects are potentially my future. I was relieved to know that I can still change my mind on some of the subjects. I have become more interested in the job sector as I have gotten older and I like the idea of working in the health industry or medical field. Not necessarily in hospitals or clinics, but maybe working in mental health or private practice. Although work such as a paediatrician or someone who can medically help those in less fortunate places are of interest to me. My mother is a nurse and so I have seen how demanding it can be sometimes having to put your own health at risk. I think that's what inspires me though. I'm not really sure yet what part of medicine to choose though. I do find the idea of surgery interesting because even though my mum currently works in the nursing home, she's also worked a nursing job in surgery before that. When I ask her about it she always talks about how working in surgery was one of the jobs that she always enjoyed and she regretted not staying in it. I think maybe I maybe I should give it a try because my mum and I have very similar interests. We like watching surgery shows together. I do like science but I want to be able to put my knowledge to use, rather than jobs that involve researching science. At the same time studying and working in the medical field scares me because I know how demanding and stressful it can be. However, I feel that if I work hard enough it'll pay off. I'm also

scared that I may be forced to give up my studies because it will get too stressful, but hopefully that doesn't happen.

Year 11

Personal context and background

This year been a really big transition from lower school into upper school. There's been some circumstances with my family that have made it hard for me to study. Early this year, both of my grandparents died. This really added to my stress. When my grandma died, I went back home to the Philippines to go to the funeral. When I came back, I was so far behind on everything at school it was really hard. I was still grieving and very sad while trying to catch up and it was overwhelming at times. Then two months later, my grandpa also died. I didn't get to go back home for his funeral because I already missed out on too much school and that was when exams were on. My parents, they went by themselves and left me and my sister here at home. This was only two or three weeks before exams and I was so overwhelmed. I was trying to study for exams while I was trying to take care of my sister and do everything around the house. I didn't know if I wanted to do the exams I was so upset. I really wanted to go home to the funeral with my parents but they said no. They advised I needed to do exams since I had missed out on a lot already with the first funeral trip. It was probably for the best because I feel like if my grandparents were still here, they would want me to go to school and do really well. My grandma's last wishes was for all of her grandchildren to study hard and to graduate from university. Both of their deaths were a really depressing experience but her last wish really motivates me to do better in my education and my career pathway. Both my grandparents came from poor families but they were really hard workers and both graduated with further qualifications at masters and doctoral level. Their work ethic really inspires me to be a better version of myself. This is really important because they were the people who helped raise my sister and I when my parents were in Australia and we were still living in the Philippines. Other than my parents and myself, they're really the only people that I would really want to make proud.

Career aspirations, goals and planning

My goals this year were finding out more about the Medicine courses at UWA and Curtin to help with my career pathway. I also wanted to develop my planning and organising skills so I can stick to my study timetable especially during exams. I had a focus to achieve B

grades in all of my subjects as well. For my first goal I've looked into some courses at UWA. The main medicine course requires chemistry but I don't do that now so I have to look at another course like human anatomy. I changed Chemistry to Mathematics Specialist because after nearly three weeks in the Chemistry class at the start of the year I didn't like it. I think in Year 10 I was pretty optimistic and I really wanted to go on a science-based pathway. But it wasn't really Chemistry that I liked. But because of my grades and interest in Science and Medicine it was recommended. I really didn't really like the subject and only chose it because I think I needed it for university entrance. In class nothing is absorbing into my brain so that's why I changed to Specialist. I have always liked Maths. However, because I missed some course it took a while to settle in and I found it hard. I do like Specialist but because I was away overseas for weeks I didn't get to thoroughly learn everything. I've now got tutors for both Methods and Specialist and that has helped me to catch up a little bit.

For the second goal at the start of the year I got my sister to check on me to make sure I was studying. After dinner she'd always come to see me and ask if I had started or actually opened anything. It worked out for a few weeks, but then after that it didn't really work. She had her own stuff to focus on and I was generally doing ok with grades despite my personal challenges so it stopped. I felt comfortable with the six ATAR considering the amount of study I had lost while being away. I think I did okay and if I didn't have the bad circumstances I feel like I'd be doing a lot better. I still have a good study planner and also we have a study group in most of my classes. There's little group chats on Snapchat and that's where we communicate on tests and whatever we need to revise. We usually get together in person a few days before tests where we need to communicate what we've learned. For the third goal it's been hard because of the circumstances but I have met most of the grades I set myself to achieve.

Influences on career development

Some role-models that have influenced me include Constance Wu. I admire how she stuck to her dreams of becoming an actress and followed what she really wanted to do despite her struggles of being broke and almost homeless. Even when she became famous from *Fresh off the Boat* and *Crazy Rich Asians*, she has still stayed humble and a down to earth person.

Emma Gonzales also inspires me. After the shooting that happened in her school, she had the strength and motivation to speak out and really do something to raise gun awareness. They even decreased the profit of the NRA in America. She has a fearlessness attitude and when she very sincere when she talks and has fire and passion. I feel like with her and her peers getting together raised a lot more awareness on the issue. Mostly, with our generation, you don't really see people our age talk about this type of stuff. The rest of the time when something happens to us young people let adults say and do everything. I think what was really inspirational about her was she actually went against some of the adult opinions. This is empowering and not stuff you really get taught at school. I guess it depends who your teachers are or what type of school you go to but I think we're so used to having school as very set and you don't really get encouraged in this way. When you talk to your teachers you don't really have a say in what your class is going to be like. Obviously you have to follow the syllabus and everything but it's not the same way you interact with society.

I also think it's not really fair the way leadership positions are given in the school. Everyone should get a chance to learn through leadership roles by taking on formal responsibility. I think we should all get to share that power and give everyone a go as everyone has the ability to do it and learn. Whereas now at school there's only one person who gets to do each leadership role. Many miss out and it's a shame.

Someone else I really like is Michelle Obama. I think she has such a great and strong personality who doesn't just rely on her husband's status but uses her own strength to make a difference in society. She was very cool when she was the first lady and she didn't just sit back and let Barrack do everything but followed her own goals. She's the definition of a strong independent woman.

Some television shows that I like include *Men on a Mission* which is a Korean variety show that showcases different Korean actors, idols and other types of famous people. Their humour is a mix of dad jokes and puns which I find so funny. They have a part of a show where the members ask the guests questions about their life so you get to know about the idols and famous people better. They do one skit all dressed up in school uniform and they pretend to be in a class and then on every episode, they have a different guest that's a celebrity join the skit. They ask them impromptu questions and it becomes very funny when the skit evolves.

Another show I like is *The Secret World of Jeffree Star*. It's a Youtube series that takes up a casual vlog style rather than the formal reality show type. Jeffree Star is such an amazing Youtuber and fashion / makeup icon. Getting into his personal life was so fascinating. It showed his emotional side, how his business grew and what struggles he went through to have such a great company. Shane Dawson is one of his close friends and he created the show. It's a documentary style on how he started from nothing. He was a drag star and then he turned into the millionaire he is now. He has seven houses and everything. He has had a lot of scandals and is a very dramatic person, I liked getting to know who he is and the behind the scenes of everything. It was different because I thought a millionaire would be going through different struggles to normal people but it's the same. When he started from nothing he had a very small close family but when he turned into a millionaire, his extended family started being interested in him. They want him to solve their money problems and other life issues. It was stuff you wouldn't expect a millionaire to have to deal with. Some of his scandals were because others started taking advantage of him and things went bad as he tried to deal with it all.

I also like *RuPaul's Drag Race* which is a reality show where a number of drag queens compete with each other by performing their shows. They make their own costumes to become the ultimate drag queen. It has a mix of drama and humour that is quite different to many reality shows today. It portrays drag queens in a different light rather than something stereotypical. They make their own clothes and they are always competing with one another. They spend a lot of time arguing and having drama between each other. Then at the end when there's the final two people who are about to get cut from the season they have to do a lip sync battle.

A story I have really enjoyed is *Our Times*. It's about a really shy high school girl that starts hanging out with a guy who is a delinquent. They hang out because they're helping each other build confidence to ask out two other people. However as they hang out they realise they actually like each other but they don't tell each other. The girl helps the guy become a better person and he starts putting in some effort at school and even places in the top ten students. They don't end up together in high school but years later they reunite and get together. I like the story because although its concept is overused I feel like I could never get tired of such a sweet and heart-warming concept. It's also set in China in the 90s so it doesn't have the same feeling as today where technology and modern ideas really come

into play. The movie gives off a feeling of nostalgia. Also because I watched it with my mom it was something we could both relate to. The setting was similar to in the Philippines. Their phones were the old Nokia block ones and it was funny to see them. My favourite character is the male delinquent, Hsu Tai Yu, who went through a lot in the story. After his best friend died he turned from an A+ student into a rebel, but as the story progressed he became a good person. He was always a good and honest person but he just didn't show it until he started hanging out with her. He also has a strong personality. Not just in fighting other people but he always stands up for others when there's an unfair situation. A quote that I like is: "The secret to getting ahead is getting started".

Formation of vocational interests

One of my favourite school subjects is Modern History. We study a range of events between the 1800s -1950s including topics such as imperialism and both world wars. The subject involves a lot of deep understanding of past events and not just listing of dates and names. I like this research aspect because I find it interesting to learn the how and why of these events; especially how they relate to today. I am doing well in Modern History so far with a mark a 74% in Semester One and I definitely think I could bring that grade up to an A by the end of the year. I like the class because I like studying the how and why of historical events. Unlike Humanities in Year 7-10 where we had to do all parts such as Geography and Economics, I like how we can focus only on History. The class is fun because I have friends in the class that are also interested in the topic. In some classes in lower school students were bored and not interested in the subject and it impacts the class. I really like my teacher as he teaches not just the dates and events but relates the content to the real world and what is happening now. He keeps the class as a very positive environment. It's a big shift from Year 10 where I had decided on not doing Humanities in senior school because most of it wasn't interesting. I really didn't try hard at all in Year 10 but I still ended up on a good grade and realised that Modern History would be interesting because my older friend was doing it. I'm glad I chose it.

In Year 9, I feel like everything we were learning in each subject was still relevant but it was different in Year 10. I think because we had all decided what we liked and were all really focused on what subjects to get into Year 11. This meant whatever subject that we didn't want to do anymore we just didn't care about. I think it's how relevant it is to each person. If we could just pick earlier what we were interested in that would've helped in Year 10; especially when preparing to go into Year 11. I know we have to do all subjects

and they all contribute to your final grade but in Year 10 I feel like it would've been useful if it was a test run of Year 11. That way you could try out all of your subjects in a lot more depth before committing to them in Year 11. The jump from Year 10 to Year 11 is quite significant especially content-wise. The assessments that you're doing and how many things you have to study for is a really big jump.

I feel that if schools could close that gap a little it would help more. There wouldn't be as many people crying. At the start of Year 11 it's such a big jump that it feels really overwhelming. I think the school does pretty well trying to get us to do the work in Year 11 but it's that students are not prepared enough from younger years. I don't think we all understand how it all works and the change in expectations. We don't understand how everything goes to our grade and the importance of the syllabus and all of the rules around ATAR. If there was more opportunity for understanding and letting us get to know our courses and build deeper knowledge over a longer period of time it would help. Instead everything is so rushed. Especially at the start of Year 11 where it really tests you; there's a lot of people who feel like they can't do it anymore emotionally but when they ask a teacher for feedback they say it's alright because you're not on a bad grade. But I feel the grade is bad compared to what we were getting in Year 10. We just don't have a good comparison. Our grades in Year 10 and our grades in Year 11 are so different because they're based on something different.

When I don't have a lot of schoolwork or when it's the holidays I like to take the time to learn classical songs on the piano. I used to actively play piano and clarinet when I was younger so I really enjoy playing music. However, I eventually quit both instruments because it got too much playing music every day and balancing all of the other requirements. Learning a new song on the piano for me is like doing a puzzle. I often relearn skills because I don't play anymore so it challenges my brain but at the same time it also relaxes me. I like the feeling of having achieved something when I finish learning the song.

I also really like baking at home because it helps me relax. I like putting together all of the ingredients where you mix everything together or knead dough. It relaxes me. I think it's because it's a hands on activities and helps me to de-stress. Unlike cooking over a stovetop where you have to stand and watch the food cook, baking is easier because once everything is done you just put it in the oven and let it bake. It's also satisfying when I finish baking and it tastes and looks exactly like how I want it to. If I don't have a lot to do in

the holidays I sometimes try something new. It may even take me half the day if I have to make a different kind of bread and wait for it to rise. But if I don't have time it will be something simple and quick just de-stress like cookies. I like making food because I like feeding people. Before the year 12s officially left school, I baked brownies for them. Also, when we went to Kairos camp I made cinnamon rolls for the people in our dorms. Any opportunity that I get to bake I bake. I think I like doing it just to take my mind off things. I wouldn't want to do it as my work. I want to keep it as something that's my hobby.

Career development activities

The start of the year was pretty stressful but then we got to the Filipino dance in front of the whole school at Harmony Day. It was really nice being able to forget about everything for that day and have a total focus on the performance. It went really well and it's great that all of the other students liked it. I also got to go on Kairos camp which was really eye opening; not just for myself but the opportunity to get to know other people in our year as well. We've been here since Year 7 but I don't talk to these people every day. It was so great to talking to the other students and learning about them. Also, to teachers as well because they opened up and shared personal things rather than just being someone who has authority over us.

It was also good getting a break from school because when we had Kairos camp it was in the middle of everything and I really needed to take a step back from school and forget the pressure. A lot of us who were doing ATAR got to talk about how stressed we were. It was a good time to reflect that if you do badly in ATAR then it's not the end of the world. The teachers were very supportive of how we were feeling. Lots of students were struggling to adapt to the courses and were scared they we're going to get cut from the class if they were failing. So being able to talk about that and vent it all out in a safe environment helped so many students. It meant we had time to come up with a clearer plan of how ATAR was going. My results were ok but other students were really sad about it because a lot of people were cut from their classes. They're school life will change as they transition from ATAR to general studies. Some people needed the time to come to terms with the change because school is too busy to process anything. Once they knew their plan and understood because you're not doing ATAR it's not the end of the world. Especially those students who used to do extension classes in Year 10 or people who had family pressure them in their studies were really struggling with failing.

One of the students in my group was really afraid that her friends weren't going to be her friends anymore because she no longer did ATAR. That broke me and got me emotional because it doesn't matter what you're studying, friends should be your friends regardless. It's because ATAR is the direct pathway to university that everyone thinks they have to do it. Some people might feel ashamed for having to go around a different way rather than doing the direct path but I think it doesn't really matter. It's just the feeling of shame that you are not good enough that was affecting a lot of students. Some people who got so stressed about it they cried. A lot of Asian students who used to be in Extension thought ATAR would be the same but they realise it's a lot different. There's a lot of disappointment for students whose expectations are high. In year 10 you get the grades mid-year to get into ATAR and then after that don't care too much. Going into Semester Two of Year 10, I did not try much and was just floating above the minimum requirements. I thought because I'd qualified that it doesn't matter anymore. But then you don't practice how to study and experience the stress that actually comes with studying for three hours or more every night. In Year 11 you have to put a lot more effort than in Year 10. Almost everyone in Extension had the minimum requirements met so even if the class average dropped a bit it didn't matter because they couldn't cut us all out of the class. Many had that type of mentality when we should have been working harder not less. Practising how to study rather than cruising.

In Year 11 there is more responsibility on the students to check the syllabus and do a lot more practice questions rather than simple note-taking. Everyone in the class now has to be a lot more proactive in their learning. Rather than just memorising stuff by ourselves we actually have to talk to others to get opinions and find extra sources online more than the textbook. I think a lot of students lack independent learning skills. Nobody teaches us how to learn properly we just have to figure it out quickly. It's sink or swim.

Currently I do not have a job because I quit work in the middle of term one so that I could better focus on my studies. I worked at McDonalds throughout Year 10 though. Working at McDonalds involved serving customers and taking and giving their orders, a lot of cleaning and also making coffee and tea. I often worked early morning shifts on the weekends and this required good time management skills to prep everything before the morning rush and the ability to multi-task and work at an extremely fast pace. I often worked with many other teenagers who were sometimes slow but they made the work environment quite enjoyable. I also worked with people much older than me like university students and adults who were

often managers or leaders of certain areas. They were good to work with as they had the ability to get the work done at a fast pace. The work environment was very dependent on the time of day and whether there was a rush or not and the workers who were there, especially which managers were there. When it's busy it gets really stressful and tiring but when there's good workers around it's not too bad. When it's not busy, it's mostly just a lot of cleaning and taking the occasional order and overall isn't too exhausting. I didn't really dislike the job as most of the tasks to do are easy and earning money is always good but it's too tiring especially when I always had to wake up at 5:30 or 6am on the weekends and work long stressful shifts when I have a lot of school work to do. It was okay in Year 10 when my school workload was less, but for me it's difficult to keep a job while doing six ATAR subjects.

Career and life transitions

I'm doing an ATAR pathway with six subjects: Maths Methods, Maths Specialist, English, Religion, Human Biology and History. Semester One has been quite a rocky semester as I am still adapting to Year 11 and the content heavy courses. I am passing all my subjects with most of my subjects being either a B or C grade. With History and Methods being quite close to an A. I also managed to bring my Specialist grade from a D to a C. This pathway has been quite exhausting because I'm still learning how to juggle all six subjects. I feel that it has also been quite hard for me to maintain my grades especially in some assessments where I feel like I'm always fluctuating. Recently in my mind it hasn't been really worth it especially with the exams coming up. I was thinking about dropping one subject however I was still unsure which subject and whether I really want to drop one anyway. I was feeling more comfortable with the six subjects after first semester and so was still willing to give them a try. But I talked to the Deputy Principal and he's in the process of taking me out of the Maths Specialist class as I'm borderline for my results. I don't know if I'm doing that exam or not.

Although at the start of the year I was only really interested in working in the medical field, I have recently grown interest in the field of law. I am still looking at careers in medicine such as a paediatrician or paramedic, however I'm not really sure what different career paths there are in law other than lawyer and attorney. I think I'm more open to different pathways. Now when I looked at the Medicine course and what it was, it did interest me. Human Biology is really interesting but I don't know if it's something that I'm really passionate about. Law when I was looking at it sounded cool. I'm not completely sure yet

but I'm just opening up to different ideas. I'm not really sure as to exactly why I'm interested in the different career paths. In the past few years there's a lot more events in politics that I've become interested in, especially American politics. I think when I took modern history, it became clear there's a lot more involved in looking into how society works and is governed by laws. It was just something that I wasn't aware of before but I think now that I'm learning about it, it's something I find interesting. I'm quite fascinated by it actually. As I research more about professional careers I'm becoming more open to different paths. I am still open to going through with an undergraduate in medicine. At the moment I don't really have any negative or positive feelings but more towards feelings of confusion. I'm now more uncertain of what I really want to study at university.

Year 12

Personal context and background

This year has been as I assumed it would be. The jump from Year 11 to 12 hasn't been too big. I think the work and assessments have gone okay. Some of the grades I have are below what I am expecting, but nothing too far out of what I can do in the future to improve. I'm trying some study techniques like the Pomodoro method. I have the app on my phone and it blocks all my other apps, so that when it's on, I don't get out of it. So that keeps me studying, and it checks how much I'm studying each night, so it's pretty good. Last year I used to stay up a lot but now I think it's more like I don't care anymore about staying up as late to finish things like I used to, I guess I have better time management this year. I usually I get about seven hours of sleep, but the week before exams and really busy weeks, where all the assessments are on altogether, I get about five and a half hours of sleep. It's okay now as it's something that I'm used to so it's not too bad.

I'm not doing as much exercise as I would like though as I just don't have time. I used to do it straight after school. I would do an hour of either a leg run or just strength training. But now I don't do it as I can't fit in. The most stressful time for me was during the exam period, when I had all of my exams in the one week. At the start it was okay, but then I had Human Biology and History on the same day, at the very end of the week on the Friday. By the time I got to those exams, my two most content-heavy subjects, I was not panicking, but I knew that it wasn't going to come out as good as my other exams. I knew because it was on the one day and the whole week was exhausting. It was just a lot to process and I was trying to stay on top of it but I already knew that my circumstances weren't going to give me my best outcome that I was capable of.

For most of my subjects, I had the exams in the morning, but the day before my History and Human Biology exams, I had Maths Methods on the Thursday afternoon, so nothing really worked out for me at the end. But, it's okay. I just know if the exam timetable was better I could have done better. Fortunately, the final ATAR exam timetable is better. I'm happy with it because they're all in the morning and they're all on different days, so I don't have any double-ups and they all finish in the first two weeks. I'm just looking forward to graduating and getting all of ATAR done.

It was interesting having the mentoring session with the Head of School of Medicine from UWA. His career, and how he has gone from a medical student through to head of medical school was interesting. It was more like being really clearing and taking the steps you need for your career. But I mean I'm not at that stage yet, so I can't really understand all of the steps yet. What he said about just focusing on school, and not stressing too much about UCAT that was good. And what he said about finding the perfect balance, doing what interests you, but at the same time doing what benefits you. That was good advice.

Career planning, aspirations and goals

I'm still somewhat interested in the field of Medicine however I've also found a new interest in Law. For Medicine I've pretty much looked into it before, but now I'm researching what type of jobs you can do as a Juris Doctor and not just a typical lawyer. I'm not really sure what type of jobs I'm interested in. I was thinking of pairing the JD pathway with a Bachelor of Commerce in UWA and so I'm also looking at jobs in accounting, as a finance manager or as an investment banker. However, I'm still quite interested in Bachelor of Law at Curtin, so I am also looking at jobs like a paralegal, mediator, and other jobs that aren't just lawyer. The subject I find the most interesting right now is Modern History because we're currently talking about international relations of the 20th century. It sparked my interest in the type of jobs that revolve around that area of study, and as I searched about it I felt it matched with my interest in Law.

I haven't really thought of any new ideas regarding my career aspirations. I'm mainly sticking to either Law or Medicine. But I have added that if I do Law, I could possibly do a Bachelor of Commerce if I were to pursue it at UWA through their direct pathway. I did previously discard the idea of going into Law but I have come back to that thought because of my rethinking of the Medicine pathway. I'm definitely now feeling quite unsure about going into Medicine just because I know how much work it is, as other jobs too, but

at this point I'm feeling like it's just not the field for me. I have another resurgence of interest in Law, possibly in international relations or commerce, but I'm feeling a little more positive about that pathway because it's a subject that I'm slightly more interested in.

Influences on career development

My role models this year are definitely my grandmother and grandfather. My grandmother was always very hardworking and could never stay at home doing nothing. I admired her work ethic and her drive. She was very much the epitome of a modern 'boss-lady' as I knew she had worked many jobs such as manager of electricity cooperative, as well as having done teaching at a university. My grandfather was also very hardworking but also was a very doting grandfather. Although I had seen him at school as a strict teacher, at home he was very gentle and loving. He always imposed good values such as working hard at school.

Another role model I have is Jaden Smith. His passion for the environment is really inspiring. With his release of an eco-friendly water company and his aid to the Flint, Michigan water crisis, I think it's really inspiring that someone as young as Jaden Smith could do something that big of a scale.

I enjoy a few TV programs at the moment. This first one is *Wife Swap* because it's really entertaining and it's interesting to see how different people cope with being put in a completely different, often opposite environment. Another show is *Derry Girls*. It revolves a group of teenage girls in Ireland during the conflict between Ireland and Britain. The girls all have very different personalities but it's really fun to watch them work as one unit and cope with weird and funny scenarios. I also like *Rookie Historian*, a fictional drama that revolves around the life of the first historians that joined Korea in history. It's entertaining to see a woman with a modern-day mindset of feminism enter into a workplace that is dominated with men.

A story that really appeals to me was *True Beauty*. It's a webtoon that revolves around the life of an 'ugly' teenage girl that uses her skills in makeup to make her look beautiful. At school she's considered pretty and popular however she remains quite humble. She does get the attention of some jealous girls that bully her and also some boys who discover her true appearance. I like the story because it's a really fun and light-hearted series even though it tackles issues about self-image. I don't often read because of how much time I study. However, it's an ongoing series that doesn't take too long to read so I enjoy a few

minutes in the day just reading the webtoon. My favourite character is Seojun because he's a genuine friend that doesn't really care about status or appearance, even though he's famous himself. His character is also very humble and down to earth.

A motto I have this year is: "studying sucks less than failing."

Formation of vocational interests

In Modern History the unit we are currently doing is about international relations in the 20th century and I have enjoyed studying the Cold War. We go through events of the 20th century and analyse how it impacts any future events and any past events that had made impact as well. We do a lot of source analysis. I'm doing well in the subject, I'm not sure what grade but I'm certain I'm on a B. I like the subject because it's not just rote learning. Doing an evaluation of events takes time and thinking. The things that we look at also influence today and it's really interesting to see how it does that.

I am still doing some baking as well. I bake different types of sweet goods and pastries. I like it because not only do I like to eat what I bake, but also because I enjoy the process such as kneading dough. I also like it because I rarely get to do anything with my hands at school as I'm always using my computer or writing. It gives me a nice break to just take time to make something I like to eat.

Career development activities

This year I attended the camp as a KAIROS Leader. I took part in helping lead KAIROS 25 by coordinating talks and activities that helped people to reflect on their lives. I liked being a KAIROS leader because it was like a short break during the term where we could reflect on our lives aside from school. It was also spent with people that we don't usually hang out with so it was definitely a new and fresh experience. I got to use my skills in public speaking because as leaders we had to do some talks. I also used some leadership skills to help guide my group throughout KAIROS. It was a really fun activity and something that you rarely get to do during high school.

I am currently working at Officeworks. I do a range of job roles such as working at the registers, filling in stock and working at Print and Copy. I also assist customers by guiding them through the store or by assisting them with what things they need. I needed to be able to have good customer service, and after working at McDonalds I think I was okay at that. I realised that I needed to broaden my knowledge on technology, as I needed to know

what type of things customers were talking about to be able to answer their question. I also needed to quickly learn how to use their range of printers, as I needed to serve customers in that area. I work with a range of people, such as people about the same age as me all the way to about 60 years old. I find it fun working with people of different ages because you always get a new experience with them, and you can always learn something new from them. Officeworks, compared to my old job at McDonalds is really calm. Although there are busy times, I don't find it too tiring. Sometimes I do struggle to find something to do, however I quite enjoy my time at work. I definitely like my job as the pay is good, the managers and co-workers are nice and the job isn't as tiring as my previous job.

In my normal week I get one after school shift, and then one weekend shift. I find that's a pretty good balance because then I still have a day in the weekend where I can dedicate it to studying. And then I still have one day in the week where I just get extra money. The managers at work are good at balancing our hours. If I ever request for a day's off or something, they're pretty nice, I don't have to push for it; It depends on what they need. There's different areas. Usually I do register after school, or if there's people that need help, I'll do floor work, like showing people around, explaining to them technology stuff. So that was a good experience because I didn't really know a lot about technology, so I was just learning on the spot. And because Officeworks has a print & copy section as well I do work there when they need to be helped. So I learned a lot about printing there as well.

Career and life transitions

Currently I'm still doing ATAR with Methods, English, Human Biology, Modern History, Religion and a study period. So far Year 12 hasn't been anything surprising. With my experience in Year 11, it's what I expected it to be. Still doing consistent study and just trying to get to the end of exams. My main challenges on the ATAR pathway have mainly been in Year 11 where I was just getting used to the workload and what subjects I wanted to do as well as subjects that would give me my desired ATAR. Year 12 hasn't been as challenging as Year 11 so far. This year, it's mainly been trying to keep my study consistent and sticking it through to the very end of exams. It was right the beginning of this year when I was looking at the courses and what type of things they do to better understand the future career as well like what areas were available and what type of jobs that they did. I think that law has always been an interest. But at that time I was still thinking I want to do Medicine. Medicine was my Plan A and law my Plan B. I think I saw

law is more of an interest sparked by modern history rather than a job I actually wanted. I was not sure if I would go through with it almost thinking that it was crossed out.

Around a few weeks before my UCAT exam I wasn't really feeling good about my decision to pursue Medicine. Preparing for UCAT made me reflect on the Medicine pathway. As I prepared for the exam with my friends we realised that we didn't really want to go through with the course. I think we realised that it was over-hyped and we were just doing it because we can rather than we wanted to. After my UCAT exam I became a little surer that I didn't really want to do medicine anymore because of the how much commitment it is. It's really important because it's changed my mind on what course I really prefer doing. More recently I'm rethinking a pathway on Law, possibly in UWA or Curtin. Right now a direct pathway to Juris Doctor in UWA would be my first preference, then a pathway into Medicine would be second. I'm feeling kind of nervous and excited at the same time. I'm excited to be able to graduate from high school soon but I'm still pretty anxious about what I'm going to be doing in the future, especially which courses I successfully enter and pursue.

Post-school

Last week I did my orientation week at university and I've gone to two lectures now, and it's been pretty chill so far. I'm really enjoying it and the things that we're learning - I actually want to learn it unlike some things at school. So yeah, so far, so good. I had Curtin Law as my first preference and I had an early offer for that and that was pretty much the only thing that I wanted to do. My other preferences included studying Law at Murdoch and I also had Commerce down as a back-up option but since I already had my early offer, I knew I could get into Law. The early offer came out before sitting my exams and it was like an assuring feeling for me because I only needed an ATAR of 85 to get in and just needed to maintain that score. Before, when I wanted to get into medicine, I was really stressed about getting to that ATAR of 94 and I just didn't know if I was going to get to make it. I think I chilled back a bit once I got my early offer. I mean, I probably should have tried harder, but I think I was just so over ATAR, and I was like happy to have my early offer and I thought 'whatever happens, happens.'

When the results came out I was still kind of nervous, because if I got below 85 then my early offer wouldn't count. But I got 88, so I was relieved and happy. That meant I just had to check results and that was it. I did not need to change any preferences. We were

actually on holiday in the Philippines when I was checking my score. We were in a hotel room in Manila so the first person to find out was my sister, and then my parents. My family were the first people to know. Yeah, so we were in Manila at that point heading towards our family for Christmas. It was a really hectic day and I only got to check results at the end of the day because people were asking questions on Facebook and via message. My friends were all saying to me you need to check your ATAR because it came out the day earlier. Everyone was like 'Oh, my God. It's out. It's out.' When I did check it I had to open it on my phone, I didn't get to save it. I didn't know that it would disappear, so I don't have my actual ATAR saved anywhere. I got what I needed though.

It certainly helped me enjoy the holiday although it was pretty full on. There was always something happening every day. It was just a lot of time with family and just going out but it was fun. I think it was just more relaxing being there. I just wanted to go out with my cousins every day, and Christmas and spend New Year's with our family. Yeah, it was just a lot of fun, and it was like I forgot everything about ATAR. After all the stress it was good to put it out of my mind. When I did talk to my friends at home I think everyone was pretty similar. It was almost as if our WACE exams never happened. That's what it felt like. After we finished our WACE exams we all blocked it out. It was like that it felt so long ago but it actually wasn't. Everyone was just wanting to get away from it and forget everything.

There's three of us doing law at Curtin this year. I guess school has prepared me a bit in terms of academic skills. I think the types of essay writing and assignments I have done means I'm prepared for that at university. But what my friends and I have noticed is some skills we don't have. The law society has started networking for us, and I feel like that was something that we weren't really prepared for at school. We felt like we didn't really know how to do this. After each seminar or each orientation thing that we did, they'd have food around and then just tell us to talk to the professors and to each other. And I don't know, it was just it felt a bit uncomfortable. It was something a little new to us, because I think we're so used to being at school here and having such a small group where we know everyone, we don't really need to talk to new people. But I think at university it's going to be a new group of people that you're not going to know. It's just something that we're still getting used to it.

This type of networking experience is something that's a bit more challenging than I have had to do before. Although I'm not really sure what school could do differently. We were so focussed on exams. One of my friends said that some of the other students from other

schools may have had the opportunity to socialise with other schools that they didn't know. Although not in a professional sense. I think there was a mix of people who were like us who were very unsure, but there was also different groups of people who were really out there and really confident. I do feel like I'm still settling in though. They have already had a few talks about what our future would look like so I have to start thinking about it already. But after a few weeks, I should be settled in. They talked about things like getting into internships, working in the legal clinic and getting really involved in the law society and the competitions and workshops. It's very competitive so this can help get that boost to your schooling.

It's nice having two other students I know in the course and we have bumped into others on campus which makes us feel we are back at school again. So far we have had two law seminars and a business law orientation last week. Also, a law orientation just for people doing law. I've also had two lectures as well. The lectures were very straight to the point. They just start with the work on the PowerPoint as I think they really want to get to the point. Whereas at school, we just go to class and wait for a few minutes before you start doing your work. University is also a little more relaxed but because there's no one telling you off for your hair, and no one's like, "You can't go to the toilet now". I feel a lot more independent.

In terms of school the work itself wasn't too bad in retrospect but back then I really didn't enjoy it and didn't want to do it anymore. School was very restrictive in what you could do and what subjects you could learn about. I always had an interest in politics and law but our school did not offer it. Other students who did it in high school definitely have a stronger background in what they're talking about. I am happy to just sit back and let it all sink in though. Hopefully we will catch up on others as we get further into the course. I'm looking forward to the rest of the year.

5.3 Student J Phenomenarrative

This phenomenarrative was constructed through re-transcribing and re-storying 18 raw data source texts. During the study Student J required extra time than what was allotted during the study. The extended interview sessions meant there were two additional interview transcriptions and one additional career goal setting table collected compared to the other participants. It includes a collection of chronologised perceptions of the

participant during Year 10, 11, 12 and post-school organised using the co-reflection process.

Year 10

Personal context and background

I was born in Baguio, Philippines and I moved to Australia in 2007 when I was five. I was pretty young when we moved, so I don't remember a lot. My dad got a job offer in Australia and went first in 2006. Then my mom and my family followed afterwards. I have two older brothers, one who is four years older than me and one who is six years older. The only things I really remember before I left was when I was in kindergarten in the Philippines and I was doing my Maths. I remember the question said 4 apples minus 3 apples and I wrote down 2. My teacher saw me writing that down and shouted at me saying I was stupid. I was extremely hurt and am not sure if I cried or not, but it is a high possibility. Another memory I have was I was once again in kindergarten and in our class we had this really chubby girl. Some of the kids around me were snickering at her and making fun of her and I just ignored what was happening. Then, one of the kids tapped me on the shoulder and said, that she is so fat she looks like a pork bun. I looked at her and said back to the kid and agreed and laughed. I feel bad about it though. I think at the time I would've been really determined to fit into my cohort and not be made fun of but if the same thing happened now, I would've stood up for the girl and made sure she wasn't bullied like that. I also have a memory of when I was 6 years old and it was our first time returning back to the Philippines after moving to Perth. I remember my auntie and uncle were staying for a few days as well from Florida. Everyone was downstairs celebrating the party until my auntie and uncle start raising their voices at each other. The kids were told to go upstairs and as I was sitting on the floor I found a hole in it and peek through to see them fighting. I remember feeling worried and scared about them fighting.

I consider myself Australian and I think both my brothers and I fit in well when we came here. We go back to the Philippines every two to three years. I think there is a drastic difference between Australia and the Philippines. For example, when you land in the Philippines, you go over a graveyard so it is kind of dangerous because there's a chance that the plane could go into the graveyard. And every time we land and then come out, my parents are always saying to hold onto your things tightly and be safe because someone will try to steal your stuff. Then then when you return over here, you are fine. So, I think it is more dangerous over there. Also, whenever we go back there's always kids coming up

to us and asking for money. When I went back last year, I instantly realized how hard it was to live there. For example, two of my cousins do not go to school anymore because my Auntie cannot pay for them, even though we send her money from here. That means they are always out late and doing their own thing and one of my cousins got pregnant because she wasn't going to school, and she was just walking around. It is definitely a lot harder to live there. In Australia, teenagers can get jobs when they are 14 or 15 if they want. But over there you can only start working when you are 18 and you would still be earning less than what a 14-year-old would be earning here!

Currently, my mother is a gaming attendant at Crown Casino and my father is an electrical engineer at Western Power. My eldest brother is a manager at McDonalds and my other brother is a casual worker at McDonalds.

Career aspirations, goals and planning

I am currently thinking about work in the areas of business, medicine or media. In Business I like the idea of Marketing and Public Relations. There is a high amount of pay when you have a lot of experience and it's mainly about management of marketing a product; in charge of one product or services or several. In medicine or health sciences it's an 11-year process to become a doctor. You mainly care for patients as a primary healthcare provider. You diagnose and treats conditions and provide treatment through medication, procedures and surgery. In media, photography or mass communications the focus is on art of photography and film to showcase specific themes for clients. Although it would be an expensive job that is hard to maintain due to growth in technology and people's ability to take photos simply with their iPhones.

I am most interested in medicine as I have hopes of becoming a paediatrician that can travel to poverty-stricken areas within the world and help children suffering within these places. If I am not able to do that then I want to do business and maybe work within organisations such as Love146 which works to abolish child sex-trafficking, something I'm deeply passionate about doing. The media component is what has driven my creative genes for a majority of my high school life. However, I have come to face the harsh reality of the arts industry and how it's not a financially stable career choice. I think in the future I'll just continue photography as a hobby, but nothing more. I am happy to take risks and work hard. I want to have a main plan as well as back up plans to help me stay motivated.

Influences on career development

A strong influence I had was my uncle. He worked on his farm in the Philippines and that was where I grew up for some of my childhood and visited often whenever we went back. I would constantly hear my parents asking him to get married because he was getting old, but he merely shrugged and said he was fine and that if the right one came along then she'd come along. I was so in awe about the fact that he was so certain within himself and who he was that he didn't need another person to be in his life. Of course I knew that there were times in his life when he would get lonely, but at the moment he seemed very content. I usually expect most people his age to be really concerned about money, and be very adult-like, but he still has very youthful qualities, and I think that's the kind of adult I would want to be. He still watches cartoons and that kind of thing and is very carefree and happy. I really look up to him for that. Interestingly though some of the kids in the village are a little scared of him which is strange because he's so nice.

Another role-model was my primary school teacher, Mr Smith. He was one of the kindest people I had ever met. He taught me proper values that have shaped me into the person I am now. He was an amazing teacher who cared about the wellbeing of each student in his class and gave us an insight into history through his stories about battles that had occurred and cultural contexts of places in Europe and Asia. Everyone called him Santa Claus, because he had qualities that were similar to Santa. He would always give us gifts and lollies and that kind of thing. He would reward us and we would watch things like Tom and Jerry, and then he'd teach us a lot about history. He was really smart, and then last year I went back to my primary school at the end of the year and we met up with him. I went with another student and I was telling him, I'm pretty sure he won't remember me. And then we went in and he welcomed us and remembered our names. We told him we didn't think he would remember us and he replied He that you always remember someone by their smile. It was so nice to see him and his kindness and gratitude are qualities I really admire.

I also really respect Taylor Swift. As a child growing up, I had a strong obsession with her. I found her voice extremely captivating at the time and I knew that she was singing from her soul and she wasn't another artist that merely made music for the money or to talk about sexual acts. She was extremely down to earth and found peace within her music. Now, I feel that she is extremely different and has lost the values she upheld when she was at the beginning of her rise in fame which is disappointing.

A TV show I liked was *This is Us*. I like it because it shows many important values needed within each person to grow and flourish. It is about real life - life that is not glamourized nor romanticised but the rawness of life within all its hardships and struggles, but also the beautiful moments of it. The most specific point of the TV show is the family values that it shows and how important family is. I like how it highlights a lot of values that I focus on, and it wasn't your usual kind of TV show, because it focused on a lot of issues that happen in the world. For example, one of the characters is black and he lives in a very rich neighbourhood and whenever he gets visitors coming over his neighbours always think they're criminals. It also goes over the struggles that the married couple face. In one of the episodes the mom talks to the husband about how she just stays at home and she has three children that don't need her anymore. She feels invisible since she never does anything for herself. It just made me think of my mom, and made me appreciate more of what mothers do because they give up a lot to take care of us.

Another show I like is 'American Crime Story: People vs. O.J. Simpson.' This TV show became one of my favourites during the time that I wanted to become a lawyer. I think that it gave me a proper insight into 'the trial of the century' and brought forward a lot of issues including race and justice. Watching it that was one of the reasons that I wanted to become a lawyer. For a period of time I wanted to do law, because the case was really interesting and I did research on it and everything. I found it really cool, because it is something important that happened in America and still is a big case. Then he recently got released and he's living like it never even happened. It was a pretty good case and maybe it's just because they kind of romanticize the entire process for television by making it very traumatic and engaging.

Also, I love the show *Friends*. It's a classic that shows me what I should consider when I get older and how being in your twenties isn't as 'grand' as it is made out to be. Yes, it may be the prime time of a person's life, but it can also be one of the hardest times of someone's life especially when they're not sure as to where they want to go in the future. The show proves that a person is not alone in the hardships they have during their twenties and that they have friends to support them through thick and thin.

My favourite story is *Glass Castle* by Elle Cornell. Sawyer Lee is a Korean girl, a senior in school. It is her last year to spend at home until she's shipped off to college. She's lived in

the same small town all her life and is desperate to leave. She can't wait until she finishes at the top of her class academically and goes to her dream college. However, the character of the arrogant, extremely smart guy, Everett Adams, who sits in the back of her class and never pays attention but still manages to get better grades than her annoys her. She thinks he does not deserve to go to Yale. But then her drunken fight with him at a party turns into a drunken mistake that results in her receiving a positive result on her pregnancy test. It would be mostly expected for a young man who hasn't even started university to not settle down because of this mistake, but Everett Adams was different. He was willing to stay with Sawyer and was respectful of her initial decision to get an abortion and even more respectful of her final decision to instead keep the baby. This was the first story I'd ever read that had brought me to tears. The story was focused on Sawyer's perspective of the situation and how she'd have to deal with the baby. She had to choose between a future for herself where she'd graduate from an Ivy League university and get a high paying job or to nurture and take care of a baby and lose her chance to 'build her future' since a majority of her focus would have to be on the child. There was one part where she tells her parents and then her dad got really disappointed in her and I remember we were on the ferry to Cebu while I was reading it, and I started crying. My parents were worried and asked if I was ok. it was one of the first stories that I read that I actually cried about because it was really sad.

Some life mottos I like are "It always comes down to just two choices: get busy living, or get busy dying." From the 'Shawshank Redemption'. It means you always have to be making a choice to get better. Also I like: 待ってられない未来がある (Time waits for no one) from 'The Girl Who Leapt Through Time' which is an anime. I feel like it's very true. We seem to waste a lot of each day. There's 24 hours per day and it doesn't stop just because something happens or because you need more time. You don't have extra time added on because you haven't done specific things so time management is really important. Time just keep goings and you fall behind and you don't do what you want to do or what's really important because you are too busy trying to catch up.

Formation of vocational interests

I really like English as a school subject. It's built around the three interrelated strands of Language, Literature and Literacy where we engage with a variety of reading and viewing of fiction and nonfiction texts for enjoyment and to develop our understanding of a range of

contexts. I like discussions about the films and novels we watch and read as well as reading and writing for the creative component. My Semester One mark was 74%. Probably because it's the only core subject that I am good at but also because I like to analyse the films and texts and because I love Mrs M and think she is an extremely brilliant teacher. I was pretty good at it in year seven, because I read a lot of books. Then we had Ms S and she was very encouraging about English and she got really excited about it. And I thought that was very cool. But recently we had an assessment in creative writing, and I got a low score for it so it made me think maybe I'm not that good. I do like the analyzing side of it though because usually when we read or when we see stuff that's it; but then in English when you actually analyze it, you go in depth about what the author or the director was trying to say to create meaning in it and I enjoy looking deeper into things.

Another subject I like is Science. It explores systems at different scales and connects microscopic and macroscopic properties to explain phenomena. Students explore the biological, chemical, physical and psychology evidence. Learning about the different phenomena that occur around us and within us is really interesting. I like doing experiments and playing the online game Kahoot that tests our knowledge against other class members. My Semester One mark was 69%. I like being able to learn about the body and what occurs within it, especially the psychological part of the brain and how it works. I find it extremely fascinating how the body functions as a whole and it's just so exciting to learn about and because Mr D makes the class interesting and interacts well with us. I didn't originally like science because I didn't find it interesting, but then my brother, he's doing exercise sports and rehabilitation science at Curtin university, would talk to me. He would get really excited about it, and then ask me if I knew this or that? It changed my perspective and I started liking it. This year, when he started learning about genetics and other things that are really interesting I also became really interested. Especially in chemistry when doing chemical reactions.

Another passion I have is for Japanese. The subject is about learning Japanese culture, basic conversations and language alphabets hiragana and katakana. We learn about the culture and having conversations with others in Japanese as well as writing sentences in hiragana and katakana. My Semester One mark was 98%. It's a quite easy language as it is just like building blocks. Once you understand how it works, it is easy to do well in. Also, I like the fact that I am able to go around seeing words in Japanese and understanding

what it means, as well as going to Japan in the future to be able to experience the culture. I will choose it next year because my brother said that it gets 10% extra on your ATAR but I also really enjoy it. The culture is really cool, as well as a lot of their philosophies and ideas. Hopefully in 2019 there's a school Japan trip and I can go on it.

Although not a school subject, another area I really got interested in learning about was child sex trafficking. When I learnt about the organisation Love146, an organisation that works to abolish child-sex trafficking, I felt this fire light up within my soul. I felt as if God was telling me that this was my purpose - to help these children. I researched everything I could on the issue and am now working to fundraise for it. I think that me learning about this issue is important as it changed a lot for what I wanted to be in the future. It was a positive change, but it also confused me a lot. It led me to feel that I wouldn't achieve enough through pursuing photography and needed to do something that could create a bigger and better impact on these children. I often have thoughts that if I don't become a paediatrician to help these children, I'd open up a branch for Love146 here in Australia to raise more awareness for the issue and stop child sex trafficking that is also occurring here. When I spoke to other peers about it most people didn't know what it was. For a while now, I feel like it hasn't gotten enough attention. I've been considering actually working for Love146 maybe going back to Philippines and meeting some of the victims. That's one of the places that the organization focuses on and I was recently reading one story about this girl who got picked by her own mom to be sold. It was heart breaking. Ever since I heard about the issue I keep learning more and more about it. I get a real feeling of passion when I think about it and I really want to make a difference to those children.

Career development activities

One of the activities I do is swimming. The squad trainings are on Tuesday and Thursday mornings in preparation for swimming carnivals and ACC carnivals. I enjoy butterfly and backstroke, drills and swimming continuously for over 800m. I enjoy the focus on breath control, coordination, speed and strokes. I like how quiet my surroundings are when I swim and how I let go of all the thoughts within my brain once I jump into the water. It is my de-stresser. Plus, I'm quite good at it and it keeps me healthy. I quit doing my out of school swimming though. It was at Belmont, and I was there for seven or eight years. Recently, well this year, every time on Friday I wouldn't get excited to go, and I'd make up excuses to not go. I realized that maybe I was doing too much. I like the ability to switch off from

your surroundings and de-stress and I still get that but sometimes the struggle of getting up and having to go is hard. Especially, after school being really tired and then having to go again was too much.

Also, I am part of the Student Representative Council (SRC). It is 'the voice of the students' and helps with planning events for the school. I like creating the posters and planning for our socials but there isn't a lot else I like about SRC. It is supposed to help students develop leadership, initiative, patience and standing up for what they believe in. Especially as it should be student run but is mostly teacher run and a lot of our ideas are rejected while the teacher's ideas are approved by the other teachers without students actually having any say on whether we want to go with their ideas. Aside from that though I like being part of the community within SRC, because a lot of people there are nice and I created a little group within year 10 for our SRC committee because we were together for three years. I can make posters and work with together with my friends. Hopefully next year when there's a new student captain of SRC and a new teachers it will become different because we've been doing it for three years, and we haven't done a lot within it.

Another area I'm involved in is the media team. We do the media coverage for the school which consists mostly of taking pictures at events that happen. I like being able to take photos at events and developing my photography skills each year. Some things I've improved are my ability to work a DSLR, working well in social environments to capture good group photos and my ability to spot a good camera opportunity. I love photography and am able to gain experience at these events for future use as well as to improve my skills. I originally got involved because I like photography, and also Mr R was very encouraging. I look up to him and he is another one of my role models Although now he left for another job so it's more about being in the media team now. It's given me more opportunities to take photos. Mr R talked a lot about getting the emotions in people's faces, especially during the athletics carnival. When I started to focus on that I took better pictures and I developed more understandings of people's emotions during times like that.

My media team skills has also helped me in my personal photography. I like taking photos with a DSLR or film camera for artistic purposes. I try capturing special moments and bringing an artistic and creative perspective on the world around us. It helps me develop my creativity, technical ability, keen eye for good detail, good communication and people skills and time management skills. I love photography because it lets me capture moments within a photo and freeze the feelings within that moment, so as if they will forever be

preserved. I think photography is beautiful because of the way it uses light, and it just amazes me how you can tell a story through just one photo.

I did some work experience at Viva! Photography where I organised photo proofs in order and into photo albums, organised client leads for competition, organised CD's with titles, folded envelope folders and put letters into envelopes, entered clients into the database, vacuumed and mopped. I learned time management and organisational skills, communication and teamwork and optimism. I liked my host employer L who supervised me on my first day since she saw me as a team member rather than just a student doing work placement. She was the only employer who I was able to have an in depth conversation about pursuing photography. I also worked with C who was quite surprised that I came in on the second day and didn't know what I could do. I disliked the fact that while she was supervising me I had to sit in the production room staring at the wall for one and a half hours with the staff just walking past me. After that time, she finally came into the room and was really dismissive say she had to give me a job to do and made me just clean the entire studio for the day. I remember asking her if I could watch any photoshoots that were happening through the day and she agreed, but when the clients came into the studio, she didn't bother telling me that they were doing a photoshoot even though she had promised to. I disliked how for a majority of the placement, I wasn't really needed nor wanted there. But, I liked how I was surrounded in a photography type of environment and it opened my eyes to the fact that I liked photography as a hobby rather than a profession. After realising that a large portion of photography was administrating and the pay within that field was extremely low, I decided against pursuing photography. The work experience at Viva Photography! taught me to be realistic. I think I didn't enjoy it as much as I thought because I had very high expectations as I was so passionate about photography, and I think that's one of the reasons it was a bit of a disappointment.

The other work experience placement I had was at Chemist Warehouse. I thought it would be boring, because a lot of my friends were saying all you do is stock shelves and It's not fun at all. But the staff there are so nice, sweet, and funny and I really liked it. Mr S from school came to visit me and I was talking to him about that, and he said the culture of a work place is really important and I think that was so true, because I didn't want to go out there that week, but the people there were so friendly. After my placements they asked if I was going to put in my resume. One of my family friends who works at Office Works says they are also recruiting so if I'm going to apply with them first and if I'm not successful I'll

definitely apply for Chemist Warehouse. It is pretty good there. I learned a lot about how they work like when you have too much stock and what you need to do. I helped a few customers out as well which I enjoyed. Although I did get one rude customer but the staff were very supportive and told me not to worry as that happens sometimes in retail, so I felt better.

I also did some volunteering at the Harold Hawthorne Centre. There I helped out with the decorations for the Christmas in July event that was occurring for the seniors, passing out the meals for the seniors as well as drinks and taking photos to put up on their website. I learned good communication skills and teamwork. One of the residents, Gloria was one of the most joyful people I've ever met! She was extremely welcoming to us and proved us wrong as we thought we'd mostly be bored doing the work. I liked the fact that she saw a majority of things from our perspective and told us many stories about the seniors and also talked to us about how vital a good education was as she let it slip she left school to follow a band around Australia during her teenage years. Everyone was extremely welcoming and kind, and our team of students worked extremely well with each other and were able to complete the tasks quickly and effectively. I loved working at the centre as I was able to work with seniors and help them have a joyful time. I was able to meet many seniors who told me about their life and it was so rewarding to see the smiles on their faces as Gloria told me that not many of them get out and this was the only time they were able to do so. I had originally thought that old people were mostly cranky, rude, and mean, and that kind of thing, because my mom always says she gets a lot of senior customers at the casino who are really rude. But when I am at the Centre and we're letting the people into the room they're so nice and sweet. I remember talking to two nice old ladies and they were so nice and telling me about their nieces and families. This experience really changed my perspective of older people.

Career and life transitions

Next year I want to take Chemistry instead of Psychology for the chance to go into a medicine course but I don't know if I am capable enough to go into medicine. Now that subject selection has closed and we have had our interviews I don't know if I am able to change my subjects. I'm really not sure yet what to do. Recently I've been thinking about being a GP but I don't know. I don't think I would like being in an office all day. I'm still trying to keep everything open in case I change my mind. I had a talk with my brother about it and he was talking about it in terms of motivation. He used the word intrinsic and

said if you're doing a job specifically for the money then you're not going to excel very well in that job. If you're doing it because you like it, and because you're interested in it then you will. Those comments have really stuck with me. He was saying that Year 11 and 12 is the time for questioning what you want to do and hopefully in the next two years I can figure out what it is I want to do. I was talking to my oldest brother and asked him if he thought I should do business. He said not to because I'm too nice to want to take people's money.

If I had to research more I would probably need to understand the entire process to do medicine because apparently it's a really long process. I would want to see what exactly each stage would be. I was talking to my neighbour, and she's doing medicine at the moment, and she said if you do undergraduate medicine it's hard. The people who do postgraduate medicine they're much more mature. They have more skillsets and life experience. If I did medicine I would probably want to specialize in paediatrics. When I think about what I want to do, it's always influenced by the status and pay of the job. I want to have a job that I am proud of to say to people, a job that has a high status and pays a lot. I think one thing that motivates me to do well is my fear of not being successful, of not achieving the best I think I can do. But sometimes, I have moments where I think about just becoming a teacher or photographer and doing what I love, but then I am reminded of the fact that I can achieve more. I feel that if I take a low paying or 'risky' job, I'll have more regrets.

Year 11

Personal context and background

Last year my brother told me that Year 11 was a big leap from Year 10 and I believed him, but I didn't fully understand how major the change was. I think that Year 11 ATAR is such a massive jump from year 10. None of us were able to ease into year 11, it was just like: boom! My best subjects at the moment are probably Literature and Design. I thought I'd do better in Japanese, but everything that we did in year 10 is nothing in comparison to what we're doing in year 11. I think a lot of the subjects that I picked, they're very basic in Year 10. Once I came into year 11 it was a big step up. Especially during exams. I feel like I didn't prepare myself enough as I should have. I was trying to setup an entire timetable and a study plan as to when I needed to have things done by but then, I had too many assessments, shifts at work and extracurricular activities. It got a bit much, a bit crazy.

Yesterday before I went to work I was quite stressed and I had a bit of a breakdown and then I had a conversation with my parents about it, and we were talking about how this year has been going. I have had a big focus on doing subjects that could lead me to Medicine as a career and I feel like I was expecting a bit too much of myself. I wasn't putting as much effort in as I should have if I wanted to go into medicine. I just wasn't being realistic enough. When I thought about it further I realised the medicine career angle is because I really want to provide aid and support for children. Going in to paediatrics, I could actually do that and also because I was really interested in the body and how it works. I was always interested in either paediatrics or dermatology because I find them both really interesting fields. I was watching videos of surgeries and stuff and it was just really interesting hearing about all the cases and how they help the children. But my average in Chemistry is low and I am also failing Maths Methods. I chose these subject to help me get the ATAR for Medicine but now I am considering dropping Chemistry. I was thinking about swapping to study Psychology but it's a very heavy content as well and I think I am really struggling doing six ATAR subjects. Every time we start a new topic, I can never get it as quickly as everyone else and I have to put in more work for it. But I also have to put in more work for my other subjects as well so it's all a bit hard. If I drop it then I won't have a science subject, which is what I'm stressed out about. I don't mind dropping chemistry but I want to have a science because if I do consider doing medicine it will be important. But now I figured out I really just want to help children maybe I don't need medicine for that.

I have started to think about international aid or international relations degrees as well. It's so hard to know what to choose and I have decided to make changes during subject selection but it was very confusing. I ended up dropping chemistry and I feel like without having the stress of that subject I would do a lot better all of my other subjects. I was going to do a general subject but not of them interested me and there were timetable clashes with my other subjects. So because I had 5 ATAR an exception was made to give me a study period. The study period has been very helpful so far especially because I have to balance work with it. I can do a lot of extra study in study period and still be up-to-date. I'm in the library for it with some of the Year 12 students. This helped lots as they could tell me what they studied from last year and the feedback they got. One student was also studying Literature so she would explain it to me and walk me through some ideas so when I went to class I would better understand what was happening. It was very helpful.

I also have three joint Year 11 and 12 classes. There's Japanese, Literature and Design. The joint class is harder with subjects like Japanese because it requires you to have the teacher for the whole period, but then on some days you can't because he has to teach the Year 12 students and it becomes very hard. Literature and Design are fine because we can do the same content, but with Japanese it's a lot harder because it's different content. I think having Literature as a joint class is very beneficial. Also, with Design it's very peer to peer collaboration as we get feedback on what we are doing on all of our different portfolios and tasks. It means we all get to look at what they did last year or at the process they used to do it which helps with our learning. In Literature as well we'll do a character or chapter analysis and each person has to do a different one and so you can kind of see how the Year 12s do it and then let that build on to where you want to be at when you're in you are in Year 12. It's really dependent on the subject though and how much you work together in it. I feel like with Japanese, I would want it to be more separate as it is more teacher-driven. I like having the peer to peer collaboration in the other subjects as the way Mrs M. does it helps us to better understand. She doesn't just tell us what to do but we all share our ideas and gain inspiration from each other. I don't think it would help me at all if it was in Maths though as it's more you do your own work. We do get to ask each other before we ask the teacher how to do a specific question but it's not engaging and harder to learn so that's the least way I like doing it.

Career aspirations, goals and planning

One of my goals this year was to develop my planning and organising skills. I think I have been a bit disorganised and I hoped being more organised would improve my grades. I created a study timetable and I'd write out the tasks that I needed to do and when I would do the task during the week and review it every day as well. I stuck with it for like the first week but then after that it just went downhill. So I tried the accountable goal setting strategy to help me stick to my timetable. This meant I had to share my goals with others and have pain points or consequences if I did not stick to it. But my brothers and my family were quite forgetful about implementing them. It might work better with my friends to be honest. And maybe I could ask my parents again. If I remind them maybe they would help me. When exams are coming up, I did start to follow the timetable again but there's a period of serious disorganisation at the beginning of the year. No one helps you with any way to organise your learning. Things are happening so fast in all your subjects you never get a chance to stop and think about how you could do it better.

Another area I wanted to learn about is motivation. I really felt like I procrastinated lots and I wanted to know why. Hopefully being more motivated will help me achieve my goals. But when I started researching motivation I spent more time learning this than I actually did studying my school subjects. I was watching this one video where a lady was on a talk show, and she was talking about how her life went extremely downhill, and every day it would be the same kind of routine that she would do. She would just stay in bed for most of the time because she was wallowing in the sadness when she'd gotten fired from her job and her marriage wasn't working out. But she used this strategy where she'd count, like one, two, three, and then she wouldn't have any time to consider doing something else. After those three seconds she'd do whatever was in her head. So for example, after waking up she'd say one, two, three, and then she'd get out of bed. She was talking about how there was a man who read her book about it, and he said that he was almost about to commit suicide and then jump off the bridge but he counted three seconds and then he got off the bridge. It was a very powerful thing. I was researching about that and I think it helped a lot, especially because in the study skills sessions that we were doing with Ms M she was talking about how if you can start studying, and stay concentrated for five minutes then it can help you continue studying for a prolonged period of time.

I think I'm studying better now and being better organised. But it's been really disheartening lately, especially because ATAR is so good at lowering your self-esteem. You're always questioning your own abilities and I think that leads to a loss of motivation again. I feel like I have really put so much effort in but the reward or the results are not there. Especially with chemistry as that's been the hardest out of all my subjects. I started having a tutor for it every Saturday for two hours. The first task at the beginning of the year was an investigation, and everyone was quite confused about it. But the second test, that's when I started to receive tutoring. I think with the extra practice I understand some of the concepts now.

Although I wanted to improve all of my subjects my main focus was to improve my Math Methods grade. I wanted to improve it to 65% as I think this will help me get a good ATAR. It's not scaled down and it gets bonus points. I also started getting some tutoring for Maths and wanted to attend the Maths Club after school. I wanted to prioritise Maths in my study timetable. It's just I didn't prioritise Maths like I said I would. I was going to go to Maths Club after school to help but it's on Wednesdays and I work my job on Wednesdays. I think that first term was the hardest, but I think now I've started to understand things that I need

to do. Also understanding things that I shouldn't be doing and I hope this will help and that I am not too busy to achieve it. There's lots of family events coming up and I also get distracted by social media, extracurricular and work activities as well.

In terms of my long term career goal I am now not sure about medicine. I haven't really thought too much about the kind of job I definitely want a career within humanitarian aide work. Like working for UNICEF or else like Love146 in the Philippines. I was thinking I would probably want to work more with rehabilitation for kids that have undergone sex trafficking but that only comes to Love146. But then I was researching for UNICEF, the careers, they have like an international sector and they have different things, and I feel like I would want to work more in the international sector. I haven't really thought as far as how I want to get there, because I will be doing a specific course in University. I feel like maybe the work could also involve Design as it's my favourite subject and sometimes when I'm working on a project I get lost in the time and don't realise how late it is.

I also like studying Religion when we're looking at the humanitarian side of things. But mostly I feel like my subjects are more just so will get an ATAR to do what I want to do in university. I feel like I should've gone into something like health studies or something like that that I would enjoy instead of picking subjects just to get an ATAR. Hopefully the ATAR will mean I can study something in design, media, marketing or international relations so I can work for UNICEF. I want to start looking for volunteering work to help others. When I was at church the priest was talking about this organisation in Perth that works with disadvantaged kids so I could try doing some volunteer work if it's possible. Maybe with the summer holidays maybe try to build connections with community organisations. If only I had time to do what I'm really passionate about rather than study. I know I have to though. I know have to do ATAR.

Influences on career development

A role model I have is Logan Browning. She is a female actor on a show called 'Dear White People' on Netflix and the character that she portrays on the show is quite similar to who she is in real life. She is quite a strong independent woman which I deeply admire and she brings focus to social issues and injustices such as racial discrimination and the detrimental impacts of gender stereotypes on society. I feel like that show is very eye opening to the kind of discrimination, racial injustice that most African American people face especially university students. She's a very inspirational person because she brings

social issues into the light for public discussion. I'm sure she has done some humanitarian work as well. I admire her character and like her; she's also really pretty.

Another role-model I have is Ms K. Despite going through numerous challenges within her life, she is constantly smiling and doing the best that she can to be a good role-model for students and other staff members. I truly admire the fact that she can rise above the hard times that she's experienced and to make the most out of her life. Going on Kairos camp means that teachers also share their experiences with students so we see them totally differently. There was this part of it where she was talking about things that have happened to her and it was just really moving because, despite the fact that she's gone through a lot she's still able to be very bright and uplifting. She's just very passionate about her job as well. I kind of aspire to be like her. It's just I didn't expect someone so happy to have had challenges like that. Because most people after they've gone through things, the majority of them are very salty and mad at the world but she's just very bright and she has a very bright personality. I feel like for her it's not just having a job, it's more like having vocation or calling. And she is such a valuable asset to our community not someone who can be easily replaced.

My older brother is also an important role model for me. He is a strong and mature person who I deeply admire. He is passionate and resilient with his studies and lives his life humbly. He gives me advice whenever I struggle with ATAR and sets me straight when he knows that I am doing things wrong without noticing. What I've noticed about my brother is he perseveres a lot as well and doesn't give up very easily. He always keeps going until everything is finished. I really aspire to have that mindset because with me if things get too hard, especially with school, I tend to give up more easily. He would always ask what can I do to fix the issue or get better at it rather than giving up. He also gets very passionate about what he's doing. I really hope I choose a university course that's right for me and that I'm as passionate about as well. He always comes home and applies what he has learnt. The other day he was talking about skin folds and how you need to make sure your body is at a particular percentage. He is so passionate about studying exercise sports and rehabilitation science that it rubs off on me. He knows that industry is very hard at the moment to get a job so he is doing lots of extra things and thinking about a Masters degree as well. He hopes that by building up the experience he'll be able to get a better job in it.

Although I don't watch much television there are a few shows that I like. The first is Madam Secretary. It has a strong female lead in the show who makes calculated and sound judgements as Secretary of State and balances such a job with motherhood. I also like The Good Doctor. It is quite inspiring to see an autistic doctor who faces prejudice and discrimination in the workplace rise above it all. The other show is How to Get Away With Murder. The show obviously dramatizes Law, but it's quite an exhilarating show and is one of the reasons I became interested in Law in the first place.

My favourite story at the moment is a Streetcar Named Desire that was originally published as a play and turned into a 1950s drama. Most people wonder why I like it and think it's a bit weird. I just find it like really interesting because things that usually study in English they're very cliché. This story is in the 1940's though so it's not like something that would be written in this day and age. This was the authors only good play and after this he just completely depleted. I like how complex it is and that it has things that apply to most readers. The main character becomes an alcoholic, because of what she suffered and I feel like most people can relate to that, like that's what they do when they have problems. It's just like, every character's very human in a way that they adapt to specific situations; it's very human. There are things that are obviously wrong, because they have mental health issues. The main character is Blanche Dubois, an English high school teacher arrives in New Orleans from Mississippi to live with her sister, Stella Kowalski and her husband Stanley Kowalski after losing the fortunes of their ancestral home, Belle Reve and apparently being given a leave of absence from her teaching position. As the play progresses, Blanche's troubled background is revealed by Stanley. Her husband had committed suicide after Blanche's harsh judgements regarding his homosexuality and following the death of her relatives and losing Belle Reve as a result of such, she stayed in a flea bag motel and engaged in numerous sexual affairs which in turn caused her to be evicted from the motel. In addition, it is discovered that she didn't take a leave of absence but was fired for seducing one of her students. As a result of her past being revealed, Blanche retreats into a fantasy she creates for herself and delves into insanity, soon being pushed to her breaking point once Stanley rapes her and sends her to a mental asylum afterwards. Despite the disturbing nature of the play, I think that it is all so intriguing. Each character is formulated so intricately, and the play is both complex and simple. Being able to do a detailed analysis into each character as well as their motives was even more intriguing. Even though Blanche is manipulating and narcissistic, I think that she is my favourite character. Her character presents such humanlike qualities that can be quite

relatable in a sense. She is in some ways quite a strong and dominant character, but she also sticks beside her values.

A current motto I live by is 'utilise your resources'. I think it is very important, especially because some of my friends are always worried about what is going on, or struggling and stressed with ATAR but they never seek help. I always advise them to go speak to their teachers or other people and utilize the resources available to them. Being able to reach out to different people and different resources to help you be better, rather than depending on yourself for everything and being overwhelmed. I also like 'Live the Fourth' but that's a quote from Kairos camp. It means to live the values and things that we were taught during the camp retreat.

Formation of vocational interests

I am really interested in the Literature ATAR course. We learn to create readings of literary texts and to create our own texts, including essays, poems, short stories, plays and multimodal texts. We learn to read texts in terms of their cultural, social and historical contexts; their values and attitudes; and their generic conventions and literary techniques. I like the creative assessments and close readings the most as I am quite good at them, but having class discussions and doing character and chapter analysis are also fun. My current grade is only around 65% but I really like learning the content and the texts that we study are extremely interesting. I am constantly challenged to apply different perspectives to texts rather than relying on the dominant reading of it. It is also fun as I really like my teacher.

Another interest I have is photography. I enjoy taking photos as it allows you to see the world through a different perspectives. This could be a more aesthetic and attractive way to look at things, or by contrast a realistic view on issues within the world that you normally wouldn't pay attention to such as poverty. My interest has helped me develop my ability to use Photoshop, change settings on a camera, think creatively and understand my creative personality as well as the ability to work under pressure. I like photography as it challenges me to be creative and to look at things from a different perspective. I recently bought film camera but I have found I am not doing it much at the moment due to studying for exams. I have set myself a goal that if I achieve well in my exams that I can spend more time on photography. I have set a target that if I get above 65 in my subjects I can buy a new

camera I don't want to go too high though because I don't want to be disappointed and not achieve it.

Photography is all I have at the moment because of ATAR. I wasn't able to continue any of my other hobbies. I had school, and then work, and then sleep and that was just it constantly and it was really hard. Not having any time to do stuff I enjoy because of ATAR. I wasn't able to do as much extracurricular activities. I stopped swimming and then I stopped photography and I think having just the focus on work and then school was not wasn't very beneficial to my own well-being. My mental health was like depleting. That's why I really want to get back in to photography. To do something I like and improve my mental well-being.

Career development activities

My main activity at the moment aside from school and study is part-time work as a pharmacy assistant at Pharmacy 4 Less. This involves me working on the cash register, customer service, stock counts and fill, stock expiries, stamping prescriptions and getting customers to sign for them as well as giving over the counter medicines. It has certainly helped me to develop communication skills, teamwork skills, customer service, numeracy and task efficiency. The majority of the people I have worked with are extremely kind and willing to help whenever I have problems with things, but there are some who get quite annoyed easily and although seeming really kind to customers, they are mean to some other staff. The pharmacy assistants who I work with are very efficient and focus a lot on customer service. The work environment is overall really positive, I enjoy work although sometimes it can get quite boring not having anything to do for 10 hours besides rip up old scripts. I work at least two days after school on either Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays. And then maybe if I have time I take on a weekend shift, if my boss offers.

I found the balance hard. Especially with studying ATAR subjects. I've been considering dropping some of my subjects, because I think that I'm struggling a bit, like balancing work, and then social life, and then studies. I'm definitely putting in effort and I've already deleted my social media like Snapchat and Instagram. I found it so distracting. It's funny now though especially because I'll go into my phone as habit and not to really do anything. But then I have to do study because there's nothing there in the phone. Although this year has been challenging I haven't had anything major happen. I did go through a period of time where I was concerned about studying too much, because I wouldn't be spending enough

time with my family. But I think I'm okay now. I'll study and then on my breaks I'll go talk to them. I think work has been a major factor, because I'll do three to four hour shifts on school nights and work is tiring. I need it though because I need it to save up for Japan next year. I don't know, maybe I could ask my boss if I could just take weekend shifts.

There's also other people who are doing casual like me so they might pick up more work but I'm not too sure. And I even told her in my interview it would be ok so I feel bad, she asked if I was sure I can take on a job, especially with ATAR, because you said you're so busy with your studies and I told her I've been balancing my studies well. I even wrote in my resume that I was good with 10 to 15 hours so I cannot let her down. It becomes really hard when employees are on leave or move on though as two recently quit and this week there's three that are on leave. So with that I have to take all of the shifts. But then I also have to study for exams so it's really hard. We're hoping that our boss might employ some more people but she's just looking for pharmacy assistant at the moment. It's getting really hard not having enough staff working there, but I cannot help that. At the moment, I'm doing some work in the back doing prescriptions rather than at the front. I think customer service is a big challenge. Last Sunday I was in the back doing over the counter prescriptions and then this lady said her prescriptions were on file I went to the cabinet to check for her prescription but couldn't see it. I asked for her name again just to check and then she and she was just completely mad at me and said it's not on file, it's on fax. I apologised for the miscommunication and then she was also sorry and said she was not herself when she doesn't have her medicine. I think that learning to be compassionate, not judging people because they're in a mood is something is really important.

I feel I've learned how to do be good at retail and also I like that I've learn about specific medicines. Such as what you can have while you're pregnant and things you use for cholesterol and other issues. I'm with pharmacists that know what they're doing so than they'll tell me things and then I'll know what to say for the next customers with that problem. It's easier to remember facts when it's in a situation and not just in a book. If it was in a book, I would probably I like remember it for a bit for a test but then forget it after when I didn't need to know it. At work I start to remember things long term. I think work experience is really beneficial and this job has made me quite certain that I don't want to go into Pharmacy long term. It is quite a repetitive job, but working in over the counter prescriptions and learning the different medication names and medication given for specific diseases and illnesses is quite interesting.

Another activity I tried was the Just Start IT Program. It was an entrepreneurship program and competition in which students formulate an app to pitch to a panel of judges; the winner will receive an investment by a company. We did it in Year 10 and I wanted to do it again. It taught me entrepreneurship skills and put me into a business-oriented perspective, which was quite beneficial as it applies so much to the real world. However, when I started the entrepreneurship program in year 11 I was too busy with ATAR so I withdrew. It kind of made me think about things from more like a business aspect and was very interesting. I like how we had to focus on the problem first not the solution. You need to understand the pain of the customer and why your solution would be used by them. Many businesses fail because their idea fixes their own problem but nobody else's. I wish I could have done more of it but ATAR study was too much.

I also got to participate in the Kairos camp retreat. It's a religious retreat in which students were able to grow closer to others, themselves and God. I enjoyed the life graph, the forgiveness session and developing Interpersonal and communication skills. The positive atmosphere that allowed to me to emotionally develop and gain a new perspective on things. I think Kairos was the most helpful experience for me. My friend said ever since I attended Kairos she felt I was less tense. I feel like having this of kind of understanding about yourself and your problems and having people help you find solutions was so beneficial. It sounds like I need a therapist, but it was just good to know other were sharing my experiencing and supporting me. ATAR is very hard. I wish it was more of a progression through rather than something that you fall into and it's just a mess. I feel like being able to know yourself and whether or not you can cope or knowing how much you can take is really important.

I kept thinking I could do ATAR and have a job and then do extracurricular activities. And then when everything started going wrong it was really hard. It took you having to tell me that you felt I was taking too much on for me to recognise my own limits. Also being able to admit that you're struggling is really important. But everyone has different points of view and it's the system. I was helping out with the university bowls and I was talking about ATAR and the people asked how I was going. When I said it was hard they said you don't really need it. You can still get into university doing different things that you only need an ATAR if you want to go to medicine. It may be better to do what you like and have some good experiences and then be able to go into university with those experiences. But then

again, I feel like ATAR exists as they feel it is the best way to prepare you for the workload of university.

Career and life transitions

I'm currently on an ATAR Pathway studying, Religion & Life, Literature, Maths Methods, Japanese and Design. I also get a study line which is helping me with my other subjects. I received an Outstanding Application award for Design in Semester 1. This year has been tough as I started starting thinking that I could balance 6 ATAR Subjects with a job and extra-curricular activities. However, I was not achieving the percentages that I wanted and I failed a subject for the first time (Chemistry). I also was not in the top 2 for Japanese like last year and was struggling with balancing a job and school. I have now made the changes I wanted by dropping Chemistry and I'm quite positive about the subjects I will continue with next year.

After experiencing a year of utter struggle and constant breakdowns because of ATAR, I know what I need to do to prepare as the course next year is very much the same as this year. I have to focus and do as well as I am humanly able to in order to achieve the ATAR that I want. The study timetable I've been doing this year was organize study times to do specific things, but I feel like what I was doing each time period wasn't very effective. I think now that I've come to understand what's required for each subject, I can be more specific with what I need to do per block of time that I set for myself for the subject. This year, I wasn't entirely sure about what was required but now from experience, it's a lot easier for me to be on top of study requirements for next year. Often when I'd get a test back I would never look through it because I found the result too disappointing feeling like a failure. But then this year, I was able to do that more seeing it as part of learning and knowing where I was going wrong to improve more. Especially with Maths Methods I would always doubt myself and my answers. But once I started to do more questions and I grew more confident I was able to stick with answers rather than second-guessing myself.

I feel this year was about learning balance. I'm also hoping to talk to my boss about my work. Every time that we're on holidays, someone goes and leaves at work, so then I always cover some of the shifts. I need to say I cannot do it due to study. Next year I won't be taking Tuesday and Thursday nights, I only want to work weekends. Also, if I have time I want ask Ms K about things I could volunteer for because when we went to Philippines I was going around giving out food to homeless people and I felt like I was making a real

difference. It would be great to do that here. Although it comes back to balance. I will also be Media Team Captain and I have been getting a lot of emails from people and that makes me happy to think that people are willing to engage with me and I'm excited to organise all of the media for events next year.

I've been doing more exercise recently and hope to do more. I originally stopped swimming as I felt it was impacting my studies, but I feel like swimming was good for my health, more than other exercise, so I really want to start again. Especially since the swimming club is back on this summer. I'm hoping to improve my sleep as well as it's not been very good. I think this year, I wasn't sleeping as much just because I was very disorganized. I wasn't using my time effectively, but if I do things right next year, I think sleep will improve okay. People say that the Pomodoro study Technique works. So, yeah, I'm going to try that out. Study for 25 minutes, then break for 5 minutes. That will be in my study timetable. Hopefully I can stick to it and not go over. This will help me get more sleep and not be up so late studying. Learning how to manage stress and forming a well-balanced lifestyle based on that is my main focus for next year.

Year 12

Personal context and background

I think I've settled into Year 12 a lot better than I did in Year 11. Everything didn't take me by surprise as much. We recently had quizzes for each subject for the teacher to see how we were doing. Some were weighted and some were not. I thought I was doing a lot better with Maths Methods and I was understanding concepts, but then when it came to actually like a test situation, I completely choked and I failed the quiz. The teacher said I need to work a lot harder. But I'm ahead in the chapters and I've been studying hard. I tried the questions again after and I got them right so I think it's just a matter of practicing for tests rather than not knowing the content.

Also, with Literature I didn't do very well but Ms M said it's because I haven't written an essay in two months and I will need to get back into things. I think that it is the same with every subject. When I'd done the Literature close reading I knew I did really badly in that then it was like carrying that into the Maths Methods test as it was over back to back periods straight after each other. I always end up doubting myself with a lot of the questions and then I don't do very well. I get really disappointed because I'm working really hard to improve. I've started to ask for feedback from the teachers to find out what I

did wrong and how I can improve. I've mostly been doing it in Literature that has helped. But in the subjects I am struggling with it is harder as it seems like I prefer to avoid my failures rather than get good feedback on how to get better. My results are probably just because I go to sleep late at night due to study. I have my head full of ideas and sometimes if that happens, I need to write something down. I think it's also because I go to bed but I don't go to sleep. I sometimes go on my phone to check things, especially if I have a test the next day. I normally get to bed after study at about midnight. But if I have an assessment the next day it is more like 2:00am. Then the next day I end up being tired for the assessment.

It was really bad during the examination period at the end of last year. Recently I've been sleeping earlier mainly because we've got a new dog and she wakes up at 5:30am, and then she barks loudly. Now I'm awake a lot earlier and need to sleep earlier. It's a dog not puppy. She's a Great Mastiff and we adopted her. It's been really good for my exercise as with the dog I'm going for walks and runs. I have started swimming again recently so I'm getting a lot more exercise so I feel good about that.

I was talking to some of my friends about what happened in the Maths Methods test and how I didn't do as well. My friend said if I'm doubting myself maybe it's because I haven't been doing enough practice. My tutor also said the same that if you do as much practice as you can, you can go confident within your ability to do the questions. I think if I were to focus more on doing more practice papers that would help. My results have improved from last year but not as much as I wanted them to. A small improvement is better than no improvement though. I think it helps that I now I recognise when I feel stressed and places that I'm spreading myself too thin. This year though I feel as if I'm comparing myself to other people too much. It should be more about whether I feel like I'm good enough to do well in my subjects rather than what others are doing.

Recently we had another Maths Methods test and I studied as hard as I could for it and there were students in my class that barely did anything and they still got a higher mark than me. So because I'm always comparing myself to others I keep questioning whether the amount of effort I'm putting in is really worth it when other students are not going to put in any work and still get higher marks than me. Especially in the more content heavy subjects like RE and Methods. I feel like I'm putting in a lot of work but still not getting the marks that I would like to be getting for it. But then other subjects like Literature become a lot harder. I think it's because I'm putting so much work and effort into Methods and RE I'm

not putting in as much for these subjects. It's like there's no balance at all. There's not enough time to do everything well. It's too hard to balance so many subjects and the workloads and do everything well.

Every one of my subjects are very content heavy so often it's more like my attention to the subject is based on which assessment is coming up rather than spreading it out in one day, balancing it to make sure I learn it well. There is definitely too much focus on assessments. We don't get time to actually learn the stuff properly; it's straight on to the next thing. Even for exams, they always say that you shouldn't be studying now what you don't already know; but it's hard to study it when you feel as if most of the concepts and skills that you've built over the semester haven't been fully learned or developed properly to understand fully what's going on. Sometimes I feel like it's not the school's fault either. It's more whether or not the student devotes their time properly but it's hard if there is not enough time to devote.

For me if I asked teachers if I could schedule time out of class to ask more questions about my individual understanding as there's not enough class time. Although I feel it would depend on the student because it's not like one strategy would work for each student. I think for me personally though, if there were changes the school could implement it would more time after an assessment happens actually reviewing and understanding rather than rushing on to the next topic. It's going over those concepts and reviewing some of the things that a majority of the class was the weakest at and then building upon it so that everyone comes to the understanding. Rather than just moving straight on after that test is finished.

I think that's a major flaw in the way ranking and percentages is done. Each student's effort and work ethic is weighted on the assessment score rather than all of the time and effort and strategies we have used in our own learning. We are judged on assessment percentages rather than actually receiving an education. I think it's really hard because I think ranking based on the percentages does not tell your whole story. I know it's because it's an indication of how good you are compared to others. But when it's not as good as you want it to be it does affect your self-esteem and you feel as if you're good enough to be doing the subject. If more attention was put onto actually learning rather than ranking students it would improve the way students feel. A lot of kids could get a lot more out of their education if there wasn't so much focus on assessments.

Career aspirations, goals and planning

I think it was because I was involved in this research it was actually really cool because a lot of my friends they were like freaking out when the school gave them the blank transition plan on what they wanted to do when they left school. But when I did it took a bit of stress off because we have had lots of discussion and kind of know where I'm heading to. My friends were all stressed and thought I only get this one plan and this is what I have to do in my life. I was like it's just a plan and you can change it whenever you want. I think the chance to do the journals and discuss my future has really put me ahead of some of the other students in terms of what to do in the future. Especially because many of my friends families don't have any idea about the system in Australia and feel like they're on their own. Because there is so much focus on ATAR and assessments not many of them have had much time to really think about things.

For my own plan I am keen to work in the humanitarian sector or in media and communications. Ideally, I want to be an aid and development worker, work in international diplomacy or even be a refugee and migrant support worker to help those new to Australia. In these roles, I could work in international agencies and organisations such as UNICEF as well as within government agencies. I am really passionate about helping the millions of people living in poverty around the world and am interested in exploring the challenges and the changing approaches to international aid by governments, international organisations and aid agencies. Originally, I had considered taking a degree in international business and was going to look into a career in that field, but I'm growing less sure of it the closer I get to graduating and more sure about international aid. I feel mostly positive about my future because I'm passionate and confident about my career aspirations. I hope that reality doesn't hit too hard and supporting myself financially won't be too difficult if I do volunteering roles when making a start in this field. I was talking to my parents about International Aid and they said it's not a very stable career so I'm definitely considering combining international aid with some type of business studies as well or even Japanese. Japanese is hard but there's a structure and I know what I need to do to become better at it. So maybe I could look at that or even growing my Filipino because I don't know how to spell and write words but I know how to speak it because of my background so maybe I could flourish that as well to add to my employment.

In relation to my academic goals and my study timetable I feel like I'm sticking to it. I think I'm enjoying the strategies I've tried and most are working. Recently I've started to leave my phone in another room and it's really helped but sometimes I'll pick it back up and then it'll ruin the entire study strategy that I have in place. Also, because I now have a dog I'll come out randomly of my room just to see her and it'll stop the flow. That's why I've been going to the library as well, that's another strategy I've implemented. I go twice per week after school. I'll usually go by myself but then my friends sometimes will follow. I think it's better if I go by myself because I've learnt that I can't study in groups for most subjects as my friends are just a distraction. I think like subjects like literature sometimes work better in group by sharing ideas from everyone but then all of the other subjects don't. Also whenever everyone gets their assessments back, it's very secretive. Nobody shares their feedback because they don't want friends to judge their work so there is not much point studying together. If ATAR wasn't so competitive I think it would be good to have a more positive perspective on seeing each other's work rather than it being like very secretive. I tried after exams to share some of my feedback but I still think it's mostly everyone's mindset about sharing feedback on their work. They feel as if others will judge them so they're not as inclined or as open to that. There is also a mindset of competition not collaboration which is a big barrier.

My main study focus has been doing the practice questions. Some teachers have given me extra resources and it's definitely helped. I still think we could learn more if we slowed down and reflected on our learning after assessments but I think it goes back to the whole thing about time constraints with teachers and them being pushed by the assessments. Education seems more about deadlines than about actually learning. I try to reflect myself on areas I am weakest at but I feel like I'm weak at everything. I feel like I haven't been able to fully become confident in every single aspect. I always feel there is more I should know and I never feel like I know definitely how it works. So when it comes to exam time and my teachers say to focus on what I'm weak at it is not helpful. Even when I do identify some things I don't understand properly I never really get the time to talk to the teacher to develop it more. For example with Literature, I feel like I know what I'm talking about and what I'm doing and then I get the assessment back and the feedback tells me what I need to work on; but, we move on quickly and sometimes I either forget when the next assessment comes around or I do try to focus on it but it won't be what she means for me to actually do. It makes me feel like I as if I've got it but I don't really.

Anyway, I think mostly my study timetable is working well. It's just a matter of me cutting back and trying to control how much other activities I do. After the ACC swimming I haven't done much swimming but the dog walking is really hard. My new dog is very aggressive towards other dogs so sometimes my dad won't let me walk her because I can't control her. She is a big dog, so if she goes off at another dog, she'll probably pull me around. Sometimes I walk with him instead or sometimes I'll take her for short sessions. So I felt the balance between study and also getting out an exercising was going well. In terms of balancing study with work it was going well because I only had two shifts per week on Thursdays and Sundays. But recently my boss has been giving me three shifts or more because my co-workers are university students who will be taking their exams so that will put a bigger strain on me. Also, after my own exams my boss will give more shifts; maybe up to four every week. Last week I had 32 hours work over my shifts so that really affected my study schedule. I also had things like family trips and going out with people so work and that was getting in the way of me actually studying properly. Hopefully it will balance out soon otherwise it may start to impact on my sleep again.

With assessments, on the days that I have work I usually finish at 8pm then go eat, get changed and have a brief rest. I would then start to study at 9pm until midnight and some days it would extend late into the night. It definitely wasn't good on the days when I had work and now that I am getting three shifts per week it is worse. But even like on days when I don't have work, I'll stay home to finish assessments and study but it never seems to end and all builds up. Sometimes I think is it even really worth this effort? The main thing that is keeping me going is wanting to do the Humanitarian university course. I have found the career that I'm really confident about pursuing and I only need a 70 ATAR so it's not like my whole life is riding on getting 90 or more for things like law or medicine. But it's just more about me putting the effort in because a 90 would show me that I did put in a lot of effort.

Influences on career development

At the moment I really admire swimmer Mack Horton. I watched his Sunday Night interview and his discussion of the Sun Yang podium protest. I definitely admired him for his courage to do what he had done. That was a man who stood for what he believed in down to his very core – something not common in our day and age. Another role-model for me is my brother. Julian is currently doing his Honours which has definitely taken a heavy toll on him. He is also the president of a university club, as well as working four different

jobs as a personal trainer. Despite all this he's still charging through and doing his best. I've never seen someone so motivated and willing to wake up at 3am just to do a job that he loves. Despite the low pay, he's still pursuing what he loves and I hope that offers me some comfort in my career aspirations. I also admire Michael Openshaw (researcher). His resilience to do a PhD study when he's already so busy being a career counsellor, teacher, father and husband. His work ethic is so admirable and his perspective on career aspirations and the different ways to achieve one's dreams is really special.

Some television shows I like include *When They See Us* which is based on the true story of the 'Central Park Five'. The show details the racially charged and unjust case that wrongly convicted five teenagers. This TV show was a confronting glimpse into the justice system and how easy it is to wrongfully convict people. Another show I like is *The Bachelor* which is extremely entertaining but I just watch this to procrastinate! Something a bit deeper is *Romance is a Bonus Book* which is a Korean drama. One character I admire is a 40-year-old woman who has come back to the advertising industry after a 10-year career leave. She's told that her previous experience is outdated and she doesn't have anything to offer, but once she's given the chance, she does extremely well at her job. I like that she is resilient and sticks with it getting success in the end.

A story I really like is actually the movie *Marvel: Endgame*. It's a continuation on from the last movie. Tony Stark is lost in space and the remaining Avengers of Thor, Black Widow, Captain America and Bruce Banner must figure out a way to bring back their allies to defeat Thanos. I originally had doubts about the movie, like whether or not the 3 hours was worth it. But movie didn't fail to go above and beyond my expectations and gave me a somewhat sense of hope. The ending fight scene ignited a child-like giddiness within me, which definitely helped take me away from my worries of graduating and moving on into adulthood. My favourite character is Tony Stark. Despite his egotistical personality, deep down, he's very much a super hero. He willingly sacrificed himself for humanity and helped save the world. A very courageous man. I still love the phrase: 'Time waits for no one' and use this to help me get going with things.

Formation of vocational interests

My favourite subject is definitely still Literature. It's challenging but I find it so interesting. There's always room for me to grow in that subject and I gain an intense appreciation for literature through the work that we do in the class such as analysing texts from a broad

range of perspectives. Sadly, I'm doing fairly average in the subject as I'm only on 67% since my essay writing skills seem to have drastically declined in quality. But my most recent essay I got 76% which I thought was pretty good. I really like analysing passages of writing, looking for deeper meanings behind what is written by the author and how the text can provide critical insight on society in really subtle ways. There are never ending layers to literature and always a range of different understandings to a text. This subject gives me the ability to put that into consideration in the real world. The world is forever changing, with different perspectives on a range of issues. By understanding such perspectives, I can get a fresh point of view on things.

Another hobby I now have is sewing. I started to upcycling clothes over the holidays or whenever I've been bored. I've reconstructed some pieces of clothing to either fit my body better or to upcycle it into something trendier. I'm finding that using a sewing machine is really therapeutic. I am really enjoying learning and developing sewing skills. The reason I got into this hobby was that 'fast fashion' is in the top five causes of climate change. If there's anything I can do to reduce my impact, especially with clothing, I'll do it.

Career development activities

I am the school Media Captain this year. In this role, I oversee all events needing media coverage. I run the Media Team which covers those events and photos and articles are produced to detail what happened at the events. I like bonding with my team of media students. It is really special to me being able to capture significant school moments and also growing my photography skills. Photography has always been a passion of mine, but rather than pursuing it within a career, it's a lot smarter for me to do it as a hobby while also being able to learn how to manage a team. However, the school media officer left during term two so we didn't have a marketing manager for nine weeks so I was trying to manage the team and events myself. The teaching staff kept wanting photographs done for events which meant I had to get photos in for the newsletter and all these events. I didn't mind it too much because although it's a bit of work I really enjoy it. Also another staff member helped me with some of it but they didn't understand much about it. This meant it was just me managing both teams so it was a lot to organise. I scheduled meetings and ran the teams but it's become a lot harder because students listen to the teacher rather than me. But I'm the one who know what's going on and the teacher doesn't. Like today, I scheduled a meeting at lunch and I had four people come out of fifteen. With the two teams I need to allocate events and organise where students are

going to take photos. I also need to organise the cameras and then edit and save all of the photos that come back in. So it's not hard work but it is a bit time consuming. There was also extra pressure in this role during my exams.

I still work in my part time job as a pharmacy assistant. My hours and shifts have fluctuated throughout this year. I'm planning on going to the Philippines at the end of the year so I need to save the money up. We are visiting family and I'm having a 'debut'. A debut is like this big Filipino 18th birthday celebration, and I don't want my parents paying for everything. But I think it's okay because I'm earning enough money and my Sunday shift you get extra money so that's really good. It's just hard getting the balance right with my studies. My main tasks are being on the register, cleaning shelves, restocking shelves, helping customers and sometimes doing over the counter work dispensing medicines. At the moment it's been a lot of cleaning because there's not a lot to do but stock counts. Sometimes I do the dispensation counter at the back of the store where I would give over the counter medication. I like this better as it gives me a chance to learn about health and helping people with their conditions. If you want to dispense medication you have to be trained but if it's just common medicines like paracetamol, ibuprofen or others then it is fine. You ask the customer a series of questions, double check with the pharmacist and then you can give them the common medicines. So it's not too hard and it's more engaging than cleaning work. Most of the other time it's just at the register checking out general pharmacy items. I think this work helps me to develop customer service and communication skills, commercial awareness, working under pressure, problem-solving and initiative. One of the pharmacists I work with is very kind. She sets up learning modules and work on the contents of different vitamins which I think is really helpful and she's a lot of fun to be around. Most of the staff at work are very kind, but sometimes they criticise other employees about their work which I dislike. I find the environment mostly positive, but there are times when it can get toxic, especially when the pharmacists gossip about another co-worker. Most of these times, I dislike work. We haven't been getting a lot of customers recently and there's hardly anything to do so it can get repetitive. If all I get to do is clean shelves then it's boring and time goes way too slowly. When people go on leave, it puts a major strain on me to balance work and my studies. I'll probably quit next year but I need the money at the moment.

This year I went to the Murdoch university Open Day. I went to the International Aid and Development stall where I was highly recommended to do a double degree. On that day, I

decided to do a Global Politics degree along with my art degree. When I went to the Law stall, it became clear that the course wasn't for me. The Open Day helped me feel more certain about my future after high school.

Career and life transitions

Year 12 has been challenging but having a study period gives me the chance to delegate my time more to each subject. No matter what, it's still ATAR and the workload will inevitably be a lot regardless. I mostly have positive feelings about my future and I'm confident in where I want to go to university. I believe that these choices will grant me the ability to work at my dream job. I think the challenge has been we didn't know what we were coming into or the standard of work required. But now that I know how everything works I expect more of myself. If I'm not reaching that level then it's creating a lot of self-doubt especially comparing to what others are doing. I've met new people from other schools and then I've talked to them about exams. I asked them where they are and how they're doing and that adds onto the comparison. I wonder if our school level is that good compared to the state. Or if I am below the standard and should I even be doing this subject. I have always tried to stay positive and think it's okay if I put in the effort then I'll get the results I want. But then seeing other students that don't put in as much effort getting higher marks really knocks me down.

Also, it gets me down thinking about the world. I read some articles about climate change and get thinking what's the point when climate change is going to kill us all. But not taking the negative thoughts about how good I am compared to others and the state of the world into account I think things are going well. I have a definite career goal in mind. A lot of my friends say I don't know what I want to do with my life. I don't have this problem. It has really helped just take a lot of stress off of me. I think seeing the state of the world now and what will happen in the future with climate change is kind of solidified the fact that I need to go into a career that can help. Hopefully the way I would execute my role and having a logical thinking behind what I would do will make me successful. And having digital design skills lets me have a of creative way to connect and relate to a modern audience. I think studying at university will help me develop further and be the building block I need to get into my career. I also hope to maybe not focus on the end goal or grade so much and actually be focusing on the process of learning.

I have my WACE exam schedule now. Mine is spread over three weeks. I have two in the first week and two in the second week and then the third one is on the third week. My last one is four days after my second last exam so I don't know how that is going to go. I feel like everyone will be going off and enjoying themselves when I'll still be studying for my final. Hopefully the spacing is good and I get my time management right. The stress is normally because I'm trying to balance everything. Recently I have been spreading myself a bit too thin trying to deal with everything and not delegating task properly. Between the media role, House committee member, study, work and the rest it has been hard. I feel a bit tired and burnt out so I think it's just whether or not I can keep going.

I think last semester I was prioritizing Maths Methods too much, but then I wasn't focusing on anything else. I think now I've got, sort of a balance between what I'm doing, and I'm using my time in class more wisely. But it's whether or not I can keep that up, because at the moment we don't have any assessments due and I think that's why I am able to balance it. But once the assessment due dates start coming, I am going to start working on multiple subject tasks at once. When I had my Design assessment due I was staying up until 5:00am trying to finish it and it's hard. This affected my sleep as well and had flow on effects. The balance is all dependent on the assessments due and how big they are. Hopefully I have enough in me to keep going. I am really looking forward to graduating and finally finishing everything. There's a lot to look forward to after school. Hopefully I am able to do better in my subjects and exams round of exams. Being in Year 12 I now know what's coming and I know what I need to prepare. I also know where I went wrong in the past so hopefully I can do better this time around. My predicted ATAR is good and I think I have a handle on scaling now and the impact on my subjects so I know what subjects I need to prioritise over others.

Post-school

I'm feeling really good since I left school. I think that I'm doing a lot better than I was last year with ATAR. University is easy going compared to school. I find that the professors are very motivated and excited about what they teach. This also has a motivating effect on me. Last year was really stressful. I think the biggest thing was that I still hadn't figured out the way I studied well. I never knew which content I had to go over the most and which I had to go over the least. I sort of already burned myself out just keeping pace with school so there was sometimes a lack of motivation. I felt quite exhausted throughout Year 12 but it

was coming up to WACE exams which was really concerning. I was very stressed. Once I got through it I felt really relieved. I had a massive gap in between my Japanese written and my Design exam. It was a week break and I tried to study a lot for it because I did have that week. But I think with studying for ATAR, it was just a little too late because I think everyone's mindset was just to keep doing enough to get through without burning out. Firstly, it was just to finish mock exams and then put effort in to actually try for the WACE exams. This sounds strange though as the mocks are meant to be the practice and they're meant to prepare you. Everyone expected the final exams to be a lot easier than they were. I didn't seem to study as much as I could have. I don't know whether this was because ATAR was exhausting, and I did as much as I could or because I didn't put in enough effort throughout the year. I thought was working hard and I was in a sense. I was definitely trying but maybe I could've been doing better. That's what I've realised afterwards that I should have done better.

When the final ATAR results were released I was actually on a plane going to Philippines. I remember after we left the airport I got the email on the train and I literally just started crying because I was so relieved I had not bombed. I really didn't expect a high ATAR but I had hoped for it. Then when I got there, and I checked, and it wasn't a high score but it wasn't low either. I felt like I deserved it for the effort I had put in. There was also like a level of relief that came over and I could now take the next steps in life. I ended up only getting 77.5. It was a lot less than I predicted but given the fact that I was struggling and exhausted near the end it was a fair result. Near the end I didn't have that sense of motivation and I didn't try as hard as I could've, so I really did deserve that score. But then there were also factors like scaling that came into play. My predicted ATAR before exams was 83 and I thought that's fine I'm still in the 80s. But in the end I got a 77. I only needed a 70 for my university entrance that's why I wasn't too concerned about it. It would've been good to get like a higher ATAR, but I guess in the end I didn't really need it because I wasn't interested in any courses that required a higher ATAR. I had an early offer for Murdoch before the exams which I accepted but then I changed my mind and then I applied for Curtin with International Relations. And it was really easy, they just gave me the offer I went through it and it. I kind of feel the early offer was sort of just for marketing. They give it to you but you still need to provide the marks and ATAR so it's not really worth anything. I'm definitely happy I changed to Curtin. My parents didn't mind either way. I think it's because they didn't really understand how it works. I think my mum thought that if I got a 77 ATAR that I got 77% across the board in all of my subjects. But recently my dad

actually looked through my marks and my grades. And the final marks are lots more scaled down than the school marks and even the raw exam marks. He saw that all my final marks for ATAR were all in the 50s and he was pretty disappointed with it as I've never gotten marks like that before. The school marks were a lot better so I think it's just he didn't understand the scaling. But my mom wasn't too fierce about it she just said if I got 77 and my course only required a 70 than I had achieved my goal.

Although it was definitely hard I don't really regret doing ATAR. Especially now that I've moved on to the next step. Originally, I was doing International Relations but I have recently changed into the Marketing Major. I went through the courses and found International Relations was more looking at looking being diplomat and researching countries laws and policies more than anything. And my skills are more tailored towards the creative side. I thought those diplomat skills was the type of job skills that UNICEF were looking for. But when I started looking through employment vacancies, there was a lot in terms of digital advertising and managing the platform. That means looking at UNICEF as a marketable organisation and helping them grow. That really excites me as it can make a big difference and help others. At the moment it's all core units and the marketing will be in second semester when you start to specialize. Currently, I'm studying Markets and Legal Frameworks, Communication, Indigenous Perspectives in Business, Introduction to Accounting and Strategic Career Design. The Career Design is a new course that they introduced where they look at what employment will look like in the future. Apparently now we're doing 50% of tasks and then the rest is done by technology and AI. And soon it'll be 80% AI and like 20% human work. My lecturer was saying that you shouldn't be focusing on a specific job but rather your career journey because in the future it's more likely that people in business will be doing more than one full time job. That they may also be self-employed or be online bidding for project work. It's more likely that you'll have three jobs rather than just one like a portfolio of jobs. I think it's good we do it at the beginning of our university degree so we know what to expect when we look for work after.

I really enjoyed parts of high school but I like university a lot better. I think if I could go back I would tell myself to become more organized and use your Year 10 and 11 to figure out your learning and study skills. By the time I figured out my best learning and study skills it was too late. If I did this earlier I could have done a lot better. The other thing is definitely not to compare myself. I think that was a big one because I would see my classmates didn't even study for assessments and then get high marks. It made me

always question myself and whether I should even be putting in so much effort for little reward. But now I know everyone works differently and I just need to accept that rather than compare all of the time.

I think for the school they should consider focusing a lot more helping kids build their learning and study skills rather than just rushing through the content. And in university if you fail a core unit then they'll make you repeat it again until you actually pass it rather than just rushing you on to the next topic. I think with the curriculum now doesn't really help you to learn the content deeply. It's more just to move you on to the assessment and then you move onto the next one. You never really get the hang of it then all of a sudden it's exam time. I think most of the kids who do ATAR choose subjects depending on what the prerequisites for the course at university are or the subjects that can get me to the highest ATAR. They don't choose it because the content is interesting or because there's a lot of learning that can be taken away from it. That was one of the reasons why I was very hesitant to do Design because it got scaled down so much. But the skills that I learned I can still use until now and it's changed my mindset when looking at things. I'll look at it and then I'll think about what elements that they put in to target a specific market and demographic and that kind of thing. I'm so glad I did Design now because I can take it with me even though the scaling says it's not valuable.

When I got my ATAR it was such a big moment, but then a week or two later it really was just a number. It matters so much when you get it, but after that it really doesn't. My brother told me that there are still people in their third year that boast they got a 99.95 and no one likes them. They aren't team players and think they're better than everyone else. I guess the ATAR it is a reflection of how hard you work and the effort that you put in to some degree but I don't know if it's the best way to actually learn stuff.

5.4 Student S Phenomenarrative

Student S phenomenarrative was constructed through re-transcribing and re-storying 15 raw data source texts. It includes a collection of chronologised perceptions of the participant during Year 10, 11, 12 and post-school organised using the co-reflection process.

Year 10

Personal context and background

I was born in Perth, Australia but my parents are from Nepal. I live with my mother, father and little brother Ryan who is nine years younger. My family came here three years before I was born so I think it was around 1990. My father was from a very poor village that had no opportunities at all. It was simple village life and the best thing you could do was to farm. This would get as much food as you and your family and hopefully you could sell some of that food to others. In the village in Nepal my dad did some teaching as well. In rural Nepal there aren't many opportunities, and it continually amazes me how far my father has come in his life to give my brother and I the best education and lifestyle possible. My mother was also from a decent village in Nepal where her hard work in all aspects of life and motivation towards my father helped us reach where we are today. My dad and his family, they saved a lot of money then organised to send him to Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal. When he went there my dad searched for work and he found a high-class restaurant and he worked really hard there. He was well regarded and he then had the opportunity to be transferred to Singapore and that's where he was able to earn more money and also receive education there studying accounting at Murdoch University. He then came to Australia from there.

I went to Nepal when I was six. In our culture, we need to visit my father's side first, because that's the dominant family. Then we need to live there for a couple of days and then we have to move to my mom's house. My mum's family now live in Kathmandu and I think they've sold their house, because no one lives there in the village now. Everyone in Nepal values education and success more than happiness. I think there are many opportunities but people don't see it. You can do a lot of things in Nepal but everyone values going outside of Nepal and being successful there. But you could become successful at things like farming or something but everyone aims to get their children out of Nepal. That's what I've noticed. There's also a big difference because here in Australia you won't see many shops as you're walking down the street but in Nepal everywhere you go there'd be shops here, shops there. People you know all over and your family members surround you. That's the major difference.

Here in Australia, my father is a restaurant business owner and a public figure in the Nepalese Association of Australia. My mother is a librarian and technician at ECU where she interacts with many students and assists them. My grandparents from my father's side

worked immensely hard to feed and allow their five children to live comfortably in one of the poorest villages of Nepal. They now live happily in Nepal's capital city, Kathmandu where my they attend regular seminars and share their life experiences with others. My father's siblings mostly started off by teaching in the villages of Nepal and some have continued this but others have gone onto becoming police officers. My grandfather from my mother's side was a lawyer and is retired now but still works to educate younger lawyers in Nepal. Whereas my grandmother used to be a model and has now retired. In all, my family from both sides has a mixture of occupations ranging from Police officers, doctors, lawyers, business owners, librarians and teachers.

Some early memories I have are putting my dental crowns on for the first time. When I was about 5 years old, I had to put crowns on my teeth, about 6 of them. The surgery had taken a long time and I remember my father telling me that even after the anaesthetic had worn off I still did not wake up. The dentists had slapped me (not that hard), pinched me and did all sorts of nerve awakening actions to make me conscious again. Apparently, my parents were really worried and probably in tears. After a while I remember seeing my father on the right side of me and a couple of dentists and nurses just looking at me, I felt quite special; as if I was the star of the show. I thought I was going to die at first because it was just like being in a hospital and then I wasn't waking up, apparently and then my parents tearing up and everything. I just remember that moment vividly. I also remember the first time I started dressing up like a girl.

I used to be a tomboy until the age of about seven. Then I decided to start dressing up in pretty pink outfits that were quite uncomfortable at first. They looked good which was all that mattered to me at the time. At first I felt as if I wore something that just wasn't right for me and made me feel like I was a totally different person but later on, I realised I was growing up I guess. I can visualise wearing a pink frilly fairy dress, a pink stripy coat and a pink light up tiara. I'm surprised it took me a while to want to do it. Married women in Nepal always have to wear red and wear all this jewellery. Normally it's a big influence on the children because they see their mother like that. But that didn't really happen to me. I just didn't like it at first but then slowly as I went back to Nepal and saw it more it kicked in. It's like I found another to myself and it was interesting. Another memory I had was celebrating Christmas at a special day care party. I remember having lots of fun going down the slide and into the pit however I was afraid of Santa Claus and his huge figure. It was a very

enjoyable celebration since I was with my family and friends and I got some presents. I also felt very scared and it's funny now to think how I was scared of him I was.

Career aspirations, goals and planning

I am currently interested in the health and medical field and I want to become a surgeon. More specifically, a heart surgeon. I know that it is very difficult and competitive to get into medical school. A surgeon has really long shifts and consists of a lot of hand and mind skills in coordination with the eyes. Surgeons have a lot of patience as they deal with different symptoms in order to diagnose the patient. Surgeons and doctors never stop learning and learn more as they go through their experiences of being an intern and getting residency. I am interested in this field and this occupation because I want to help the patients and their families to give them hope. I want people to have faith in me to help them and achieve a good outcome. When people have this hope and faith in others, it is seen as a sign of worship and respect, which I wish to gain one day. Also, I believe everyone has the right to live freely without diseases and sicknesses affecting them daily. Many places in the world don't have the right amount of education or resources to prevent people from sicknesses that could kill them. One day, I want to put my education and availability of resources to good use and travel around the world, helping these people. In order to help them I wish to become a doctor. Unfortunately I do have many negative thoughts about my career choice since it is extremely hard to do and you must basically be a genius to become a surgeon. But despite these thoughts, I believe that if you have the right mindset, motivation and determination to do well for others and if you look at the bigger picture, then you will succeed. I read that Curtin is better than UWA to study medicine because the students get to do more hands-on experience and practical work rather than just studying so I would like to go to Curtin.

Influences on career development

There are some role-models who I admire including Selena Gomez. I looked up to her from a young age because she was truly herself no matter what others said. She always stayed strong. What I admired most about Selena was that she wasn't influenced so easily by the changing world around her, she stayed true to herself and wasn't afraid of being herself. That's what inspired me to be myself no matter what others think, say or do. Selena's song 'Wouldn't Wanna Be Anybody Else' is one of my favourite songs because of the lyrics. I think she inspired many people by teaching others to open up and be themselves. There's this music video that showed her strength and everything. How she

persuaded young children to be yourself no matter what other people say. At a young age it made me really admire her. Another role-model I have is Anuradha Koirala. She is a Nepalese social activist who founded and is the director of Maiti Nepal, which is a non-profit organisation in Nepal dedicated to helping victims of sex trafficking. In 2010 she came to Perth for a presentation about what the organisation does and how bad sex trafficking is and gave insights through the stories of the victims. Her work in Nepal and her kind and caring nature inspired me to become as great as her and made me realise that with help, people can live again and overcome situations. She even won CNN Heroes prize for her work which is great recognition despite the Nepalese culture influencing her. She still aimed towards her dreams rather than what the culture says to do because you're meant to get married in the Nepalese culture. But she didn't get married. She's really old as well and she's helping others, despite the influence of the Nepalese culture. She has devoted her life to just helping others.

Another role-model for me was the character of Hermione from Harry Potter. Hermione was a fearless, confident and smart character in Harry Potter, where she mainly provided realistic and helpful solutions to the problems she and her friends faced. Her bravery stood out despite being a girl and allowed me to also do the same in everyday situations where I felt I could not do something or was unable to. She hung out with boys, which was something different for me because you usually see girls with girls and boys with boys. But she was the only girl hanging out with the boys. And she was never shy and was just fearless and often was the one telling them what to do.

Some television shows I like include Confessions of Junior Doctor because it gives insights and different perspectives on the medical industry. It explains diseases really well including the procedures taken to remove or control the disease. Patients are also interviewed to get their point of view. Also it shows surgeries and doesn't censor any parts so all the gruesome parts are shown. I also like Sunrise which has all the latest news with full coverage. They have sessions everyday where they invite people to express their opinions on certain topics. I like that when interviewing people, they ask really good questions that are also helpful for the public. This was especially true during the Lindt café siege. I really admired how they were really brave and the officer at the building and full coverage of the unfolding crisis.

My favourite story is *Tuesday's With Morrie*. It's a book about Mitch Albom recalling the days spent with his favourite professor, Morrie including their sessions together after their

fifteen year reunion where they spoke about life and death. Morrie gave Mitch life lessons that he had learnt from experience and provided Mitch with how it feels like going through the journey of death (since Morrie is dying). Morrie is my favourite character because he shares very interesting life lessons that he learnt and has very pure feelings towards certain situations. He says his mind and is simply himself. I like the quotes throughout the book as it allowed me to see a different perspective of both life and death. I like this story because it was a true story about an old dying man sharing his experience of life and journey to death with a young man. After reading this book, my thoughts in life dramatically changed allowing me to realise that there isn't much time, there really isn't much time since you don't know what can happen in the next second, hour or day. What Morrie teaches is so simple and enlightening which makes me love the story even more! It was really inspiring because and gave you new insight and perspective.

A motto I like is 'The trouble is, you think you have time'. That's by Buddha, and I'm really into Buddhism. We always store things up to do. For example, for school you'll have assessments coming up but you always think I'll just start that tomorrow. Then you keep on storing it and suddenly it's tomorrow and you have lots to do and there is no time left. So really it is saying to that if you don't do things now you never know what's going to happen tomorrow, so it's best to do it now.

Formation of vocational interests.

A subject I'm enjoying at the moment is Religion. It mainly consists of different parts of Catholicism ranging from Jesus' teachings to Mary and Joseph's struggles. This year, we have also been adding our own religious thoughts and values towards the Catholic religion's teachings and how it impacts our view towards it. Every week we write journal entries that are kept privately on our laptop. In these entries, we answer personal questions in depth, which is my favourite activity. My academic performance in this subject has improved greatly with 75% being my lowest grade and 90% being my highest. Our teacher, Ms K always shares us stories, which help us understand confusing religious teachings, or Bible stories. The main reason I enjoy this subject is because we have a lot of discussions about giving and life lessons, which are all, tied back to religion. I don't really believe in religion as I'm Buddhist not Catholic but I like seeing what people think and what they wanted to believe in during the past. I find the stories that they had really interesting as they show the struggles people had and what they believed in. It's really interesting. I do like Buddhism more, but then our villagers interested me as well. In India it

mostly consists of Hinduism but Buddha was born in Nepal and started Buddhism there. But then India significantly influences Nepal. Much of the things about India were just the same or similar to Nepal. That's why there's just a mix of both cultures. I really enjoy Science as well even though I'm not that good at it. I like learning about human biology and the heart, blood and all its functions.

Another interest I have is Dance. My best friend and I choreograph Bollywood, typical Nepalese dances and hip-hop dances to show at Nepalese events around Perth. Although we sometimes do more mainstream events as well. We mostly finish the dance in one day with very short breaks and what I enjoy most about our sessions is just practicing and thinking of new ideas that will engage the audience and allow them to see a connection between our dance and the music. I have been doing these dances for almost eight years and my skills have improved greatly. I have now gotten to a stage where I can perform in both traditional female and male roles. The main skill used throughout our dances is technique. It's really important in getting the technique right in every form of dance. It has also built my confidence, interest in culture and the ability to engage in the dance and look for meaning within it. I love this activity because I get to go to a variety of events, meet new people and perform a dance made from our own ideas. My favourite event so far has been Buddha's Birthday Celebration, where our dance was a very peaceful and meaningful one. We have tried to get more people involved but it's just my friend and me because there aren't many people that are interested in giving up time that they could spend on their studies. I understand this as my studies also impact my ability to rehearse and participate. This year we haven't done as much as we thought we'd do we've only done three minor charity events. We're still raising money for the earthquake victims in some villages in Nepal and that's what makes it all worthwhile.

Career development activities

I help out with Student Ministry where we aim to help the wider community by organising food stalls, donations and other events to help raise money and essential items for others. I mainly enjoy organising donations for those less fortunate than us, and also going around the school selling items to raise money. The skills used in these activities include the confidence to speak to others and sell them items. I think it's helped me develop a kind and caring nature and also good leadership and organisation skills to create events and stalls. I like these activities as it makes me feel good that I am helping someone in the

world and since I want to continue helping people after school and this is a great start for me.

Every year my dad's restaurant volunteers to sell typical Nepalese food on both days at Buddha's Birthday Celebration in the City. Although my dad takes Nepalese food from the restaurant to sell there he doesn't get any money as it all goes to charity. Previously my friend and I have danced at this event but recently instead of dancing I have been volunteering instead. I have helped to sell the food and explain the importance of our country since Buddha was born there and not many people actually know that. I get to develop customer service skills and also preparing the food. Being involved helps me build my confidence, knowledge of the different foods and the event planning. To be successful you need to have a kind and caring nature towards the customers and also a business attitude. Most of the people I worked with were really nice and confident and had a lot of knowledge about the foods being sold and also Buddhism. This helped me to understand and learn from them. The work environment was really peaceful and calm with relaxing music in the background. I really liked the positive attitude from both the volunteers and the customers. Overall, I absolutely loved doing this job and I am willing to volunteer in the future to give up two full days to do it.

There's an orphanage in Nepal that my friend's father organised through raising money. It means the Nepalese orphans have somewhere to live. It's near one of the big villages and they have computers because we raised money here from volunteering to give to them. Every week, I'm part of a small organisation of six teenagers that Skype call orphans in Nepal. We all have a day allocated where we make casual conversations with them about their lives and their story. We also teach them English or anything they want to learn through games and questions. You need to have a caring nature and be very understanding to do this. My best friend and I mainly run the program. Although there is an adult that helps us they aren't very organised so we don't get much assistance. I have thoroughly enjoyed this experience as I am like an older sister to all those orphan children which makes me very happy. When we talk to them we give them companionship and make good relationships with them. We are hopefully going to go and meet them one day in the future by flying over there when we raise enough money.

I had the opportunity to complete some work experience this year at Apollo Health. It's a medical clinic where patients can have a booking or just walk in. I was there for a week and since I am not qualified to do most of the work there, I was given simple tasks. These

tasks included things like taking the blood pressure, heart rate and temperature of patients, inviting them into the nursing area, cleaning the beds and equipment, putting substances into the needle and preparing equipment ready for minor surgeries. The skills needed for this were mainly confidence and a kind and caring nature towards the patients and the willingness to learn new things. The work environment was absolutely amazing; the staff were so kind and bubbly and made me feel very welcomed. They all had a unique feature about themselves and always greeted each other every morning with a big smile. It was my first time I got to see a live minor surgery and since that's what I want to do, it was really like the best moment ever because I just saw the doctor opening and cutting the patient. The people were really helpful there. One lady even gave me a surgical kit as well she was that nice. This work placement in Apollo Health motivated me even more to join the medical industry in the future especially because they gave me a surgical equipment practice set to practice with. The other opportunity I had was at Chemist Warehouse. This was really good as well and I've applied there for a job because just loved the atmosphere and just being around medicine and health.

Career and life transitions

The pathway I have taken is to do 5 ATAR subjects with an online VET Certificate in Nursing. In university, I want to study in the medical field to hopefully become a doctor and possibly a cardio-surgeon. In order to be successful, I believe the first thing I need to do is have the motivation and determination to continue studying and also acknowledge the importance of studying now and doing my best. My feelings about subject selection is that it will help me choose the subjects I wish to pursue in the future and also allows me to try a range of different subjects. Although some negative feelings I have had are around being able to achieve the minimum entry requirements to do the subjects I desire. I didn't do as well as I thought in my exams and I was afraid of me not getting the minimum entry requirements. If I could just be a doctor it would be great but the academic pathway is very challenging to get there. I also really admire what nurses do so that's why I wanted to get an insight and if becoming a surgeon doesn't happen, then nursing would be a good Plan B.

After my end of year exams I had to change my Maths course from Methods to Applications. The exam result was a terrible score. It was just a failure. Whenever I study Maths, I write notes rather than practice and I changed that, but I just didn't remember basics. I think my basics weren't strong enough. My subjects now for Year 11 are

Chemistry, Human Biology, Maths Applications, Religion and English. I already have a tutor for all my subjects to help me as I'm not doing well. I spend a lot of time writing notes before assessments and studying textbook chapters. I even delete my social media when I'm studying but it doesn't seem to help my results. I guess other factors that may be impacting my study are my dancing and the orphanage volunteering work.

I plan to go to open days at the universities to investigate Human Biology and Nursing degrees in case medicine doesn't work out. I really hope to keep developing my leadership skills because surgical-wise in the theatre, I think having that confidence as a leader is essential. Especially in a hospital if you're in a top level job you need to have leadership skills. Leadership is when you gather everyone's ideas and think of all the best ways to do things. It's not just being above others but being with others and taking the group towards a certain goal. I think the orphanage work is helping me develop leadership. Having more people in this work would be helpful and just making more people my age realize that giving back and helping others is good for you. If I can get more students involved by talking to them or their parents and having meetings to build support it would really help the organisation and the orphans.

Year 11

Personal context and background

I thought I'd do better than what I'm doing right now for some subjects but for a couple I'm doing alright. I am struggling keeping constant grades and it's definitely harder than I thought. I did start working from the beginning of this year at Chemist Warehouse three days a week, so it was quite tough maintaining that work and school life. Then I decided to leave the job as my school results were suffering. Now I am finding it a bit easier to manage my time, but the workload is a lot more than last year. I'm enjoying my Cert IV Nursing because it's like the Human Biology course. I'm still doing five ATAR subjects but I changed Human Biology to Health because I wasn't doing well in either Human biology or Chemistry. Human Biology was my favourite subject but I was told I had to drop one of them because it'd only get harder and I could hopefully raise the grades of the other one.

Although I don't like Chemistry as much as Human Biology I chose to keep that because that's the requirement for one of the degrees that I'm looking at. I decided to continue with Chemistry and hopefully if I work hard towards that subject I can improve rather than having two subjects I'm not good at. But it was shocking because during the two weeks

holidays I worked solely just on Chemistry. I also had a new Chemistry teacher and also a tutor. We did three or four lessons in one week which is like five hours with breaks and I thought I was improving. Then I did my first test of second term and I got the lowest mark I had ever gotten. This was totally shocking for me because I worked so hard. Then I guess realized that there's a difference between working hard and working smart. I tried to be smarter with my study. After that mark there was an improvement, although it wasn't a great improvement but still an improvement. I now focus more on doing questions for Chemistry especially, because I've seen a pattern in the test that similar questions are found in the harder textbook. There's a different textbook that the teacher uses and I think she uses that in the test. I now focus on her class notes rather than my key notes from the chapters in my own textbook. I write down a lot of notes because I want to understand clearly so that I can use what I learned from the notes in the test questions. I do definitely miss doing Human Biology though. All my other friends talk about the subject and what they're learning now. What they did last term was childbirth and the stages of labour. I really had an interest in that. I've still got the Human Biology textbook which I skim through now and then but I guess it was for the best that I dropped it.

Although even with my current subject load I still find school is stressful. It is tough being in a stressful work environment and having such high demands. But I know I have to do it if I can then help more people in Nepal. I know studying medicine in general will be a major thing so just being put in a stressful environment through exams will hopefully prepare me for surgery. Last year the work placement really helped me a lot. It would be good if we could have a lot more work experience. This year there are some general students out at clinics during school but ATAR don't get to do it. I don't know how that would work with ATAR but that really helped me to learn a lot more than in the classroom. Especially through the work experience at Apollo Health as I got to stand next to a doctor and stand next to a nurse which inspired me further.

Another impact is my little brother as I have to look after him if my parents are working. It's ok sometimes as I'm basically doing my own study and he's doing his own homework. But he is in Year 2 so does need a lot of help and supervision. The study has also meant that I have stopped doing my dancing. I did do it in Term One but I never had time to remember the steps and then practice due to all of the study I have to do. I also had to stop with some of the orphanage Skype calls. We cannot do every week now as study is too much. So we are now trying to do it every fortnight. But with for the upcoming month I've stopped

because of the exams. My main focus is the academic focus and that is definitely enough right now.

Career aspirations, goals and planning

I am currently interested in the medical field and know that it is a very stressful and tiring job consisting of constant learning and very little sleep. I am also aware that people in that field devote their lives to the service of others. I am interested in cardiac surgery and other surgical sectors of the medical field. Through interviews and shows providing insight to hospitals, I am aware that surgeons can face traumatising incidents and need to think quickly for the patient's benefit. I am interested in this industry because I believe I am capable to devote my life for the service of others whilst maintaining a sense of interest in the surgical field. I cannot imagine myself doing anything but being in the operating theatre. I have recently been thinking of using my medical skills and knowledge after university and many years of practice in a hospital to assist those people in the villages in Nepal who have very little health services. Throughout my journey, I also aim to improve the hygiene of hospitals in Nepal. Currently, I am feeling positive about my career choice because I believe I will be able to work harder now to achieve it. Although I did look at the nursing pathway at Notre Dame as another option but it didn't appeal to me as much as the medical courses. After researching the nursing course at Notre Dame, I ended up going back to the Curtin website and looking at the MBBS Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery and other types of medical courses. If I don't get the required ATAR 95, I'd probably go do something like genetics or molecular biology, which would be 80, and then transfer into medical school later. That's what I've decided as a plan B. Because nursing didn't appeal as much so I would definitely do an undergraduate science degree instead. I have also considered places like Scotland, where I have heard it is easier to get into the medical system but I don't know if this is right. I need to research more to be sure. I know Bangladesh is an option as well. I was thinking Nepal as well but the system is so corrupt there that I don't feel comfortable studying there. I feel as if my goal is to improve any way possible and if I studied there, then maybe I'd be brainwashed into being corrupt as well, so anywhere but Nepal is safe for me right now.

Influences on career development

A role-model I like is Yoo Hye Jung from a Korean Drama called *Doctors*. I admire the fact that despite coming from a poor background and going through a lot at a young age, she was still able to study hard and use her education to become a doctor. She was depicted

as an independent, positive and focused young woman that did not allow unnecessary things to distract her goal. I also admire the fact that she is a black belt and is able to protect herself, thus reinforcing the 'independent' nature of hers. She was originally a really rebellious teenager and all of a sudden she got put into a situation where a pregnant woman fell in front of her and she was lost as to what to do. Her teacher who was previously a doctor for numerous amount of years, went and helped the lady. He had been kicked out of the medical field because he went against the senior leaders even though he was right about some of the ethical issues he raised. He used his former expertise and helped the pregnant woman and her child as well who was dying on the floor, and from that moment I think she got really inspired. It was like there was some transition in that moment and I felt that related to me somehow. Then her passion after that scene towards medicine and the the human body and somewhere I saw myself in that scene. Definitely just her passion. But she wasn't even in the exams at the time and then when she was she wasn't doing well. Again, I thought this related to me as well. Then she worked so hard every single night to get there. Obviously, it was a drama but she worked so she would study so hard until she even got a blood nose. I know it's exaggerated but it showed me that even though I feel it is not possible and that it is too hard that working hard means you can achieve it and the hard work can pay off.

I also admire Dhurmus and Suntali who are a famous Nepalese comedian couple. Throughout the past two years, they have raised money to build numerous houses in the villages of Nepal for those who have been neglected by their own family members and the rest of society due to certain diseases they got. Dhurmus and Suntali built these houses in only six months to help them. I highly admire their work because they have done something that the government of Nepal has never done or could possibly never do due to their selfishness. They started off as just normal religious people in Nepal. Then they were on a reality-based television show that has a lot of comedy in it. They made everyone laugh because they're really funny. They then took their fame and all the money that they got from their jobs and started building houses for those in need. They built double-storey houses for orphans and a group of diseased people and they've done so much more than the government has not done to help others. They have helped the people in need in Nepal and it's so inspiring because two people who even have a child of their own shows their love for their country. Especially the girl which I don't think had any education because in the villages girls need to stay home because that's their role. The male, he'd be

out on the fields and doing the more physical work on the field. I don't think the male had any education either.

A quote that I really like is 'If you wish to change the world, start off by making your bed'. This was in a video I watched. I cannot remember his name but he was a Sergeant or General in the armed services. He was giving a motivational speech to the new recruits and he said it in the middle of the speech. I liked it because it made me think that if you don't have the power to change your own habits; how are you ever going to have the power to change the world? I also think that having everything organised around you helps you to think more clearly. If your home is neat and tidy and your room is clean then your brain is also clean. If you've got a messy room and you are surrounded by a lot of messy things then your head would also be full of junk. I think a clean environment will help you have better and more powerful thoughts.

Formation of vocational interests

One of my favourite subjects this year is ATAR Religion and Life. It consists of acknowledging the various religions of the world and the beliefs, rituals and other significant aspects around it. I think it's interesting how the Islamic religion, Hinduism, Christianity all have different perspectives towards their god and the spiritual power above and I want to learn how these came to be because it's just interesting. It mainly focuses on the Catholic Religion and its influence in on a person's life and the world so the teacher does focus on Catholicism. But she also refers to other religions and what they think about it as well. She describes Catholic sacraments and beliefs about the Holy Trinity and then links it up with other religions. For example, Hinduism. In Hinduism they have so many gods that all represent different aspects. It is interesting to compare this to Catholicism where you have one God and then the Holy Trinity. The subject consists of writing essays, doing document analysis, class discussions and presentations. I really enjoy class discussions as I am able to view certain situations and issues from a different perspective through the input from my peers. My academic performance is improving for this subject as I am finding it interesting and enjoy it more.

I have started to get interested in vlogging. For my birthday last year, my Dad bought me a GoPro. It was right before our trip for Nepal to see my cousin getting married. I captured all the memories and highlights from the trip on my camera and decided to edit it to create a vlog. Nepal has this unique mud-looking quality when it rains. There's mud on the floor

everywhere and it looks really different. It looks like home every time I see it. So I filmed all those special small moments from the trip. I captured all the memories and highlights on my camera and decided to edit it to create a vlog. I really enjoyed capturing the moments from different angles and through different features. But it was very difficult to edit as my iMovie would stop working after a while; causing me to restart multiple times. This meant that the main skill required was patience because it took me one year to finally complete my vlog. I highly enjoy vlogging because it is interesting to see from how many different angles one can capture very precious memories.

I've also started a new project which is a dance video. I'm doing it because it's about cherishing memories. I think some special memories are found by chance. Sometimes you don't know they will be special until after you've had them. I also find that doing dance again is a good way to de-stress. Whenever I'm dancing it really centres me and I feel like I'm one with the moment. It's really hard to express it. I feel as if it's just me in the world and there are no other worries. I've been dancing for many years but haven't done it much lately due to studying and being busy. I'm happy and excited at getting back to it again. I've always wanted to go back to it but I haven't a lot of spare time. I decided it's important though so I've taken on this project and maybe I can improve my dance skills and be more consistent with it.

Career development activities

I had part-time work at Chemist Warehouse this year. This mainly consisted of re-stocking, assisting customers, cashier work and placing orders for finished stock. This job required a lot of confidence and determination because I was working with professional people in the health care industry and also if I were to advise someone on the least suitable product for them, I would be in trouble. Most of the people there were very welcoming and kind-hearted as they assisted me even when I constantly asked questions. The manager however was not so understanding and did not allow me to work 1-2 days a week despite me providing a medical certificate. The work environment was very happy and comfortable as everyone was like family to each other. But I left the job at the end of March and I didn't have a good experience at the end. I loved the people and the working there. It's just work became too much. Working three days a week including for a whole day on the weekend and straight after school on Thursday was just way too much for me. Because of being run down I was really iron deficient, so that affected my studies as well. I tried asking the manager to change the shifts because of my health but she couldn't change it so I just had

to leave. Overall, I really enjoyed this job and am willing to go back after year 12 when I have less things to balance. Recently I have been doing a little waitressing work at my dad's restaurant. It's a lot more flexible hours and not the stress of too many shifts. I have enjoyed it because you meet a lot of new people and mostly the elderly because in that area most people that live there, they're a bit older. I enjoy just listening to them talk about their stories and experiences, it's been enlightening, and it feels good to do a bit of work again.

I also participate in the youth division of BLIAWA (Buddha's Light International Association of Western Australia). This Buddhist association offers many meditation, volunteering through dance, assisting with events or helping out with elderly activities. Although I have been active in this organisation for many years I was involved in their activities the most this year. I mainly enjoy the meditation as it helps reduce my stress and also the dance opportunities which helps increase my confidence. Everyone in the organisation is very welcoming and kind-hearted which is the main reason I have been active in this organisation. I like the meditation activities as they help to develop patience and gratitude. I really enjoy meditating as it allows me to reduce my stress and find the meditations are really calming and effective.

At the beginning of this year, there was a Buddhist festival for Buddha's birthday. It was held at Elizabeth Quay for two days. I volunteered with my friend to do dancing and also welcoming people and telling them the story about Buddha. We told people about Buddhist workshops and generally about Buddha himself. Also my family volunteered by providing food from the restaurant so I helped with that as well. It was great to be involved in that event one and I found it was an enlightening experience. I also got to do tea meditation and the normal meditation from a professional Buddhist. The tea meditation was a highlight for me because they taught us how to taste every little flavour. It tasted almost like water but with focus we found a taste in it. The first time I tasted it was like water but the deeper I got into the meditation I found a taste from within. It was from the tea but was very subtle so I guess the meditation was effective. Normally when I drink something I don't just have a sip but I take a big gulp. When we started the meditation we were guided to take very small sips. Little sip-by-sip and then you got the taste of it. I thought that if you put more in your mouth you'd get a bigger taste but it was the opposite. If you have a sip-by-sip you get more of the taste which was very interesting almost like magic. I guess it's just the way that you drink it because the meditation put us into a zone where we got to

feel every sensation in our body and when we drank it, you could actually you could feel the taste more. It was almost like a new mindset but it's hard to explain. I also have a mindfulness app I use but it's not the same as the Buddhist mediation. It's more for general meditating on the train, bus or anywhere really. I try to do that once a day, but sometimes I forget. It does definitely helps though. When I do it before I go to sleep it makes me clear out all the unnecessary thoughts I may have, and it gets me ready to relax to go to sleep.

Unfortunately, we haven't done as much work with the orphanage due to other commitments. During the exam period it all became too much. Some of the younger students that don't have as much homework and study have now been doing the Skype calls. There are 20 active members and they range from the ages of six to nineteen. The organisation's name is Marigold Children's Home and the orphanage is called Aamakomaya. So now my friend and I have started to work on charity dinners rather than doing the calls. We approached one of my uncles in Nepal about organising a trip to visit the orphanages but we definitely haven't done as much work as we had hoped. We want to organise the charity dinners here but there isn't much time to do anything between school, family and other commitments. Hopefully we can get going with this so we can raise money to go to see the orphans on the trip next year.

Career and life transitions

I am currently doing 5 ATAR subjects. Throughout the beginning of my ATAR journey I have faced many unexpected challenges that have significantly affected my progress. These challenges include friendship issues and being quite sick for a long period of time. I believe success in this pathway would be the fact that I have maintained a decent Math grade and I have bounced back from my failures in other subjects to implement changes in my study routine. Another change in my ATAR pathway has been the change from the Human Biology course to Health Studies course. I felt quite hurt about this change because it was my favourite subject despite just beginning to improve my grades. At the same time I am looking forward to how I perform in this new subject and how it will hopefully improve my ATAR score. I believe that failure has highly impacted my perspective towards my learning and thoughts about careers and work. After failing multiple times, despite changing routines and studying harder, it made me realise that passion was a key component to excelling in a subject or at least doing well. An example is Religious & Life Studies ATAR; at the beginning of the year I found it really hard to understand the topics presented despite it being my favourite subject in Year 10. As I

became disinterested, I did not focus on the subject too much. This became evident in my grades and getting a very low score for my first test. After this failure I decided to read the modules given to us and watch videos on different perspectives on the topic which allowed me to regain that passion and enjoyment for the subject again. This improvement was evident in my grades. Thus, without that passion I was unable to enjoy the subject and do well in it. It's hard because some ATAR subjects I have no passion for but I'm forced to do them to get an ATAR score. Hopefully I can become better at studying and improve overall.

Year 12

Personal context and background

At the start of the year I was feeling nervous and scared but also determined. It was quite hectic at the beginning and I felt like I'd done more work in the first three weeks than whole of Year 11. It was hard to balance everything out. On top of my school work I also had some of my relatives pass away. Since that, everything was very difficult to balance. I had school so I couldn't miss out on that to help me process the loss. There was a big week of tests which meant we had four tests over the week. It was really hard to prepare for them at that time. One of the relatives was sick so it was expected that they may die but then the other one was an unexpected death so it is hard. Both of them had such a great impact on everyone's life so it was really sad. I found I have definitely missed the subject of Human Biology that I had to swap last year. I was working 22 hours a week at Chemist warehouse at the beginning of Year 11. I then got iron deficient and I think all my poor results during that time have led me into subjects I don't enjoy much. I remember I felt like it was always draining my energy and I let it impact my studies. Human Biology and Chemistry definitely were affected. Now I look back I felt like I could've done better in Human Biology if only work and sickness had not happened during that time period. Now I cannot go back so I have to do subjects I'm not as interested in so I can get an ATAR. Also, my learning style would have had an impact on it because other people can do sports or extracurricular and also do heavy subjects. I had to memorise a lot and it was very content heavy. Although studying it was enjoyable I had to take my time making sure I was studying it in order and really learning the content.

In Year 11 it moved really quickly and I had to do a lot of cramming from the beginning. I felt that I was still adapting my study style from Year 10 into Year 11 and nobody helps you with this. We should spend the first few weeks learning how to study in each subject

instead of racing ahead in the curriculum and failing especially if the subject is very content heavy. Now in Year 12 I have to focus on Economics ATAR since it is a new subject for me. Since I got through that first part of the year and the grief period of losing my relatives things been going a lot better. I think I've improved both my wellbeing and also academics and study. Mentally, everything is a lot better than it was. I feel like I'm making good progress and have a good balance of most aspects of my life. I feel good about my studies although it always gets hectic around assessment due date times. I've been doing some good study and preparation though. I need to because I get scared and a bit nervous of how I will go and what my results will be.

I also started a diet and exercising more recently. I'm doing more walking and doing some lifts to calm myself down in the middle of studying. When I do that it makes me feel much healthier and cleans my mind. I've started eating healthy as well by cutting down on soda, carbs and junk and it definitely makes me feel a lot healthier. Although sometimes I don't feel like I'm getting enough sleep. I go to bed between 11pm and 2 am but I always get up at 6am. I'm trying to become more organised and not procrastinate as much otherwise I end up studying until 2am. I do my meditation before I study and then sometimes I push it back to right before I go to sleep so it is relaxing before. I go to sleep straight away after meditation. I think everything's generally going fine right now and I'm just going with the flow.

Career aspirations, goals and planning

Obviously getting my ATAR and getting into university is my main focus. I always feel there's an improvement in my subjects. But for some reason even though I'm getting better results than my average, my overall grade isn't going up. But I'm determined to work even harder. I want to do the best that I can because I've put in a lot of hard work. It's just when it comes to actually sitting the assessments or exams it doesn't really go well. I knew I would not do as well in Economics and Health because I'm still playing catch up. But I thought that at least English, Maths and Religion would go well. But then I failed two exams and just passed all the rest. Comparing to last year's results I actually did better last year than this year. But I thought I was more prepared before the exams this year. Especially with Maths it was just really frustrating with the marking. I'm not blaming it on the teachers but they stopped giving half marks. So even if you've generally got the right answer you need to have the exact keyword in the marking key. This was frustrating because I got some of the key words mixed up and then got no marks at all even though

the working out and answer was right. I just described it wrong. There were a couple of times where I had some of the working out right as well and it wasn't rewarded because it wouldn't constitute a full mark. It's just hard because it can then cause you to lose confidence and sense of achievement.

That's exactly how I felt after Chemistry last year before I had to swap to Economics. Every Chemistry test it would be hard. I wasn't in Extension in Year 10 only mainstream. And it was hard as the teacher slowed it down for the others in the class. That meant the other students from Extension had already built-up more knowledge and they found the jump to Year 11 a lot easier. When I think about my ATAR results I get really nervous and it makes me question if I am good enough to continue ATAR. It's just that I'm over-thinking everything. It's because other things overload in my head so I forget to breathe or practise any techniques to calm me down in that moment. At the end of the day, after I do my meditation, it's much better. But in the moment it just comes naturally and my legs are just shaking and I can't stop it. I think sometimes that negative emotions are all part of it as you need them to find the balance but sometimes, if it's too much, then I'm overwhelmed.

Recently at school I've had some really bad friendship fallouts so I don't have much support or feel like I can trust anyone. At the moment I only trust my mother and nobody else. This doesn't mean that I have negative relationships with other people I am just very upset on the friendship fallout and it broke my trust. I still have many friends and good friendships but not at the same level as the one that just broke down. It's all very hard and I don't know how to explain it. There's just lots of pressure from every angle.

I am still interested in the medical field, specifically surgery. I know it requires a lot of patience and passion while studying and it is a difficult course and a lengthy process to get qualified. There are numerous long hours and it's a very hands on job that can get tiring. Other careers I have been looking at are paramedic because I know that this occupation requires a lower ATAR and less study time. Also I like the idea of being a criminal psychologist or lawyer. I know these occupations require a lot of patience, teamwork and attention to detail. I really enjoy researching and learning more about all these fields and have great interest in both the hands on and theory work within them. I have not discarded any career aspirations in the hope that I will still have a chance in becoming successful in the medical field. I have neutral feelings regarding my career choices as I am still in a state of confusion as to what to do based on my ATAR.

My current plan is to put UWA biomedical science as my first preference and then health science, paramedicine or nursing as my other options. I may even put criminology, psychology or legal studies on TISC as my other preferences. And once I finish my undergraduate I'm hoping to go on and do the GAMSAT later on. I know how hard it will be but it's the only way I can get into medicine based on my ATAR results. I know someone that's done the GAMSAT five times already and he still hasn't passed. He keeps doing it though as he can't imagine himself doing anything other than medicine. And that kind of acted as a motivation source for me to see him never giving up. I'll probably have to do it five times or more myself. It's so expensive though as it costs \$500 each time you take it.

I cannot worry about that now though my main focus is getting 75 ATAR so I can do Biomedical Science at UWA. The reason I was thinking paramedicine is that I know I could get a job from that if I couldn't do medicine. But my dad talked me through it and said it's seven years total learning including the undergraduate and that I shouldn't necessarily be getting a job from my undergraduate. Especially if I am only using it because I want to study further. But it's confusing not knowing the future. I think I will enjoy biomedicine more to study but I would enjoy paramedicine more than being a lab scientist if it was for a job. Unless it was in forensics then that might be interesting. The biomedicine will help me a lot more as preparation for medicine though. My parents don't mind what I want to do as long as I excel in it. I feel like paramedicine may be better than nursing because it's more the onsite trauma rather than just in a hospital. Although if nursing was specialised and qualified me to assist a surgeon in the operating theatre itself then I would really like that. They would obviously need nurses in that area whether they were performing the surgery or not. I've noticed from the shows I've watched that nurses are mainly giving the tools and organizing the area rather than working on the patient.

Influences on career development

I have a few role-models that have influence me such as Maggie Doyne. I like her determination despite her growing up in an orphanage and the way she wholeheartedly assists other people. Another person I admire is Shah Rukh Khan. He's a really famous actor from India but I like his back-story. My mother says he lost all motivation to study but then his father died and he went to the Dehli and he wanted to be an actor. He kept challenging himself to become better. And a couple years later after working really hard he became a massive success. But the fame has never gone to his head. He's known for being humble and still staying normal despite being so famous and rich. He's one of the

richest people in the world but is very humble. I like how tenacious he was and how he is still down to earth. Also, I admire Malala Yousafzai for her determination in achieving her goals and purity in who she truly is. She's the girl that got shot in the head by the Taliban for fighting against education.

I don't get time to watch much television anymore, but some shows I like include *Running Man* where they have all different types of content which really lightens my mood. It's a Korean variety show where the contestants do missions. It's weird that I enjoy it but I find it really funny. The humour is not that funny for people my age as mostly the people are middle-aged. But the small things are very funny I watch that almost every day just 45 minutes as soon as I go home to help me relax after school. Their humour and the challenges they face makes me laugh a lot. I also like learning new languages so I really enjoying learning Korean through the subtitles. Sometimes I turn them off and this helps me learn as well through their body language and expressions. It's completely different to my other languages of Nepalese and Hindi which is why I find it interesting. We mainly speak Nepalese at home. So even though I was born here my second language has overpowered my first language, which is English. This is really bad after school holidays. It's ridiculous because I don't know how to speak English anymore when I get back to school.

I also like watching Sunday Night and the way they portray true stories. Another show is *Crime Patrol*. It's an Indian TV series and I am very interested in the mysteries in it. They re-enact crimes that have been occurring throughout India. It's amazing watching how people break the law and to what extent they go to. I enjoy watching it because I want to see how bad people actually are just to get what they want. There are some very selfish people in this world. I like that the police officers use criminal psychology to investigate and find evidence to find the person that's guilty.

Badla is a Hindi movie and it's my favourite story at the moment. The title means Revenge. The film revolves around a young woman and a mystery of how two bodies came to be. She is the only person of suspicion yet she pleads that she was not the murderer. She is interrogated by the police as she's the only person that's found alive. Then is given a prestigious lawyer to help her. First of all, she didn't open up to him and she seemed like the cunning one as she was twisting stories around. She was making the other people that she was with seem as if they were the guilty ones. Then there is a big twist as her lawyer is wearing a mask and he turns out to be the victim's father. In order to find out the truth,

they set it all up where he came in as her lawyer that she hadn't seen before, and she ends up trusting him. It turns out he was the one that killed the two people. Then when in the end when she finally trusts him it backfires on her as he uses her story against her. The story brings out many twists and has different sides to it and revolves around the difference between 'your story, my story and the truth'. My favourite character is the lawyer as I admire his calm and cunning way of how he brings out the truth even though he turns out to be the bad one.

Formation of vocational interests

My favourite subject this year has been English. This subject involves studying and analysing texts and making meaning from them. It also involves writing analytical and creative texts. I enjoy breaking the texts down and making meaning from small details in the texts. I was performing really well in the beginning of the year in this subject, but now I have dropped to an average of 60% for this subject. I enjoy the tasks within the subject that involve analysing texts in great detail and relating them back to ourselves and the world around us.

I am still involved in the charity work and organising the trip to visit the orphanage. My friend Shaya, she goes to Curtin and is studying Psychology, is working with me. We did the Marigold Skype calls together as well and through that we got motivated into this fundraising. The donations are still coming in. I've got some donations from Ms L and some from my family friends. What's happened is because it's my cousin's wedding my parents are maybe going over as well. I think that is probably safer if we go with them. The wedding will be late January or February but the date is not fixed yet. It will also depend if I get into university and when it starts or if I need to do extra tests like if I fail English. I think I'll be fine for English though but you never know. ATAR is so uncertain.

To help with the fundraising we've created a shared Google doc. This has helped us to brainstorm and add lists of things we need to think about. I've been adding ideas on all the things we want to do and then we can prioritise what to focus on or cut things out. Currently we're brainstorming and getting feedback from the organiser of the charity. If we're going to visit the orphanage, we might do a charity function based on things that can be taken over for them. We can get people to donate items that they need. We are also looking at raising money for others as well. My Aunty has been to so many of these different villages and she's done similar works giving to the poor. She usually takes tourists

to those places who want to donate time or money to help the disadvantaged. We think that she's the most suitable person to help us and she has said that she will accompany us when we travel around there. We had looked at cheap student flights to cut down on costs but it depends on fundraising and also on the wedding date.

Career development activities

I was appointed to the Student Ministry leadership role this year. This involves organising fundraisers for certain charity organisations over the year. I enjoy the actual fundraisers where we get to spread awareness to the community regarding the cause along with seeing how many people are enjoying the fundraiser. It has helped me to develop leadership, patience and listening skills. I have also improved my skills in presenting different ideas. I like this activity because it makes me really happy seeing the involvement of the school community in assisting those less fortunate.

I have a part-time job at Oporto which is a Portuguese fast-food restaurant. I didn't want to work in fast food but I needed to work somewhere and nowhere was hiring so I decided to apply there. I had been putting my resume into every single pharmacy including Priceline, Wizards and Soul Patterson. I put it in so many places and didn't get any response so I had to look at fast food. It's only three days per week and around 12 hours so not as draining as the 22 hours at Chemist warehouse. I learned my lesson there. It's only very short shifts as well so I do have time to study. Although it's longer on Friday nights so I just come home and I sleep. I don't do any study on Friday. I will see if I can reduce to one shift during exams. The role involves me working at the fryer and also managing the drive through and front counter so I can assist customers with their orders and pack their foods. It also involves cleaning the working area and restocking items. I have developed multitasking skills as various areas we need to work in are required to all be done at once. It has also helped me develop patience as there are many customers that can be rude or unpleasant. I have also improved being faster at my work as I need to multitask and be efficient. Overall, everyone is extremely nice and I love how despite me being the only person from a different country who may not speak the same language as them, they still make me feel comfortable. The work environment can be very chaotic at times but I enjoy that, rather than a slow shift. Despite being busy, everyone is still very calm and nice. I find this job ok for a student job. But I would prefer another form of job that will challenge me more regardless of the people being nice and comfortable to be with.

Career and life transitions

My current pathway is an ATAR pathway, along with a Certificate IV in Preparation for Nursing Studies. My ATAR is low below the 70 but I'm hoping it can motivate me to do better. I know the certificate guarantees me the equivalent ATAR of 70 and would be a basis for university admission but I am hoping I can boost my ATAR to use that instead. The subjects I am doing are Religion and Life ATAR, Mathematics Applications, Health Studies ATAR, Economics ATAR and English ATAR. I believe that I was successful in Year 11 in most of these subjects however now I have decreased in such successes and have become a very average student. Changing from Chemistry ATAR to Economics ATAR was truly a challenge and it still is. It feels as if I'm always playing catch up with my work. I do more catch up work than actually doing up to date class work. This change has also impacted me negatively as I feel overwhelmed and I cannot be as attentive as I would be in my other subject other classes. It has also been a challenge to conform to certain teacher's teaching standards.

My struggles have definitely made me consider changes in my studying style where I will aim to learn and understand topics more deeply rather than just memorising information. I definitely feel like I spend more time catching up on the subjects that I changed into than actually enjoying learning the subject. Although I wasn't strong I actually really liked learning both Chemistry and Human Biology. It was difficult to come to terms with changing into subjects you are not interested in simply to get a good ATAR score. But I had no choice. Fortunately, my Certificate IV in Nursing plays a major role in providing me with positive feelings about my future as it is a back up if my ATAR pathway goes wrong. At least I have certainty I can get into university rather than the uncertainty and guessing game created by the ATAR. ATAR has definitely made me feel really stressed, but then, at the same time, I'm looking forward to finishing Year 12 and having a good break from assessments and schoolwork. At the same time, we have so many assessments coming up in the last weeks and also need to prepare for exams and it's getting really hectic. I recently completed my last assessment for my Certificate IV in Nursing so I know I will get into university anyway but it's just that last push to do well in ATAR. In the Cert IV I felt that I had more freedom. I could take my time with learning, understanding, and just enjoying basically the topic, whereas Human Biology at school, was just test then more tests even if you weren't ready. You have the same thing for other subjects as well. You cannot choose to do the assessment when you feel you are ready to. It's just rushed upon you. But with nursing, I could take my time to learn the content at my own pace and then do the

assessment when I was confident I was ready. The learning content was more interlinked in various ways because we had physics, chemistry, anatomy and Maths all in together rather than separate subjects. They were very practical as well because they would use narrators and provide scenarios of what would happen when you use the medical tools for chemistry or physics problems. Then they would use them for real life scenarios and talk about the human body. It was very connected and I enjoyed that because it was a good flow of work. But then at school, it's all separate subjects and not as practical or real world. However, the ATAR subjects are good because they go in depth a lot more. The nursing certificate did not go in that much depth but gave the basics of what you need to work in the field. I don't want to study nursing though I've definitely decided I want to do Biomedical Sciences at UWA. It's normally 80 ATAR but since we're a Broadway school it's a 75 to get in. I recently did my TISC application and that's what I put in. Hopefully I can improve my ATAR in my final exams to boost me to 75.

Post-school

I'm feeling quite positive for the upcoming year and university itself. Last year, before the exams I was very nervous. I needed to boost my ATAR and so was nervous but I was still steady at the end. The nervousness didn't kick me over really bad though because I still had that nursing certificate completed. That meant I was nervous but positive as well. I think some of the exams went well, but then I was just glad it was done and over. To be honest I just wanted to complete it and get it over with. If I didn't have the nursing certificate to fall back on I definitely would have been more stressed. I knew I also needed to pass English but I was doing well in that subject so I felt confident. Then when the results came out I remember I was at home. I had heard that everyone's results came out a day earlier but I was nervous so didn't check. But then I loaded it up and was just waiting for my results even though I didn't want to see it.

I was quite disappointed at first but then I told myself that I'll still get what I want through this process. My dad was sitting next to me but I didn't say anything at first. I was just going through my results. After I calmed down I told him that it was low and I joked it was 58 but then I showed him. It was an ATAR of 71 and he was happy because if you say a lower school mark first then you say something higher then it is better. I used that type of psychology with him and because I got the offer letter into lab medicine he was fine. I got the requirement for lab medicine at Curtin which was a 70 ATAR so I was happy with that. It was my second preference. I had Biomedical sciences at UWA as my first preference,

but I was too low for that. I was disappointed at first but I'm not at all anymore because I've heard from lots of people that have been to UWA that they prefer Curtin and changed universities. Now I'm happy to be at Curtin because it's all going well and I'm enjoying it. Also, I used to go there to study in the Curtin library when I was still a high school student so I knew where everything was. I was familiar with the environment there.

I have joined AIESEC, which is a group of young people that send people on exchange and they have meetings regarding how we can change the world. I really like it because we bond on important issues and talk about what we can do and how we can raise awareness of them. We also look to send people on projects for exchange and volunteering. I joined the week before university started during orientation week. This made me feel I was already part of the group so I was comfortable in the environment. I think because of my other volunteering experiences it all fits together nicely.

I couldn't go to my cousin's wedding in Nepal because of university but I am still involved with Marigold as well. During orientation week I was with all of the other students from school who were also starting that university so it was a good experience. I also signed up to get involved in Bollywood dance club. When it comes to classes at university it's quite hectic because there's 300 people in one lecture but it's good experience so far. As well as the lectures we have workshops of around 30 to 40 people. In these, we work in smaller groups on questions. I also have lab classes back to back on Fridays for microbiology and chemistry. It's interesting and I'm enjoying it so far. At school we were very interactive with the teachers and this has given me the confidence to do the same at university. Some of the past students said you are not supposed to ask questions in the lectures. But we want to be close to the lecturers and have a good relationship to help us better understand the content. That's something that we're breaking down and we're actually talking to our lecturers by asking them questions. I think they actually prefer it so I don't know why people didn't want to ask questions.

Also I think my studying in general has improved as I have learned to study ahead and that is what is expected at university. You have more independence and responsibility to move ahead and be prepared. A big change has been the amount of assignments being so much less. In university they give you two assignments in one semester. At school we would have assignments or tests continuously and it would make us panic to try to remember everything. Here we have a lot more time to understand and spend time putting

more effort into the assignments because there are less of them. I think this style of learning is much better.

I left my job at Oporto in January because it was getting too much. The people working there were being very toxic and not nice to everyone. I started working full time at my dad's restaurant. Recently I got a casual job at Optus Stadium as a dietary supervisor so I'm happy about that. I have started to reduce my hours at the restaurant as university get busier.

5.5 Summary

Phase One of the research followed the narrative method of re-transcribing and re-storying the raw field texts into phenomenarratives anchored using the co-reflection career development elements of personal context and background; career planning, goals and transitions; influences on career development; formation of vocational interests; career development activities; and, career and life transitions. The findings were organised into the three phenomenarratives to provide a rich tapestry of the students' perceptions of the career-related learning experiences that shaped their journey through secondary school. They provide visibility of the deep interconnections at play within the recursive interaction zone and how the iterative engagement between the participants and their environments may accrete, retune or reshape their schemas of conceptual understandings related to work, career and vocation within their metasystemic cognitive network.

Chapter 6 includes Phase Two of the research; a content analysis of the phenomenarratives and student feedback and the themes that emerged. The content analysis identified common themes across the three phenomenarrative texts. The themes identified influenced the participants' perceptions of their career-related learning experiences and shaped their career development. The themes are organised using the co-reflection framework but there may be crossover and overlap within some of the themes due to the complex interactivity of the experiences. The survey feedback data found in Appendix F were analysed to provide insight into the students' perceptions of using a narrative co-reflection process as part of their individual guidance and pathway planning.

Chapter Six: Phase Two Findings

6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses Phase Two of the research that analysed the Phase One findings outlined in Chapter Five. The content from the phenomenarratives was analysed to identify common themes across the three narrative texts to provide insights into the research question of understanding the students' perceptions of experiencing career development during school. The emergent themes that were identified are organised using the co-reflection elements of personal context and background; career aspiration, goals and planning; influences on career development; formation of vocational interests; career development activities; and, career and life transitions. There is some crossover and overlap within some of the emergent themes due to the complex interactivity of the experiences. The raw survey feedback that can be found in Appendix F has also been analysed to provide insight into students' perceptions of using the narrative co-reflection process as part of their individual guidance and pathway planning.

6.2 Analysis of phenomenarratives

The content analysis firstly coded and categorised manifest data by identifying themes based on frequency of occurrence and also the commonalities of experiences in all three phenomenarratives. This process was then repeated for latent content to further support the identified themes in the manifest data and provide deeper understanding and insights of student's perceptions embedded within their language and discourse. The emergent themes were then organised using the co-reflection elements. The themes were discussed through the inclusion of quotes from the phenomenarratives that had been coded and categorised during the analysis. The discussion centred on the students' perceptions of their career development experiences. This phase also included the analysis and discussion of the student feedback surveys to provide perspectives on the secondary research question seeking to understand the students' perceptions of using the narrative co-reflection process as part of their individual guidance and pathway planning. The same content analysis process was repeated when identifying themes within the raw survey feedback. The emergent themes are summarised in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1*Emergent themes from phenomenarratives*

Co-reflection elements	Emergent themes	
Personal context and background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family support • International worldview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational values • Ethnic heritage
Career aspirations, goals and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future aspirations • Academic goals • Limiting stress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competing value propositions • Healthy wellbeing
Influences on career development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal role-models • Cultural role-models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media participation
Formation of vocational interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School subjects • Feedback on strengths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived value of effort • Network connections
Career development activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment • Community engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extracurricular • Travel opportunities
Career and life transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathway and subject choices • Support structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-efficacy • Wellbeing support

6.2.1 Personal context and background

Individuals' cultural contexts and identities shape their worldview and impact on the meanings ascribed to their vocational identity and their career development concerns. Intersecting dimensions of culture and identity often combine to shape meanings of a person's position in society related to gender, social class and ethnicity and the opportunities and barriers that individuals may experience in relation to this. The understanding of a client's personal background through direct and indirect inquiry can reveal hidden and complex influences on an individual's cultural identity and context (N. Arthur, 2019). Understanding and connecting with personal context can also provide insight into the social capital available to the individual including the quantity and quality of relationships that can provide opportunities for development and support; the structure of social networks including reliability and diversity; and, and the ability an individual has to mobilise relationships including the mindsets and skills needed to activate relationships (Charania & Freeland Fisher, 2020). The themes identified during the analysis process were family support; international worldview; ethnic heritage; and, educational values.

Family support.

Family background was an important aspect for all three participants and visible in the perceptions of the students in the phenomenarratives. They all had a strong nuclear and extended family that provided support for each other. They relied on this support to provide encouragement and positive feedback on their experiences as well as to help them and assist them through life's challenges.

Student A.

Student A was very connected to her grandparents and they supported her as she was growing up. During Year 11 she unfortunately lost both of her grandparents and this was very hard for her to cope with. She understandably lost focus with her academic studies and didn't perform well in her exams. Her parents and sisters provided emotional support and the loss galvanised Student A's motivation to work hard and achieve in memory of her grandparents.

“Early this year, both of my grandparents died. This really added to my stress. Both of their deaths were a really depressing experience but...really motivates me to do better in my education and my career pathway.”

Student J.

Student J has a strong relationship with her older brother who she relied on for advice and guidance. She admired his resilience and that he didn't give up easily. She aspired to take on some of his positive characteristics including perseverance and dedication. She was hoping to emulate his passion for his university studies by finding her own area of interest.

“My older brother is also an important role model for me. He is a strong and mature person who I deeply admire. He is passionate and resilient with his studies and lives his life humbly. He gives me advice whenever I struggle.”

Student S.

Student S had a lot of admiration and respect for her parents and grandparents and their hard work and efforts to provide her and her brother with the opportunities they have. Her parents were very supportive and she had a stable family unit that helped and guided her to achieve her goals.

“it continually amazes me how far my father has come in his life to give my brother and I the best education and lifestyle possible...my grandparents from my father’s side worked immensely hard to feed and allow their five children to live comfortably in one of the poorest villages of Nepal.”

All of the students indicated they had a stable family situation that included significant others who were committed to supporting their learning and development. This family support provided the students with the advantage that they could rely on family members to provide advocacy, advice, encouragement and mentorship. The family members devoted time to the students and were invested in ensuring a wide range of learning opportunities were available. They also provided their own problem solving wisdom to ensure the young people in their care are being prepared to make future life decisions on their own as they moved toward independence. The strong familial support and interaction modelled healthy and supportive relationships and a connection to community. This was enhanced by an international worldview.

International worldview.

Further to family support all three participants had extended family from overseas in developing nations. Family perspectives supported the students to have a more considered and global perspective on the opportunities available to them.

Student A.

Student A was very connected to her family overseas and had a traumatic experience when Typhoon Haiyan hit her hometown in 2013. The experience made her more aware of the challenges faced in other countries and the opportunities available for her in Australia. She really appreciated her life more after this experience and her international worldview helped motivate her to utilise as many opportunities available to her.

“when the Typhoon Haiyan hit my hometown in 2013...I experienced a lot of sadness and fear that the hometown I grew up in was destroyed and that my whole family could have been taken away... I think this was an important experience because it influenced me to look at life from a very different perspective and appreciate my life more.”

Student J.

Although Student J moved to Australia when she was young she still had extended family in the Philippines and returned to visit them. She noticed a difference in interacting with people in a developing society as there are not as many opportunities there with a lot more poverty and people needing assistance.

“I think there is a drastic difference between Australia and the Philippines... I think it is more dangerous over there. Also, whenever we go back there's always kids coming up to us and asking for money. When I went back last year, I instantly realized how hard it was to live there.”

Student S.

Student S returned to Nepal when she was six and was very cognisant of the different cultural traditions there including a more patriarchal culture. She also commented on differences in the economy and the frequency of small business and stalls in Nepal compared to Australia.

...I went to Nepal when I was six. In our culture, we need to visit my father's side first, because that's the dominant family. Then we need to live there for a couple of days and then we have to move to my mom's house.”

Having an international worldview provided the participants with a greater sense of purpose and commitment to their academic studies as a significant opportunity to improve their lives. The students could make direct comparisons to many individuals less fortunate than themselves to live within a developed economy with democratic and egalitarian values. The students often compared their opportunities to those from their ethnic heritage.

Ethnic heritage.

The influential family perspectives were derived from the ethnicity of the participants. The perceptions of the students make visible how influential family can be on the formation of a young person's worldview. There is also a strong diasporic element and connection to the traditions and heritage of their country of origin observed in the students' perceptions.

Student A.

Student A was born overseas but was very connected to her heritage and extended family in the Philippines. Fortunately, she is able to use technology to stay connected to her relatives.

“I was born in Tacloban City, which is a small provincial but much urbanised city in Philippines...all of my girlfriends and family are in the Philippines. We do a lot of FaceTime on Facebook and stuff to keep connected.”

She is very proud of her heritage and performed a Filipino dance in front of the whole school which brought her joy to share with other members of the school community.

“The start of the year was pretty stressful but then we got to the Filipino dance in front of the whole school at Harmony Day. It was really nice being able to forget about everything for that day and have a total focus on the performance.”

Student J.

Student J also had connections to her Filipino heritage but had moved to Australia from a younger age and considered herself to be Australian but her family returns every two or three years to see her extended family.

“I was born in Baguio, Philippines and I moved to Australia in 2007 when I was five...I consider myself Australian and I think both my brothers and I fit in well when we came here. We go back to the Philippines every two to three years.”

Student S.

Student S had Nepalese ethnic heritage and discussed the historical background and family journey. She was proud of her parents who had worked hard to move from a rural village into Kathmandu and finally on to life in Australia although found some of the customs strange when reflecting on them.

“I was born in Perth, Australia but my parents are from Nepal. My Father was from a very poor village that had no opportunities at all”

“married women in Nepal always have to wear red and wear all this jewellery. Normally it’s a big influence on the children because they see their mother like that. But that didn’t really happen to me.”

The importance of the student’s heritage and ethnicity was visible in the students’ perceptions in the phenomenarratives. Each participant had come from a developing nation and had within their heritage disadvantage and challenge. There was enormous respect and acceptance of the way things were but also immense pride at breaking the cycle of disadvantage through hard work and moving to a country with more opportunity like Australia. Having experienced Australian childhood firsthand participants made clear distinctions and analysis of cultural differences when returning to their country of heritage. All participants felt a real connection to their ancestral countries but also a strong sense of Australian identity. Cross-cultural understanding when connecting with the participants was important to understand their unique context and background. Within their heritage they all demonstrated a strong sense of value of the importance of education.

Educational values.

Values play an important role in what is prioritised and encouraged in young people. In particular values around learning and education are fundamental in curating motivation and effort of young people to engage in school work. Students who value education and can connect their school experience to their larger aspirations and goals are more engaged in academic studies. All participants and their families valued the educational process and its purpose in helping them succeed in their future lives.

Student A.

Student A found schooling between the Philippines and Australia remarkably different. The Filipino students were more behaviourally compliant and the system was focussed on the individual ranking of students based solely on their academic results. In Australia, students are not only rewarded for their academic achievement but on being good citizens within the school community. Good behaviours including work ethic and conscientiousness as well as helping others in the community are often also rewarded alongside academic achievement.

“When I started school here things were different. When I went to school in the Philippines for a few years there was a lot of competition...I think that’s

ingrained into me that I have to be at the top. Whereas, here in Australia you can get rewarded on behaviour...but in the Philippines it's very different...they automatically behave so there is no need to focus on rewarding them for it."

Student J.

Student J had cousins overseas who were unable to go to school as it was too expensive. Although education was valued it was not accessible to everyone. Her cousin was unable to secure work and ended up falling pregnant as a teen. Student J was able to access work early and had a higher income but saw the value of remaining in school despite more access to employment opportunities.

"When I went back last year, I instantly realized how hard it was to live there....two of my cousins do not go to school anymore because my Auntie cannot pay for them...and one of my cousins got pregnant....In Australia, teenagers can get jobs when they are 14 or 15 if they want. But over there you can only start working when you are 18 and you would still be earning less than what a 14-year-old would be earning here!"

Student S.

Student S discussed her awareness of the importance of education as a significant opportunity to improve the quality of life for Nepalese people. She recognised the importance of sacrifice and effort in order to make progress with many in her culture prioritising academic success over happiness. Often accessing educational opportunities requires shared family goals and a collective effort of all family members in achieving the shared aspirations.

*"Everyone in Nepal values education and success more than happiness...
...In rural Nepal there aren't many opportunities and it continually amazes me how far my father has come in his life to give my brother and I the best education and lifestyle possible. My Mother...her hard work in all aspects of life and motivation towards my father helped us reach where we are today."*

While these students all valued the education process; it is important to recognise that not all students may have such positive sentiment arising from their backgrounds and it is

essential that all young people in schools be provided opportunities to 'come to see' the connection between their personal life goals and the day-to-day experiences of school. The disconnection between these elements can lead to disengagement, a lack of motivation and effort and a sense of going through the motions rather than a clear plan to achieve their life goals.

6.2.2 Summary

Personal context and background is shaped by the intersecting dimensions of culture and identity that often combine to form meanings of a person's position in society related to gender, social class and ethnicity and the opportunities and barriers that individuals may experience in relation to this (N. Arthur, 2019). Understanding the unique socio-cultural factors that underpin how an individual creates meaning in their lives and engages with the world at large is important in supporting the personal learning and growth of young people. Approaches that prioritise cross-cultural understanding through intercultural dialogue to co-construct meaning in situ with a focus on relevance of the personal cultural context of the individual have the opportunity to have a positive impact (Ribeiro, 2020). Themes including family support, international worldview, ethnic heritage and educational values all emerged as part of understanding each student's personal context and background. Understanding an individual's personal context can provide insight into how their aspirations have been shaped and opportunities to assist them to achieve their career goals.

6.2.3 Career aspirations, goals and planning

Aspirations are the hopes and dreams that an individual has for the future. The achievement of life aspirations is closely linked with the achievement of career aspirations as the opportunities for social mobility and advancement are improved through positive work and labour market outcomes. Career development and work aspirations can be achieved through careful planning and strategic goal setting (Arthur et al., 2017). Career planning is more than simply making a choice or decision about the type of work to participate in; rather, it is about optimising resources within the individual's ecosystem to identify vocational goals that that will have positive impacts and benefits while also calibrating the sustainability of efforts made to maximise the chances of achieving the goals (Tang, 2019). Individuals who engage in more proactive career behaviours also enhance their chances of achieving career goal success. Career behaviours such as career planning, skill development, career consultation and network building also improve the chance of accomplishing career goals (Clements & Kamau, 2018). Understanding the

career goals and projects that people are aspiring to achieve is essential in supporting a person's career development. Goals are the planning of actions and behaviours to assist in the achievement and realisation of career aspirations. The themes identified during the analysis process were future aspirations, academic goals, limiting stress, competing value propositions and healthy wellbeing.

Future aspirations.

All three participants had similar aspirations at the commencement of the study with all wanting to become medical practitioners. This aligns with research into the impact of career concentration on teenage aspirations with more than 15% of teenage girls having expectations of working as doctors (Mann, Denis, Schleicher, et al., 2020). These aspirations shifted throughout their secondary schooling as students engaged in the career development process and eventually selected higher education courses in law, marketing and laboratory science. Law is still the fourth most concentrated profession with over 4% of teenage girls aspiring to this occupation (Mann, Denis, Schleicher, et al., 2020). The most notable influences impacting on their shifting aspirations were the feedback they received on their educational achievement and the requirements needed for further study.

Student A.

Student A had aspirations for medicine and human biology in her younger years; picking subjects that would allow her to generate a high enough ATAR to meet the Medicine entrance requirements. As she progressed through her journey new ideas around law and commerce opened up and she started to review her ambitions. In Year 12 she had a change of heart about Medicine, reflecting that she felt the pathway is over-hyped and many students who have good academic scores choose it without really considering why. After some deeper reflection and research she settled on law as her first preference. She achieved the required ATAR score to study Law at Curtin University.

Year 10: "I want to go onto the ATAR pathway...hopefully I can get into courses such as Medicine or some other course that looks at Human Biology. I think I'm just really nervous because I don't really know what I really want to do. I like the idea of Medicine and Human Biology, but I don't know if that's the thing that I'm really into."

Post-school: *“I had Curtin Law as my first preference and I had an early offer for that and that was pretty much the only thing that I wanted to do.”*

Student J.

Student J had a range of aspirations including business, media and medicine. Her preference in her younger years was for medicine and she chose her subjects to study based on this. However, she struggled with some of the academic pressures and had to reflect deeply about what attracted her to medicine and whether she could achieve her same ambitions through other career options. She decided that she wanted to work in a field to help children who were in disadvantaged situations. Student J decided that pursuing international aid and working to help those less fortunate in other countries would be rewarding. She initially thought international relations at university might prepare her for this but after further research into advertised UNICEF job roles she decided that digital marketing would prepare her with more of the skills needed. This also aligns with one of her strongest school subjects: Design. Interestingly she selected this school subject for interest and passion rather than to achieve a high ATAR.

Year 10: *“I am currently thinking about work in the areas of business, medicine or media. I am most interested in medicine as I have hopes of becoming a paediatrician that can travel to poverty-stricken areas within the world and help children suffering within these places.”*

Post school: *“Originally I was doing International Relations but I have recently changed into the Marketing Major... when I started looking through employment vacancies, there was a lot in terms of digital advertising and managing the platform. That means looking at UNICEF as a marketable organisation and helping them grow. That really excites me as it can make a big difference and help others.”*

Student S.

Student S had aspirations to work in the health and medical field specifically becoming a cardiac surgeon to be able to return to Nepal and improve the health in hospitals and provide more access to rural communities. However, despite these aspirations her academic results did not align and she needed to adjust her next steps based on her ATAR results. The aspirations of Student S were consistent throughout her journey and

her passion and motivation to help those less fortunate was sustained. However, based on her ATAR results her pathway became increasingly complex to navigate to achieve her aspirations. She settled for her second preference of laboratory medicine; still connected to the health and medical field but not directly leading to being qualified to practice medicine.

Year 10: *“I am currently interested in the health and medical field and I want to become a surgeon. More specifically, a heart surgeon. I am interested in this field and this occupation because I want to help the patients and their families to give them hope.”*

Post-school: *“It was an ATAR of 71... I got the requirement for lab medicine at Curtin which was a 70 ATAR so I was happy with that. It was my second preference.”*

All students had identified some of their future aspirations and engaged in a process of vocational circumscription and reflection throughout their journey. Their participation in career-related learning and development experiences allowed them to refine their aspirations. All of the students had an understanding of the academic requirements to achieve their goals. These academic requirements were a significant influence on student vocational choice.

Academic goals.

The education system prioritises the development of academic knowledge with the goal of providing all young people with opportunities to learn and develop themselves. Academic achievement is seen as the main metric of success and students who advance their academic knowledge and achieve well are rewarded in the system.

Student A.

Student A selected a challenging academic pathway including six higher level subjects (only four are needed to generate an ATAR). She found it hard to balance all of her subjects, performing really well in some but not as well in others. Student A also reflected that many students lack independent learning skills as there were no classes on learning how to learn; students just needed to figure it out for themselves. She commented that success in middle school is often just memorising content rather than discussing opinions

and going beyond the classroom work to other sources to develop more nuanced understandings.

“I’m doing an ATAR pathway with six subjects...this pathway has been quite exhausting...I think a lot of students lack independent learning skills. Nobody teaches us how to learn properly we just have to figure it out quickly. It’s sink or swim.”

Student J.

Student J also selected a challenging pathway of six ATAR subjects and while performed exceptionally well in her Design subject her performance in some of her other subjects was disappointing. She withdrew for her Chemistry subject after failing indicating it was too hard to balance her extracurricular and part-time employment commitments alongside her academic requirements.

“I’m currently on an ATAR Pathway...I received an Outstanding Application award for Design in Semester 1. This year has been tough as I started thinking that I could balance 6 ATAR Subjects with a job and extra-curricular activities. However, I was not achieving.”

Student S.

Student S selected an academic ATAR pathway aligned to her interest in Medicine. Despite having an established study routine and strategies she struggled to maintain her grades and needed to change subjects after failing her higher-level Mathematics course. Her expectations on her achievement were higher than her results and she needed to engage with an additional tutor outside of school to ensure she passed her other subjects.

“After my first exams I had to change...the exam result was a terrible score. It was just a failure...I already have a tutor for all my subjects to help me as I’m not doing well...I thought I’d do better than what I’m doing right now...I am struggling keeping constant grades and it’s definitely harder than I thought.”

The dominance of an academic excellence at all costs mindset pervaded the students’ career goals. The first thing on their minds were their grades and the ATAR score they could achieve. As the students were able to reflect more deeply through the career narrative process they were able to step back and see that the academic goals were a

means to an end; that the important focus was on understanding their own aspirations and identity. Once they had a more defined understanding of their own identity and what they wanted to achieve, the setting of their academic goals became subservient to their life goals; rather than the other way around. The constant focus on academic results continually forced students to make value judgements on competing areas of focus.

Competing value propositions.

Life is full of decisions on where to invest time, energy and effort. It is important to support the development of decision-making skills in young people so they are investing their time and effort in a balanced and rewarding way that allows them to maintain positive wellbeing and achieve success in their lives.

Student A.

Student A's time management improved over her journey and she was able to prioritise sleep over her studies outside of exams and major assessment deadlines. During those times she managed five and half hours sleep. Unfortunately, she was unable to continue with exercise due to her study and other commitments as she could not fit her running or training into her schedule.

"I usually I get about seven hours of sleep, but the week before exams and really busy weeks, where all the assessments are on altogether, I get about five and a half hours of sleep."

"I'm not doing as much exercise as I would like though as I just don't have time. I used to do it straight after school. I would do an hour of either a leg run or just strength training. But now I don't do it as I can't fit in."

Student J.

Student J was very focussed to improve her grades; in particular her Maths subject. She started with tutoring and intended to attend the after school Maths Club; however, there was a clash with her part-time employment and she was unable to attend on Wednesdays. She had to make decisions between prioritising her studies, her work and her family events. She found that balancing everything was challenging. She also indicated that social media was a distraction.

“Although I wanted to improve all of my subjects my main focus was to improve my Math Methods grade. It's just I didn't prioritise Maths like I said I would...there's lots of family events coming up and I also get distracted by social media, extracurricular and work activities as well.”

Furthermore, Student J participated in an entrepreneurship program during Year 10 and found it rewarding and aligned to her interest area. Unfortunately, due to the pressures of her Year 11 academic ATAR pathway she was unable to continue with the program due to her study load.

“I tried...an entrepreneurship program and competition in which students formulate an app to pitch to a panel of judges; the winner will receive an investment by a company. I like how we had to focus on the problem first not the solution. You need to understand the pain of the customer and why your solution would be used by them. Many businesses fail because their idea fixes their own problem but nobody else's. I wish I could have done more of it but ATAR study was too much.”

Student S.

Student S found balancing all of her priorities difficult. She commenced part-time work but had to leave her job as her grades were suffering. Likewise she needed to stop doing her dancing so she could study more. Unfortunately, her volunteering work that involved video calling the orphans in Nepal was also impacted as she made the decision that her study commitments and grades were the top priority.

I did start working from the beginning of this year at Chemist Warehouse three days a week, so it was quite tough maintaining that work and school life. Then I decided to leave the job as my school results were suffering... I guess other factors that may be impacting my study are my dancing and the orphanage volunteering work...unfortunately, we haven't done as much work with the orphanage due to other commitments. During the exam period it all became too much.”

The students often had competing priorities and were continually making decisions about what to invest their time and effort in. Sometimes they were not happy at the domination of the ATAR over other areas of their life that they perceived to have as much value if not

more than achieving a high academic score. This continual tension exacerbated the pressure the students felt and didn't provide a rewarding experience for students, often leading to an increase in stress.

Limiting stress

There are growing concerns on the levels of stress and pressure on our young people and how this is contributing to mental health problems (Shiple & Stuble, 2018). In Australia, suicide is the leading cause of death in young people aged 15 – 24 (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2022). At least 40% of young people in this age bracket experience depression and social isolation; while more than 60% experience anxiety, sleep disturbances and feelings of insecurity and inadequacy (Shiple & Walker, 2020). It is important our youth are supported with strategies to limit the levels of stress they are experiencing.

Student A.

Student A found it particularly stressful during the examination period; especially when exams were timetabled on the same day and she was unable to devote enough time to either one of the subjects to get the outcome she desired.

“The most stressful time for me was during the exam period, when I had all of my exams in the one week....I was not panicking, but I knew that it wasn't going to come out as good as my other exams...the whole week was exhausting...I already knew that my circumstances weren't going to give me my best outcome that I was capable of.”

Student J.

Student J found her academic pathway very stressful. Despite her study timetable working well she felt there was simply not enough time to do everything well; feeling like she didn't utilise her time effectively. She perceived herself to be a failure due to negative academic results and often ignored critical feedback so as to avoid those feelings of disappointment. As Student J became a more experienced and confident student she was more open to engaging with the negative emotions that arose from her studies due to not performing well in some academic assessments.

“After experiencing a year of utter struggle and constant breakdowns because of ATAR, I know what I need to do to prepare as the course next year is very much the same as this year. I have to focus and do as well as I am humanly able to in order to achieve the ATAR that I want.”

Student S.

Student S found the academic pathway significantly stressful. She found the lack of certainty and the guessing game on what rank you may achieve caused her stress. As well as completing her ATAR studies she enrolled in a VET (Vocational Education and Training) certificate as a level four qualification provided the equivalent ATAR for standard university admission. Student S found the competency-based training more rewarding and allowed her more freedom and independence in her learning. She also found the subjects were more clearly interlinked and practical than her ATAR subjects. Studying the Certificate IV helped her feel positive about her future and limit some of the stress of her ATAR subjects.

“Fortunately, my Certificate IV in Nursing plays a major role in providing me with positive feelings about my future as it is a back up if my ATAR pathway goes wrong. At least I have certainty I can get into university rather than the uncertainty and guessing game created by the ATAR.”

“The learning content (Certificate IV) was more interlinked in various ways because we had physics, chemistry, anatomy and Maths all in together rather than separate subjects....then they would use them for real life scenarios and talk about the human body. It was very connected and I enjoyed that because it was a good flow of work. But then at school, it's all separate subjects and not as practical or real world.”

The students experienced stress in a range of ways. They were interested in how to study smarter to reduce the stress levels aligned with their academic goals. However, often they were not provided with enough tuition and guidance aligned with the development of metacognitive and metamemory skills. Much tuition time was dedicated to focus on ‘what’ to learn rather than ‘how’ or ‘why’ to learn it. Providing the student opportunities and time to focus on developing the personal learning strategies to become more successful learners could decrease stress and improve outcomes. Further to this, the ATAR academic subjects were viewed as segregated and unrelated; providing limited

applicability or scenarios of where and why the knowledge is applied in the real world. Student stress can impact negatively on their healthy wellbeing.

Healthy wellbeing.

The importance of health and wellbeing is supported by a significant evidence base and is now extended beyond physical health such as exercise, nutrition and sleep to also include mental wellbeing (Seligman, 2011). Rather than responding only to negative experiences; positive psychology promotes active and healthy wellbeing through strategies that enhance awareness of an individual's positive and negative emotions; engagement with their world including an understanding of their strengths, balance and absorption; strategies for managing relationships; seeking meaningfulness and purpose through community participation; and, recognising accomplishments through the celebration of achievements, developing self-efficacy and goal setting strategies (Seligman, 2011).

Student A.

Student A tried to utilise any free time during the term and during the school holidays to improve her wellbeing. She enjoyed playing music. However, she had quit learning piano and clarinet as she would devote too much time to it and not be able to balance her other commitments. During the school holidays when she had no academic pressure, she could reconnect with her music to bring her a sense of joy.

“When I don't have a lot of schoolwork or when it's the holidays I like to take the time to learn classical songs on the piano. I used to actively play piano and clarinet when I was younger so I really enjoy playing music. However, I eventually quit both instruments because it got too much playing music every day and balancing all of the other requirements.”

Student J.

Student J found the experience of her subjects difficult and often could not sleep well due to her study load. She stayed up late to study and then often didn't perform very well during the test or exam. Further to this she avoided feedback on some of her learning to protect her emotional wellbeing; preferring to fail quietly rather than having to engage in constant feedback on what she did wrong. This did not assist in her maintaining her wellbeing during her schooling.

“I always end up doubting myself with a lot of the questions and then I don’t do very well. I get really disappointed because I’m working really hard to improve...my results are probably just because I go to sleep late at night due to study...I normally get to bed after study at about midnight. But if I have an assessment the next day it is more like 2:00am. Then the next day I end up being tired for the assessment.”

Student S.

Student S had a break from her dancing due to her study commitments. However, she re-connected with her dancing and made time for it to improve her wellbeing. She was happy and excited to participate in an activity that made her feel centred and offered an opportunity to de-stress. Prioritising her dance project improved her wellbeing although her time was at a premium.

“I’ve also started a new project which is a dance video. I’m doing it because it’s about cherishing memories...whenever I’m dancing it really centres me and I feel like I’m one with the moment... I’ve been dancing for many years but haven’t done it much lately due to studying and being busy. I’m happy and excited at getting back to it again.”

Students were interested in understanding strategies for wellbeing including discussions on the importance of sleep, nutrition, exercise and mental wellbeing. However, they often found it difficult to implement strategies for wellbeing due to competing demands on their time. The demands and pressures on young people have increased significantly and the time to focus on these essential areas in life has dwindled. If a young person is not mentally and physically healthy they will find it difficult to achieve their goals and aspirations. More focus on re-balancing the education process to help young people to develop and achieve their health and wellness goals will provide a stronger base for student achievement and better outcomes in their futures.

6.2.4 Summary

Career development and work aspirations can be achieved through careful planning and strategic goal setting (Arthur et al., 2017). Career planning is more than simply making a choice or decision about the type of work to participate in; rather, it is about optimising resources within the individual’s ecosystem to identify vocational goals that will have positive impacts and benefits while also calibrating the sustainability of efforts made to

maximise the chances of achieving the goals (Tang, 2019). The themes identified during the analysis process were future aspirations, academic goals, limiting stress, competing value propositions and healthy wellbeing. Understanding the career goals and projects that people aspire to achieve is essential in supporting a person's career development. It will also allow them more time for reflection and to build awareness of the influences shaping their career development journey.

6.2.5 Influences on career development

Influences refer to the complex systemic web of internal and external factors shaping career development. The unique contextual forces that make up an individual's subjective and intersubjective experiences significantly influence the trajectory of an individual's life course. The access to resources, support and opportunities that an individual has impacts on the quality of decision-making and actions one undertakes (Cournoyer & Lachance, 2019). The complex interplay of the contextual forces that exert influence is unique to the individual. Influences can have an impact on the career development process. Themes of personal role-models; cultural role-models; and, media participation were identified during re-transcription.

Personal role models.

Personal role-models were people who the participants knew directly. The students may have strong familial or peer bonds or felt a personal connection to someone they knew through their network such as a teacher.

Student A.

Student A had strong personal role-models and connections. In particular, her grandparents were very influential in her development and she admired them greatly. She also had a strong connection with one of her cousins in the Philippines hoping she can move to Australia one day.

“My role models...are definitely my grandmother and grandfather. My grandmother was always very hardworking and could never stay at home doing nothing. I admired her work ethic and her drive....my grandfather was also very hardworking but also was a very doting grandfather. Although I had seen him at school as a strict teacher, at home he was very gentle and loving. He always imposed good values such as working hard at school.”

My older cousin, Bea, was also a role-model. She is four years....She was like...my sister and I always followed her. Hopefully, after she finishes her university studies in the Philippines she will look to migrate to Australia. We're hoping of encouraging her to come over here."

Student J.

Student J also had some strong personal role models and she remembered her Uncle from the Philippines. She admired his confidence in himself and patience in finding a life partner hoping that she could be as relaxed about adulthood as he was.

"A strong influence I had was my uncle...I was so in awe about the fact that he was so certain within himself and who he was that he didn't need another person to be in his life....I usually expect most people his age to be really concerned about money...but he still has very youthful qualities, and I think that's the kind of adult I would want to be...very carefree and happy. I really look up to him for that."

Student S.

Student S was positively impacted by her relationship with her father and his journey from rural Nepal to Australia. She aspired to make the most of all of the opportunities that his hard work had provided her and she respected his selflessness and his volunteering work.

"it continually amazes me how far my father has come in his life...my dad and his family, they saved a lot of money then organised to send him to Kathmandu...he worked really hard there. He was well regarded and he then had the opportunity to be transferred to Singapore...he then came to Australia from there..."

"in Australia, my father is a restaurant business owner and a public figure in the Nepalese Association of Australia... every year my Dad's restaurant volunteers to sell typical Nepalese food on both days at Buddha's Birthday Celebration in the City. Although my dad takes Nepalese food from the restaurant to sell there he doesn't get any money as it all goes to charity."

The students were deeply connected to some of their personal role-models mentioning them throughout the co-reflection process. Having strong and supportive personal role-

models provides significant opportunities for young people to grow. The students were also influenced by cultural role models.

Cultural role models.

Cultural role-models who students did not know personally still provided strong examples to students of qualities and characteristics they admired and were hoping to demonstrate in their own lives.

Student A

Student A was inspired by the experiences and qualities of Emma Gonzales. After being involved in a school shooting situation in the United States she spoke out on gun violence. Student A admired her passion, sincerity and fearless attitude finding her story inspirational and empowering.

“Emma Gonzales also inspires me. After the shooting that happened in her school, she had the strength and motivation to speak out and really do something to raise gun awareness...she has a fearlessness attitude and when she very sincere when she talks and has fire and passion...I think what was really inspirational about her was she actually went against some of the adult opinions. This is empowering and not stuff you really get taught at school.”

Student J.

Student J admired Logan Browning who was a strong and independent woman who brought social issues around racial discrimination and gender stereotyping into focus.

A role model I have is Logan Browning...she is quite a strong and independent woman which I deeply admire and she brings focus to social issues and injustices such as racial discrimination and the detrimental impacts of gender stereotypes on society...she's a very inspirational person because she brings social issues into the light for public discussion.”

Student S.

Student S admired Anuradha Koirala who set up a not for profit association to help victims of sex trafficking. After seeing her present in person, she was inspired to help others who were less fortunate. Student S also respected that Anuradha made her own decisions on her future rather than acquiescing to the dominant cultural traditions and expectations.

“Another role-model I have is Anuradha Koirala. She is a Nepalese social activist who founded and is the director of Maiti Nepal, which is a non-profit organisation in Nepal dedicated to helping victims of sex trafficking. Her work in Nepal and her kind and caring nature inspired me to become as great as her and made me realise that with help, people can live again and overcome situations...She has devoted her life to just helping others.”

The students admired a range of cultural role models whom have had a positive impact on the world. They were often inspired by the qualities and the experiences of the cultural role-models and related these to their own aspirations and goals. The importance of recognising the qualities we admire in others can help us to understand the type of person we aspire to become and provide examples of the potential impact of others on society. Cultural role models are more accessible and diverse in the information age with opportunities to engage with a greater range of media sources.

Media participation.

In the information age with more global interconnections, students engaged with a range of media participation from a range of sources in a range of media including non-fiction print and news; non-fiction academic texts; fiction narratives in print and visual formats; personal print and visual social media content; and, cultural print and visual social media content. All participants were engaged in media content creation as well as reception through using virtual means to communicate ideas in print and visual forms.

Student A.

Student A enjoyed a YouTube series around Jeffree Starr who was a drag star and fashion icon. It was a vlog style production and she enjoyed his rise from nothing to a millionaire and all of the challenges that came with that; in particular, how he managed his relationships with others.

“Jeffree Star is such an amazing YouTuber and fashion / makeup icon. Getting into his personal life was so fascinating. It showed his emotional side, how his business grew and what struggles he went through to have such a great company.”

Student J.

Student J enjoyed the dramatisation in in show ‘This is Us’. She enjoyed that it felt real and represented the hardships, struggles and challenges that everyday people face. She likes that it highlights family values and appreciates what her mother had done for her.

“I like it because it shows many important values needed within each person to grow and flourish. It is about real life – a life that is not glamourised nor romanticised but the rawness of life within all its hardships and struggles, but also the beautiful moments of it.”

Student S.

Student S enjoyed watching the comedian couple, Dhurmus and Suntali who used their popularity from a reality television show to help those in need. They built houses for the disadvantaged and provided positive outcomes to the lives of many disadvantaged people in Nepal.

“they started off as just normal religious people in Nepal. Then they were on a reality-based TV show...they then took their fame and all the money...and started building houses for those in need... in the villages of Nepal for those who have been neglected by their own family members and the rest of society due to certain diseases they got.”

The students accessed a diverse range of media for different purposes. The content was often accessed on demand and chosen through a range of influences such as family and peer recommendations, advertising on social media and computer-generated algorithmic suggestions. The ubiquitous access and engagement with a diverse range of media provided students with an abundance of information; however, there was a sense of overload in some ways. The purpose for accessing content also highlighted a disconnection in the value of some of the rich informal learning opportunities the students

have through personalised media participation compared to the standardised content accessed through formal learning at school.

6.2.6 Summary

The complex interplay of the contextual forces that exert influence is unique to the individual. An individual's internal intrapersonal system; and, an individual's external contextual systems combine in unique ways to provide influences that shape learning and growth. The internal system of values, personality and self-concept connect to the external system including social influences such as family, peers, and media as well as environmental-societal influences such as socioeconomic status and technological advancements (Patton & McMahon, 2014). Themes of personal role-models, cultural role-models and media participation were identified in this study. Influences can have a significant impact on the career development process. A key influence that motivates a person to action is personal interest.

6.2.7 Formation of vocational interests

Understanding an individual's interests and connecting their interests to education and labour market opportunities is seen as a key role of career guidance practice. Interests are formed through a sense of curiosity combined with positive experiential feedback in three main ways: (1) when an individual's engagement in an experience provides a positive outcome and the individual seeks to engage in similar experiences; (2) when an individual combines different experiences based on positive outcomes into a new combination of interest activity; (3) when an individual uses others' experiences as feedback to engage in new interest areas (Silvia, 2001). In particular, vocational Interests are developed when individuals view themselves as competent in the activity and anticipate that continuing to perform the activity will produce positive and valued outcomes (Blustein et al., 2011; Healy & Bourne, 2011). Themes identified within the formation of career and work-related areas of attraction included school subjects; feedback on strengths; perceived value of effort; and, network connections.

School subjects.

The organisation of school discipline areas and student participation in subjects is the dominant mechanism for providing students with the direct experiences needed to form

discipline-linked interests. There still seems to be a significant gap in translating school discipline areas into the world of work opportunities. Despite this school subjects remain important in the formation of vocational interests.

Student A.

Student A enjoyed a range of school-based subjects including Science and Maths. However, she was most interested in history because she was curious to understand the how and why of the events. She also enjoyed that the teacher and group of students were motivated to learn in this subject and how the teacher related it to the real world and what was happening at the time.

“One of my favourite school subjects is Modern History. We study a range of events...I find it interesting to learn the how and why of these events; especially how they relate to today...I really like my teacher as he teaches not just the dates and events but relates the content to the real world and what is happening now.”

Student J.

Student J enjoyed a range of subjects including Design, Japanese, Business and Science. However, her favourite subject was English Literature. She enjoyed Literature because she liked to explore the deeper meanings within texts and see multiple perspectives and critical insights into society.

“My favourite subject is definitely still Literature. It’s challenging but I find it so interesting... I really like analysing passages of writing, looking for deeper meanings behind what is written by the author and how the text can provide critical insight on society in really subtle ways.”

Student S.

Student S enjoyed Religious Education as it provided a global view of different beliefs and traditions and also English. She enjoyed English as she liked to analyse the texts and connect the meanings back to her personal life and the world around her.

“My favourite subject this year has been English...I enjoy the tasks within the subject that involve analysing texts in great detail and relating them back to ourselves and the world around us.”

The students provided interesting insights on the school subjects they were participating in. Some subjects they chose were based on simply wanting to get a good ATAR score while with others they were very passionate about and really engaged in the discipline at a deeper level. Subjects in schools provide students opportunities to experience ways of knowing and thinking that provide preliminary insights into the ways these subject discourses can be applied in the world of work. Within these subjects and in their experiences more generally students are receiving feedback on their strengths both formally and informally.

Feedback on strengths.

Feedback on strengths is important for young people to understand what they are good at and the opportunities that may arise from this. Strengths may include or go beyond academic learning to a wider range of capabilities that are valued in society. Throughout the study, the students received ongoing feedback on their own strengths across a range of activities including school subjects, community engagement and extracurricular activities.

Student A.

Student A participated in a religious education camp (Kairos) centred around contemplation and reflection where she was selected as a leader. This role allowed her to use her strengths of public speaking and organisation with informal feedback given from teachers and peers on these areas she was good at.

“I liked being a Kairos leader because it was like a short break during the term where we could reflect on our lives aside from school... I got to use my skills in public speaking because as leaders we had to do some talks...it was a really fun activity and something that you rarely get to do during high school.”

Student J.

Student J participated in the school media team. She was provided positive feedback and encouragement on her photography skills from the school media officer which inspired her to develop her skills more. She felt that the experience allowed her to develop her strengths of attention to detail, technical camera shot skills, creativity, communication, interpersonal and time management skills. The role provided her with informal feedback on her strengths.

“Another area I’m involved in is the media team...I originally got involved because I like photography, and also Mr R was very encouraging. I look up to him and he is another one of my role models.... Mr R talked a lot about getting the emotions in people’s faces...I try capturing special moments and bringing an artistic and creative perspective on the world around us. It helps me develop my creativity, technical ability, keen eye for good detail, good communication and people skills and time management skills.”

Student S.

Student S participated in student ministry activities to help the wider community. She enjoyed organising events and fundraising for those less fortunate. She developed confidence and was provided positive feedback on her interpersonal skills as well as her organisation skills. Both of these areas were her strengths, and she was able to see how they could be used more broadly to help and care for others in the world beyond school.

“I help out with Student Ministry where we aim to help the wider community by organising food stalls, donations and other events to help raise money and essential items for others...the skills used in these activities include the confidence to speak to others and sell them items. I think it’s helped me develop a kind and caring nature and also good leadership and organisation skills to create events and stalls.”

All students participated in career development experiences beyond the classroom that allowed them to access multiple and diverse perspectives on their strengths. Feedback on strengths and capabilities, both formally and informally can help students to align their learning experiences and opportunities to develop these strengths further and see their value and application beyond the classroom. It’s important that students can see the value

of the time and effort that they are putting into their development and feel they are making progress in their lives.

Perceived value of effort.

The amount of time and effort that individuals dedicate to their tasks is commensurate with the value of the perceived outcome of that effort. With a range of competing demands and pressure on young people, it is impossible to devote all of the energy to every task. Many students aim to be strategic with their time and effort often focussing on areas of guaranteed success to preserve their energy.

Student A.

Student A devoted a significant amount of time to her academic studies but was exhausted by the demands. She questioned the value of her efforts based on the future reward and decided to withdraw from one of her subjects.

“This pathway has been quite exhausting because I’m still learning how to juggle all the six subjects...recently in my mind it hasn't been really worth it especially with the exams coming up. I was thinking about dropping one subject.”

Student J.

Student J found balancing her academic studies difficult. She felt she could never devote enough time or effort to any one subject to learn it to the level needed; often feeling she was playing catch up across her whole experience. She felt too much focus was on assessments rather than on the learning process itself and it was very difficult to balance everything.

“I keep questioning whether the amount of effort I'm putting in is really worth it...there's not enough time to do everything well. It's too hard to balance so many subjects and the workloads...there is definitely too much focus on assessments. We don't get time to actually learn the stuff properly; it's straight on to the next thing.”

Student S.

Student S was a dedicated student who worked diligently and devoted a lot of her time to her studies. However, she found it difficult to perform during timed assessments and examinations. She was passionate about learning but was disheartened that her assessment and examination results did not reflect the amount of time and effort she devoted to her studies.

I want to do the best that I can because I've put in a lot of hard work. It's just when it comes to actually sitting the assessments or exams it doesn't really go well...I failed two exams and just passed all the rest...I thought I was more prepared before the exams this year."

All three students indicated that there was often tension between the amount of effort they dedicated to their academic studies and the results they achieved from this effort. Especially when making comparisons to other students and judging themselves based on this. They felt at times the correlation between their effort and perceived personal progress was diluted when they were constantly ranked and judged against the results of other students. They felt education was driven by the need to assess rather than the actual learning process. Despite finding the academic pressures of school challenging all students found connecting with the wider community rewarding in helping them to understand their futures.

Network connections.

Broader network connections beyond school can provide students with greater access to diverse perspectives and feedback. These broader network interactions can provide authentic feedback on an individual's strengths, interests and abilities. Moreover, it can provide more information and a stronger evidence base to make future career decisions.

Student A.

Student A indicated that while school had prepared her with academic skills there was little preparation and skill development on how to engage with a broader network and professional community. She found the initial networking events at university to be challenging but was looking forward to learning from others.

“I guess school has prepared me a bit in terms of academic skills...but what my friends and I have noticed is some skills we don’t have. The law society has started networking...that’s a bit more challenging than I have had to do before. Although I’m not really sure what school could do differently. We were so focussed on exams.”

Student J.

Student J participated in some work experience with a photography business. This allowed her to connect with professionals within the industry and assist them in gaining authentic feedback on how her interest in photography translated into the professional world. Through discussions with her host employer and the opportunity to participate in the placement she decided her photography interest was more of a hobby than something she wanted to pursue for work.

“I did some work experience at Viva! Photography...I liked my host employer L who supervised me on my first day since she saw me as a team member rather than just a student doing work placement...I liked how I was surrounded in a photography type of environment and it opened my eyes to the fact that I liked photography as a hobby rather than a profession...the work experience at Viva Photography! taught me to be realistic.”

Student S.

Student S also completed a work placement. She went to a medical clinic where she was able to shadow nurses and doctors completing their roles. Being immersed in a professional health context allowed her to see a minor surgery that reinforced her passion for surgery and wanting to pursue a medicine pathway. She was able to build her network and engage with professionals to obtain authentic feedback on what working as a health professional was like.

“I had the opportunity to complete some work experience this year at Apollo Health. It’s a medical clinic where patients can have a booking or just walk in...It was my first time I got to see a live minor surgery and since that’s what I want to do, it was really like the best moment ever because I just saw the doctor opening and cutting the patient.”

The students involved in the study had a wide range of connections within their network that offered incidental feedback on the world of work. However, participating in a structured work experience program allowed students to establish a wider network and engage with professionals within industry to assist them to gain authentic feedback on their interests and how they align with the labour market. The opportunity to build their networks and engage with professionals can assist them in enhancing their career decisions.

6.2.8 Summary

Understanding an individual's interests and connecting their interests to education and labour market opportunities is seen as a key role of career guidance practice. Interests are formed through a sense of curiosity combined with positive experiential feedback (Silvia, 2001). In particular, vocational Interests are developed when individuals view themselves as competent in the activity and anticipate that continuing to perform the activity will produce positive and valued outcomes (Blustein et al., 2011; Healy & Bourne, 2011). Themes of school subjects, feedback on strengths, perceived value of effort and network connections were identified in this study. Interests can form in a variety of ways including direct experiences with the world of work. Encounters with the world of work enrich a student's career development experiences (Turner, 2020).

6.2.9 Career development activities

Engagement with the world around us is fundamental to the process of learning as individuals adapt to their experiences and environment (Bransford et al., 2000). Environmental stimulation affects brain development across the lifespan. An individual's brain develops and is shaped by their own unique set of experiences and environmental influences that provide opportunities to develop brain connectivity and more sophisticated representations of knowledge through generalisation, categorisation and problem solving strategies (National Academies of Sciences Engineering and Medicine, 2018). Participation in a broad range of activities can assist in the developmental process. Participation in activities that require active engagement during direct experiential encounters can facilitate career-related learning and development. While activities such as work exposure, work exploration and work experience can have a positive impact on the career-related learning outcomes of students (Turner, 2020); a range of experiential activities can also stimulate career development and growth. The themes identified in this

study were employment, community engagement, extracurricular activities as well as personal travel experiences.

Employment.

All of the students were engaged in part-time employment during the study; although this was not sustained for the entirety of the study for various reasons. This allowed them to develop a range of employability skills and engage in career and work learning.

Student A.

Student A commenced working in fast food and then moved into a retail role. She learned a range of employability skills including technical skills related to her hospitality and retail roles as well as developing interpersonal skills to assist with customer service.

“I am currently working at Officeworks. I do a range of job roles such as working at the registers, filling in stock and working at Print and Copy. I also assist customers by guiding them through the store or by assisting them with what things they need.”

Student J.

Student J worked in retail pharmacy and enjoyed the role as it connected to her future aspirations of working in healthcare. She developed a range of employability skills and enjoyed interacting with customers and helping them with the over-the-counter medicines that they needed.

“I still work in my part time job as a pharmacy assistant...my main tasks are being on the register, cleaning shelves, restocking shelves, helping customers and sometimes doing over the counter work dispensing medicines. At the moment it's been a lot of cleaning because there's not a lot to do but stock counts. Sometimes I do the dispensation counter at the back of the store where I would give over the counter medication. I like this better as it gives me a chance to learn about health and helping people with their conditions.”

Student S.

Student S commenced working in retail pharmacy and then transitioned into fast food work. While she did not find this work rewarding her decision was based on shorter shifts that allowed her to balance her studies and work. The retail pharmacy work involved whole day shifts and she was unable to balance this while also studying.

“I have a part-time job at Oporto which is a Portuguese fast food restaurant. I didn’t want to work in fast food but I needed to work somewhere and nowhere was hiring so I decided to apply there. The role involves me working at the fryer and also managing the drive through and front counter so I can assist customers with their orders and pack their foods. It also involves cleaning the working area and restocking items.”

Engaging in part-time employment provides young people with many benefits including the development of employability skills, knowledge of work environments, expectations, tasks and roles, an extended professional network and opportunities for reflection on future career aspirations. All three students had the opportunity to engage in part-time work to gain valuable real world feedback on their capabilities as well as build independence and confidence.

Community engagement.

All three students were engaged more widely through their communities by participating in activities within and beyond school. These engagements provided the students with enriched opportunities and a sense of belonging.

Student A.

Student A enjoyed using her baking skills to connect with her peer community. This provided her with opportunities to establish stronger relationships within the school community; often beyond her normal peer group. It also provided her with recognition for her skills. This engagement contributed positively to others as well as herself.

“I like making food because I like feeding people. Before the year 12s officially left school, I baked brownies for them. Also, when we went to Kairos camp I made cinnamon rolls for the people in our dorms...it’s also satisfying when I finish baking and it tastes and looks exactly like how I want it to.”

Student J.

Student J volunteered in an aged care residence that allowed her to connect with her community and extend her understanding of how important it is to recognise the contributions of older generations. She enjoyed engaging at the centre and found it very rewarding.

“I also did some volunteering at the Harold Hawthorne Centre... I remember talking to two nice old ladies and they were so nice and telling me about their nieces and families. This experience really changed my perspective of older people.”

Student S.

Student S volunteered at the Buddhist festival to sell food to donate to charity. She was able to learn a range of skills and build her confidence while also giving back to her community. She enjoyed the experience and wants to continue volunteering in future years.

“Every year my Dad’s restaurant volunteers to sell typical Nepalese food on both days at Buddha’s Birthday Celebration in the City. Although my dad takes Nepalese food from the restaurant to sell there he doesn’t get any money as it all goes to charity...being involved helps me build my confidence, knowledge of the different foods and the event planning. I really liked the positive attitude from both the volunteers and the customers.”

Engaging in the wider community offers many benefits to the students and the community itself. There is the opportunity to become part of a group to build a sense of belonging and acceptance. During community volunteering, there is also an opportunity to engage with others to achieve shared goals of a wider mission as well as develop a range of personal capabilities.

Extracurricular.

Schools often provide many extracurricular activities for students to participate in. These activities provide opportunities for learning and growth outside of the classroom setting. The skills and capabilities students learn from participation in extracurricular activities can be invaluable in preparing them for life beyond school.

Student A.

Student A was nominated to the student council as a volunteer to assist with whole school events and year group activities. While she was hoping for an opportunity to engage in leadership and make improvements to the school her main tasks involved working collaboratively in planning and organising socials and school competitions. The opportunity to participate in this group allowed her to develop teamwork and event planning skills.

“I am a volunteer on the Student Representative Council (SRC)...who hope to make improvements to the school...working together as a team... putting together socials and organising the school activity cup competition.”

Student J.

Student J was selected as the school media captain. This position provided opportunities to coordinate the media coverage of all school activities and events. She then had the added responsibility of managing and editing the media content to be used for school publications. This role allowed her to develop her interpersonal, teamwork and organisational skills; however, this was a lot to balance given all of her other commitments.

“I am the school Media Captain this year...I oversee all events needing media coverage. I run...the two teams...allocate events and organise where students are going to take photos. I also...organise the cameras and then edit and save all of the photos that come back in... it's not hard work but it is a bit time consuming.”

Student S.

Student S was successful in her application as the student leader involved in campus ministry. This role provided her the opportunity to work with a team of students to organise fundraisers of money and items to give to charity groups. She developed interpersonal and teamwork skills as well as the opportunity to provide direction for the younger students. It also provided her with a sense of achievement in giving back to those less fortunate.

“I was appointed to the Student Ministry leadership role this year. This involves organising fundraisers for certain charity organisations over the year....it has helped me to develop leadership, patience and listening skills...it makes me really happy seeing the involvement of the school community in assisting those less fortunate.”

All three students took advantage of their extracurricular opportunities participating in a range of student leadership roles. This facilitated their development of capabilities beyond academic skills including growth in communication, teamwork and planning skills. Being involved in activities that provide opportunities to develop skills and capabilities valued in industry and beyond academic settings can prepare students to be more successful in life.

Travel opportunities.

The students all had opportunities to travel internationally and all three students indicated that these experiences impacted their understanding of the world in varying ways. Opportunities to engage in a range of socio-cultural environments can broaden an individual's perspectives on culture and values to develop more nuanced ways of understanding.

Student A.

Student A participated in a school immersion experience in Cambodia. Students travelled to Cambodia to volunteer in disadvantaged communities. They engaged with orphanages and schools to assist in providing food and teaching English. Student A found being immersed in the culture including understanding the history of the Khmer Rouge regime and the mark it left on society to have a significant impact on her.

“One experience that really did open my eyes and challenge me was the Cambodia immersion. I think the hardest part was going into the genocide museum, S21, and also going into the killing fields. It was at the start of the journey where we saw the history...we went over to provide food and help for the disadvantaged children but not really to learn the history; that is why it was so impactful as it was unexpected.”

Student J.

Student J had strong family ties in the Philippines and travelled there from Australia to reconnect and see her extended family. Growing up in Australia provided her the opportunity to compare the lifestyle and opportunities available in both countries. She realised how hard it would be to live in the Philippines permanently and how lucky she was to have the opportunities she had in Australia.

“We go back to the Philippines every two to three years. I think there is a drastic difference between Australia and the Philippines... whenever we go back there's always kids coming up to us and asking for money. When I went back last year, I instantly realized how hard it was to live there.”

Student S.

Student S was involved in a charity organisation who raised funds for disadvantaged children in Nepal. She was involved in weekly virtual video calls with the orphans to provide a sense of connection through companionship and support. This also helped with the development of their English language skills. Student S had the goal of travelling to Nepal after she finished secondary school to meet the orphans in person.

“There's an orphanage in Nepal that my friend's father organised through raising money. It means the Nepalese orphans have somewhere to live... I'm part of a small organisation of six teenagers that Skype call orphans in Nepal. When we talk to them we give them companionship and make good relationships with them... we are hopefully going to go and meet them one day in the future by flying over there when we raise enough money.”

Travel provides experiential opportunities to learn about the world by being exposed to different cultures, perspectives and ways of life. It provides students with new information and experiences to reflect on, and broadens their understanding of the world around them and their place within it. All three students travelled beyond their country of residence to other locations around the world that allowed them to grow and see the world differently.

6.2.10 Summary

Engagement with the world around us is fundamental to the process of learning as individuals adapt to their experiences and environment. Participation in a broad range of activities can assist in the developmental process. Participation in activities that require active engagement during direct experiential encounters can facilitate career-related learning and development. While activities such as work exposure, work exploration and work experience can have a positive impact on the career-related learning outcomes of students (Turner, 2020); a range of experiential activities can also stimulate career development and growth. The themes identified in this study were employment,

community engagement, extracurricular activities as well as personal travel experiences. The participation in career development activities can improve life transitions.

6.2.11 Career and life transitions

Career development is now seen as a lifespan process with transitions through roles and pathways as a continuous process (Riverin-Simard & Simard, 2018). Acknowledging transitions as a continuous process rather than one only at particular points in time increases the complexity of supporting and guiding students on their journey as they traverse a diverse range of social identities, roles, and pathways. Individuals may hold multiple social positions or be transitioning through multiple pathways that are each represented by acceptable social interactions, rules and behaviours. Roles provide individuals with cultural identity and meaning (Bakshi & Fialho, 2018). A range of factors combine to influence roles and pathways differently for everyone as socio-cultural background, identity characteristics and locational differences generate a diversity of social pathway flows and outcomes. This uneven and convoluted transitioning process may advantage some individuals and not others. Themes of pathway and subject choices; support structures; and, self-efficacy were identified during re-transcription.

Pathway and subject choices.

As students transition through secondary school there are more choices to choose a wider range of subjects; in particular, from non-core areas such as the Arts and Practical Technologies. This helps students to identify areas of interest and choose subjects they are more interested in. This often culminates with a pathway selection in senior school that is more aligned preparation for post-school learning. Despite secondary pathways designed to cater for all learners there is often a domination of focus on academic subjects leading to higher education admission.

Student A.

Student A found that she lost interest in a number of subjects in Year 10 after making her selections for Year 11. She felt they lost relevance as she would not need to study them again as part of her pathway and subject choices. She found the transition from Year 10 to Year 11 hard as there were more academic requirements across her subjects. She felt that across her cohort many students struggled with the transition and needed more preparation to be successful.

“In Year 9, I feel like everything we were learning in each subject was still relevant but it was different in Year 10. I think because we had all decided what we liked and were all really focused on what subjects to get into Year 11. This meant whatever subject that we didn't want to do anymore we just didn't care about.”

“The jump from Year 10 to Year 11 is quite significant especially content-wise. The assessments that you're doing and how many things you have to study for is a really big jump. I feel that if schools could close that gap a little it would help more. There wouldn't be as many people crying.”

Student J.

Student J found the transition from her Year 10 studies to her ATAR pathway studies in Year 11 to be a significant challenge. As the academic load and number of assessments increased she found it difficult to balance other areas of her life including her extracurricular and part-time work commitments. She found the transition overwhelming and the amount of academic assessments to be completed too much for her to cope with.

“I think that year 11 ATAR is such a massive jump from Year 10...everything that we did in year 10 is nothing in comparison to what we're doing in Year 11.... I feel like I didn't prepare myself enough as I should have. I was trying to setup an entire timetable and a study plan as to when I needed to have things done by but then, I had too many assessments, shifts at work and extracurricular activities. It got a bit much, a bit crazy.”

Student S.

Student S selected a pathway and subjects that would lead her to become a surgeon. However, her academic results through her journey led to the requirement for her to change some of her subjects or risk not graduating. She perceived that she was forced into selecting alternative ATAR level subjects that she had no interest in and that did not align with her future aspirations in the hope she would improve her ATAR score.

“My struggles have definitely made me consider changes in my studying style where I will aim to learn and understand topics more deeply rather than just memorising information. I definitely feel like I spend more time catching up on the subjects that I changed into than actually enjoying learning the subject....it was difficult to come to terms with changing into subjects you are not interested in simply to get a good ATAR score. But I had no choice.”

Pathway and subject choices featured heavily in students' discussions. What subjects to choose and why to choose them dominated student decision-making processes as they perceived the choice of subject to have a significant impact on their ATAR score, which in turn was a gateway to achieving their future aspirations. While students were generally interested in the subjects they were choosing some of their perceptions indicated that these decisions were a means to an end; more a process of ticking the boxes required than through genuine interest in advancing their knowledge in any particular field. All three participants attempted to pick subjects aligned to their future aspirations. At the time of subject selection their aspirations were not fully formed and students picked a pathway that would lead them to Medicine entry.

Support structures.

Every school has different support structures to assist students transition through secondary school. These are often highly contextualised and dependent on the school leadership's vision for learning, the values and priorities embedded within that vision as well as the funding and resources to execute their vision with quality and in sustained and meaningful ways. The participants in this study were attending a Catholic school and had access to strong levels of pastoral support. This included multi-age homerooms with a program of specialist wellbeing activities, staff with their main role as wellbeing coordinators and a significant amount of opportunities for extracurricular learning. The students' perceptions of the school culture were mainly positive.

Student A.

Student A participated in a wellbeing camp that helped her connect with peers and teachers in a supportive and trustful environment. This helped her reflect on her progress by opening up and sharing with other members of the community. Many students were struggling with the stress of the ATAR pathway and this camp allowed for them to share their struggles and worries and to receive support and feedback.

“I also got to go on Kairos camp...It was so great talking to the other students and learning about them. Also to teachers as well because they opened up and shared personal things rather than just being someone who has authority over us.”

A lot of us who were doing ATAR got to talk about how stressed we were. It was a good time to reflect that if you do badly in ATAR then it's not the end of the world. The teachers were very supportive of how we were feeling. One of the students in my group was really afraid that her friends weren't going to be her friends anymore because she no longer did ATAR. That broke me and got me emotional because it doesn't matter what you're studying, friends should be your friends regardless.”

Student J.

Student J also attended the wellbeing camp and found that the support offered allowed her to grow emotionally and to provide her and her friends with a new perspective on things. Engaging in the process of opening up and sharing problems with others to help find solutions was beneficial and rewarding for her.

“I also got to participate in the Kairos camp retreat....I enjoyed the life graph, the forgiveness session and developing Interpersonal and communication skills. The positive atmosphere that allowed to me to emotionally develop and gain a new perspective on things. I think Kairos was the most helpful experience for me. My friend said ever since I attended Kairos she felt I was less tense. I feel like having this of kind of understanding about yourself and your problems and having people help you find solutions was so beneficial.”

Student S.

Student S didn't specifically access as many school support opportunities but was very aware of her own wellbeing and engaged in meditation and mindfulness activities to help her wellbeing. Unfortunately, she had relatives pass away at the start of Year 11 and it impacted her academic scores which she never recovered from meaning she 'subject hopped' for the remainder of her pathway due to failing the subjects she was passionate about. Some students will pick any subject regardless of interest just to have the

opportunity to stay in an ATAR pathway. Despite this Student S developed resilience through her journey and strategies to assist her in balancing her wellbeing needs and academic requirements.

“On top of my school work I also had some of my relatives pass away. Since that, everything was very difficult to balance. I had school so I couldn't miss out on that to help me process the loss. There was a big week of tests which meant we had four tests over the week. It was really hard to prepare for them at that time.”

“I do my meditation before I study and then sometimes I push it back to right before I go to sleep so it is relaxing before. I go to sleep straight away after meditation.”

All three students felt they were generally supported through the school structures to make positive transitions in their developmental journey. Although the structures of support were in place, the students still lost confidence in their abilities frequently as they engaged in ATAR studies.

Self-efficacy.

An individual's belief in their ability to achieve their goals is essential for life success (Berzonsky, 2011). Adolescents need to be supported through the customisation of goals and experiences that offer the right amount of challenge to extend them (Tang, 2019). Feedback on the strategies students are using is essential for healthy failure where young people understand that it is the strategies that were employed rather than the person themselves who failed. This allows students the chance to develop a growth mindset and maintain a positive self-concept rather than the erosion of their confidence (Niles et al., 2019).

Student A.

Student A found the transition from Year 10 to Year 11 challenging. The expectations were greater and everything seemed rushed without an opportunity to build deeper knowledge over a longer period. There were limited comparisons between the Year 10 curriculum content grades and the Year 11 ATAR grades leaving her with a sense of not knowing if she was doing well or not. This doubt can erode students' confidence as they worry about whether they are good enough or not.

"We don't understand how everything goes to our grade and the importance of the syllabus and all of the rules around ATAR. If there was more opportunity for understanding and letting us get to know our courses and build deeper knowledge over a longer period of time it would help. Instead everything is so rushed."

Student J.

Student J found the ATAR pathway disheartening and contributed to lowering her self-esteem. As she doubted her abilities she started to lack confidence and belief in herself and what she could achieve which then caused her motivation levels to fall. Despite feeling she had put a significant amount of time and effort into her studies her academic results did not align with her perceived effort.

"But it's been really disheartening lately, especially because ATAR's so good at lowering your self-esteem, like about your abilities, so I think that I've been lacking a lot of motivation again, because I feel like, I have really put so much effort in but the reward or the results are not there."

Student S.

Student S employed a range of different strategies to be successful in her learning and studies but still failed on multiple occasions. She felt she was forced into subjects she had no interest in to generate an ATAR score. Her struggles to engage with subjects led her to understand that she needed to have a passion for the subject to be motivated and successful in her learning.

"I believe that failure has highly impacted my perspective towards my learning and thoughts about careers and work. After failing multiple times, despite changing routines and studying harder, it made me realise that passion was a key component to excelling in a subject or at least doing well...It's hard because some ATAR subjects I have no passion for, but I'm forced to do them to get an ATAR score."

Throughout the study, the students experienced an erosion of confidence and belief in being able to achieve their academic goals. Academic goals were standardised based on the ATAR rather than personalised and often linked via statistical means to potential

admission outcomes that were far removed from the control of students, disempowering them and their sense of agency. The lived experiences of the students participating in the ATAR process seemed to be the cause of unnecessary stress and anxiety; with students experiencing low levels of self-esteem and belief in themselves. The current academic model seems unhelpful in supporting young people in their quest for self-understanding, personal development and socio-cultural acceptance.

6.2.11 Summary

Career development is now seen as a lifespan process with transitions through roles and pathways as a continuous process (Riverin-Simard & Simard, 2018). Students are undergoing a continuous process of transition as they traverse a diverse range of social identities, roles, and pathways. Students may hold multiple social positions or be transitioning through multiple pathways that are each represented by acceptable social interactions, rules and behaviours. Roles provide individuals with cultural identity and meaning (Bakshi & Fialho, 2018). A range of factors combine to influence roles and pathways differently for everyone as socio-cultural background, identity characteristics and locational differences generate a diversity of social pathway flows and outcomes. This uneven and convoluted transitioning process may advantage some individuals and not others. Themes of pathway and subject choices; support structures; and, self-efficacy were identified during this study. It is important to support students throughout their journey and to provide opportunities for young people to provide feedback on structures and processes that they find useful in supporting their learning, growth and development.

6.3 Analysis of student survey feedback

The students' perceptions of participating in the career narrative co-reflection process provided some emerging themes. These common themes are discussed and provide positive preliminary feedback from the student's perspective on the use of the narrative co-reflection process within their individual guidance and pathway planning. These emergent themes are listed below and include:

- Relationship of trust
- Understanding self
- Awareness of influences
- Sense of purpose
- Realistic goals

- Clearer steps and strategies
- Wellbeing support

6.3.1 Relationship of trust

Establishing a relationship of trust is critical to the success of the narrative co-reflection process. This element of guidance practice is challenging in traditional school environments as there are often limited resources with guidance more transactional in nature. Opportunities to establish trust are sometimes hampered by the amount of time spent together due to counsellor to student ratios. A trusting relationship is based on a mutual understanding of expectations and roles within the relationship with elements of respect, integrity, competence and personal regard all important. In career guidance counselling, personal regard refers to extending beyond the bare minimum of the process to personalise the experience for the client to demonstrate genuine care and investment in the relationship (M. Holland, 2015). Trust is established through time, familiarity and mutual respect. Young people need to feel relaxed and comfortable to open up and share their true thoughts, feelings and experiences.

Student A.

“The process was quite relaxed and it was like having a normal conversation rather than interview, which made the whole process comfortable.”

Student J.

“The process...was a comfortable process that felt like I was just having a casual conversation with someone, thus making it feel comfortable to open up about things.”

Student S.

“The interview allowed me to feel safe and comfortable...I was able to open up about my life along with how it affected my goals and overall career.”

The importance of establishing trust during the guidance process allowed students to feel safe and to be completely open when responding. All participants found the structure of the co-reflection and narrative guidance process comfortable. The process and narrative approach empowered students to feel they had ownership and shared engagement in the research process. They were the authors of their stories and wanted to contribute

accurately and share their experiences so it may help others in the future not only themselves.

6.3.2 Understanding self

The formation of vocational identity and the building of self-awareness is a complex and meta-systemic process. Providing participants in the co-reflection process with appropriate scaffolding through the journaling and guidance interviews facilitated the time needed to engage in deeper self-reflection.

Student A.

“(we) went through who I was as a person and how it relates to (my) goals. It...helped me to analyse my personality and showed the how and the why of myself.”

Student J.

“We discussed my journal on my career pathway, background, hobbies, likes and dislikes and the impacts of these things on shaping who I am... through the interview, I was better able to understand the impact that my experiences had on my career development.”

Student S.

“The career journals really affected me as it provided me the opportunity to allocate some time for me to think about my life goals and what is going on in my life. I am very grateful for this opportunity as it has really organised my thoughts regarding my future.”

All three students provided positive feedback that the process provided them with opportunities to reflect on their own identity and develop a clearer understanding of themselves and their futures.

6.3.3 Awareness of influences

There is a complex array of socio-cultural factors that influence vocational identity formation and career decision-making processes. Providing learning opportunities so that students can develop awareness and reflect on the factors that are shaping their futures can empower students and improve future outcomes.

Student A.

“...helped me to understand how the people around me, such as my family and friends, and my interests help to shape what type of career path I take.”

Student J.

“The career narrative interview helped me better understand that one's experiences and context have a major influence on the career pathways that we choose in the future...and given a better sense of awareness in my decision to go down such a career pathway.”

Student S.

“...was really positive as it constantly allowed me to think through my current life decisions and how it can affect my overall future. During each interview session, I was able to open up about my life along with how it affected my goals and overall career.”

All of the students developed a greater awareness of the socio-cultural factors shaping their lives and how these impacted their career and life decisions. The students were empowered through the process to develop more awareness of their unique influences.

6.3.4 Sense of purpose

It is significantly important for young people to be able to connect their education experiences to their futures. This has positive outcomes for mental health and wellbeing as well as academic achievement and future prospects.

Student A.

“I think the career narrative process was really good because I've actually got the bigger picture of what I'm really doing in my last two years of high school...this process has helped me to understand what I want to achieve in the future.”

Student J.

“I gained a lot of knowledge and a big push towards my career goals as I was provided advice and given recommendations on how I could get closer to achieving such career goals.”

Student S.

“I definitely think the career narrative process helped me because my life is busy and I got to sit down and talk about what’s actually going on in various aspects of my life. And really talking about it, because sometimes you may just touch upon some things. Then the process let me think deeper into and I realized, “Oh, I could do this better, or I shouldn’t have done that.” I get to think about it, reflect on myself.”

All three participants indicated that the process provided them with opportunities to reflect on the ‘bigger picture’ and connect their schooling to their career aspirations and goals. This provided all of the students with a greater sense of purpose, focus and direction.

6.3.5 Realistic goals

Setting realistic goals and understanding the different types of strategies that can assist in achieving those goals is important. Students need time for feedback and review of their short term goals and how they relate to their longer term ‘bigger picture’ goals. Students should be supported in schools to plan, review and refine their career goals continually.

Student A.

“It...kept me focussed on my goal because I wasn’t thinking about how scary or intimidating going to university was. At the end of the semester I was also kind of feeling disappointed with my results however through the process I was reminded that my results were in fact okay and matched my goal.”

Student J.

“Through understanding the requirements of my preferred course as well as being given an insight into the future of my preferred career, the career narrative process has helped me plan.”

Student S.

“I learnt to think realistically about what I wish to do in the future. By creating goals during the interviews, regarding my career, along with sharing those goals, I was able to achieve most of them which allowed me to become one-step closer to my overall goals....it allowed me to distinguish between goals that were realistic and goals that just seemed achievable in my head. The interview allowed me to think realistically and understand the hard work and long process to achieving my goals.”

The three students developed career planning and goal setting skills throughout the process. This allowed them to be more engaged in career thinking to be realistic about what they could achieve, how to go about it and what it would lead them to in the future.

6.3.6 Clearer steps and strategies

While many schools provide opportunities for students to set goals, this process is often done once or twice a year with no support to develop advanced planning and goal setting skills. Goals are often set in isolation linked to a particular subject and often around achieving a mark or grade. Students need guidance and expertise to help them understand their overarching project goals and to break down these goals into clear steps and strategies linked to their futures.

Student A.

“The interview helped me to perceive what type of steps I might take or need to take right now and in the future... it also helped me to recognise what I should be doing now and how these actions will impact my future... the process really allowed my goal to be broken down to easier stages.”

Student J.

Year 11 was quite a challenging year for me, but through this process I was able to confidently drop subjects that I wasn't performing my best in and also create goals to grow a step closer to achieving my desired career.”

Student S.

“After planning and organising my route to that certain goal, it seemed more realistic and achievable. This process has helped in allowing me to plan my future which seemed so difficult that I thought it was impossible at first but then became realistic and achievable.”

6.3.7 Wellbeing support

All students should receive the wellbeing support that they need throughout school. Providing opportunities for students to talk about their futures and goals with trusted adults who can help listen and guide them has positive mental health benefits and can provide a stronger platform for student achievement.

Student A.

“I think going through the career narrative process was a really positive experience because it allowed me to see the little parts I needed to do in school to achieve my goals. I think it was really helpful and I feel like other students should have something like this, especially when they feel a little lost in what they want to do after high school.”

Student J.

“Meeting so many times in year 11 when I was so lost and so stressed about my future was really important. I really appreciated talking to someone who had expertise and could provide me with the advice that really helped a lot. I think I would have been a lot more lost and a lot more stressed with ATAR if I didn't have this to help me.”

Student S.

“Being able to have guidance as well was very helpful. I feel like we are like the special students who got to be involved and yeah, it's helped definitely.”

All three students took something different away from the process in relation to their wellbeing support. This was because each student is unique and needs specific feedback and guidance to move confidently into their future. The co-reflection process was positive for all students and helped support their mental health and wellbeing.

6.4 Summary

This chapter provided a content analysis of the phenomenarrative texts presented in Chapter 5. The first part focussed on making visible the students' perceptions through the emerging themes arising from the phenomenarratives. The themes that emerged from the analysis that made visible the students' perceptions of their career-related experiences that shaped their career development included: family support, international worldview, ethnic heritage, educational values, academic goals, future aspirations, competing value propositions, limiting stress, healthy wellbeing, personal and cultural role-models, media participation, school subjects, feedback on strengths, perceived value in effort, network connections, employment, community engagement, extracurricular, personal travel, pathway and subject choices, support structures and self-efficacy. The second part focused on the student feedback provided on participating in the career narrative co-reflection process. Themes that emerged from the student feedback on the narrative guidance co-reflection process included: relationship of trust, understanding self, awareness of influences, sense of purpose, realistic goals, clearer steps and strategies and wellbeing support.

Chapter Seven discusses the emergent themes arising from the analysis within this chapter in more depth and connects it to the pertinent literature that situates this study. It provides a discussion of each of the themes and their relevance to understanding the lived experiences of the students explored within this study before making some recommendations on future focus and how student secondary school transitions could be supported more effectively within the ever changing economic landscape we find ourselves within.

Chapter Seven: Discussion and Future Focus

7.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion of the findings in relation to current understandings in the literature. It discusses the emergent themes that arose from the phenomenarratives and survey results through connection with the literature and makes pertinent recommendations for consideration. This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are students' perceptions of the career-related learning experiences that shape their career development?
2. What are students' perceptions of using a narrative co-reflection process as part of their individual guidance and pathway planning?

In Phase One of the research, the students' perceptions were collected, re-transcribed and re-storied into the phenomenarratives. In Phase Two of the research, the phenomenarratives and feedback surveys were analysed for any emergent themes. The themes from Phase Two are compiled in Table 7.1 and discussed in this chapter in relation to the wider literature. Recommendations for future focus based on the literature, students' perceptions and emergent themes are also discussed.

Table 7.1*Combined emergent themes from students' perceptions*

Co-reflection elements	Emergent themes	
Personal context and background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family support • International worldview • Ethnic heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational values • Relationship of trust
Career aspirations, goals and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future aspirations • Academic goals • Limiting stress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competing value propositions • Healthy wellbeing • Realistic goals
Influences on career development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal role-models • Cultural role-models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media participation • Awareness of influences
Formation of vocational interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School subjects • Feedback on strengths • Perceived value of effort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network connections • Understanding self
Career development activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment • Community engagement • Extracurricular 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel opportunities • Sense of purpose
Career and life transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathway and subject choices • Support structures • Self-efficacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing support • Clearer steps and strategies

7.2 Discussion of the students' perceptions

This study provided a snapshot into the students' perceptions of their career development journey from year 10 to their first year of post-school education and some important themes emerged from their stories. The themes are discussed in relation to the wider literature.

7.2.1 Personal context and background

The study provided visibility on some emergent themes including the importance of family support, a global perspective, ethnicity and education values through the phenomenarratives and the importance of establishing a relationship of trust through the narrative co-reflection process. Individuals' cultural contexts and identities shape their worldview and impact the meanings ascribed to their vocational identity and their career

development concerns. Intersecting dimensions of culture and identity often combine to shape meanings of a person's position in society related to gender, social class and ethnicity and the opportunities and barriers that individuals may experience in relation to this. The understanding of a client's personal background through direct and indirect inquiry can reveal hidden and complex influences on an individual's cultural identity and context (N. Arthur, 2019).

In this study this significance was highlighted in understanding the background and culture of the students. All students prioritised strong familial connections and valued opportunities that the education system could provide them; especially in comparison to their countries of ethnic heritage. Understanding the unique kaleidoscope of each student's personal background allows educators to build stronger relationships and personalise the learning experiences for each student. During the study it became apparent how important it was to connect with the students on a deeper level to understand their unique personal circumstances and provide them with a reflective conduit to better understand themselves and their own context. Understanding the unique socio-cultural factors experienced by an individual assists in creating meaning in their lives to engage with the world at large. It is central in supporting the personal learning and growth of young people. Approaches that prioritise cross-cultural understanding through intercultural dialogue to co-construct meaning in situ with a focus on the relevance of the personal cultural context of the individual have the opportunity to have a positive impact (Ribeiro, 2020). Developing strong relational connections has been shown to improve an individual's wellbeing, enhance their career decision-making and employment opportunities as well as build strong networks of role models and mentors (Popadiuk, 2019).

Understanding and connecting with personal context can also provide insight into the social capital available to the individual including the quantity and quality of relationships that can provide opportunities for development and support; the structure of social networks including reliability and diversity; and, and the ability an individual has to mobilise relationships including the mindsets and skills needed to activate relationships (Charania & Freeland Fisher, 2020). Students were very receptive in seeking to understand their own networks and opportunities during the guidance process within this study. The unique opportunity structure for each student differed and it was challenging to see many assumptions made by educators when simply reducing learners to their 'cognitive' aptitude and providing a narrow definition of individual progress and success based on academic

understanding in isolation. There was a richness and greater sense of collaboration when exploring the interplay of the interconnected social, emotional and cultural elements of students' identity formation and how these shape and influence engagement with academic learning.

This study highlighted the deeper more complex socio-cultural factors at play indicated through the students' thoughts and perceptions. This richness also indicated the depth and potential for growth to support young people to develop holistically rather than a reductionist approach that narrows an individual's worth based solely on academic grades. This study highlighted that a more effective way to support students to learn and grow would be to shift the focus from content-centred to learner-centred education. Students benefit when they feel safe (psychologically and physically), feel like they belong (through nurturing relationships and community connection), develop awareness (of the intersection of self and their socio-encultured environmental setting) in order to set authentic goals for growth (transformation and development of their cognitive, social and emotional domains) to make personal developmental progress towards their life aspirations.

7.2.2 Career aspirations, goals and planning

Emergent themes of future aspirations, academic goals, competing value propositions, limiting stress and healthy wellbeing arose from the phenomenarratives; and, the importance of realistic goals from the survey feedback. Aspirations are the hopes and dreams that an individual has for the future. The achievement of life aspirations is closely linked with the achievement of career aspirations as the opportunities for social mobility and advancement are improved through positive work and labour market outcomes. This study highlighted how important the process was of supporting students to develop their aspirations and providing them with clear steps and strategies to achieve them. Career development and work aspirations can be achieved through careful planning and strategic goal setting (Arthur et al., 2017).

Career planning is more than simply making a choice or decision about the type of work to participate in; rather, it is about optimising resources within the individual's ecosystem to identify vocational goals that will have positive impacts and benefits while also calibrating the sustainability of efforts made to maximise the chances of achieving the goals (Tang, 2019). This was evident with students in this study who shifted their aspirations in relation to academic feedback with a focus on needing to limit their stress and also balance the

competing value propositions from all areas of their lives, not just academic achievement. As students became more aware of their own personal context it allowed them to exercise more control and build confidence in responding to challenges in a proactive way. Individuals who engage in more proactive career behaviours also enhance their chances of achieving career goal success. Career behaviours such as career planning, skill development, career consultation and network building also improve the chance of accomplishing career goals (Clements & Kamau, 2018).

Understanding the career goals and projects that people are aspiring to achieve is essential in supporting a person's career development. Career and life goals in general are often organised into 'projects' that include a range of specific goals and strategies to help individuals make personal progress. In this study it became apparent that the overarching 'project' for students was the process of transitioning from adolescence into independent adulthood. While student goals did include realistic academic achievement that would lead to higher education admission this was only part of the picture; students were also committed to developing a strong social network and sense of belonging within a community; as well as seeking family approval and acceptance of the increasingly independent decisions being made by the student. Wellbeing and health goals also played a role within their projects as the young people in this study seemed more aware of their mental health needs and the importance of mental wellbeing.

However, career development goals also involve the exploring, refining and testing of interests, strengths and aspirations through iterative research and experiences aimed at developing a stronger evidence-base within their cognitive network of work, career and vocational schemata. This repository of evidence can provide a framework to create and align future goals. Feedback on the evidence-base through immersion in real world situations or connections to authentic contexts improves the quality of the evidence-base more than theoretical career research or 'imagined' situations and contexts. In this study, students had limited time to engage in experiences to develop their career learning and thinking. Career development goals for youth are often reduced to the learning of standardised content within a discipline area; with goals set around grade achievement instead of learning experiences that help students to develop a repository of evidence linked to their future aspirations. The goals are often extrinsic in nature and disconnected from students developing a more salient vocational identity and future decision-making evidence-base. Grades and academic achievement often act as the 'trees' blocking the

view for students as they strive to see the 'forest'. Grades and academic achievement are a means to an end not the end itself; a vehicle for students to achieve their future aspirations; not the aspiration itself. The fixation on grade achievement rather than on the learning experiences that will help shape a young person's identity is a concern and did dominate a significant portion of the guidance process. This is a linear and narrow focus on the goals of course completion and advancement in discipline knowledge rather than a holistic focus on the individual student's meta-project that seeks to understand their unique constellation of interests, strengths and aspirations and how they connect to their futures.

Trends such as globalisation, technological advancement, urbanisation, sustainability and demographic change will continue to reshape the economic landscape (Hajkovicz et al., 2016). Relying on a traditional education system that uses academic achievement only as a sorting proxy for employability and opportunity stratification may have negative consequences that further drive a widening skills gap and generational disadvantage. New metrics of success within the education system could have far reaching benefits (Milligan, Luo, Toshiko, Rice, & Kheang, 2020) and allow for a personalised focus to support young people to achieve their aspirations.

In particular, in mid-adolescence around fifteen years of age students executive function skills develop to allow them to reflect on, build awareness of and challenge their own evidence-base to review earlier circumscription decisions (Westwell & Panizzon, 2011). The setting of career development goals that provide connection to and immersion within real and authentic work contexts provides an improvement in the quality of feedback so students can develop a more salient vocational identity schema with a stronger evidence-based to align their career-related decision-making. This study highlighted a gap in secondary school structures and experiences that could assist students to have a more effective career development experience during school; one that develops confidence in their trajectory and purpose in their academic learning. Academic goal setting should be a clear subset of an overarching career development project that could be the central tenet of any curriculum. This type of project builds engagement and purpose and provides visibility of the influences that are shaping a young person's identity and development.

7.2.3 Influences on career development

Themes of personal role models, cultural role models, media participation and awareness of influences were identified as influential in this study. The unique contextual forces that

make up an individual's subjective and intersubjective experiences significantly influence the trajectory of an individual's life course. The access to resources, support and opportunities that an individual has impacts on the quality of decision-making and actions one undertakes (Cournoyer & Lachance, 2019). The complex interplay of the contextual forces that exert influence is unique to the individual. Within this study, a range of systemic influences shaping the students' vocational identity, learning and development opportunities and the education pathways they participated in became visible. Influences can have a significant impact on the career development process. Students are often unaware of the personal, social and cultural factors exerting an influence on their experience of the world. These influences provide a melting pot of understanding that often connects to the peripheries of an individual's vocational identity schema; becoming assimilated within the schema as it develops into a more complex system.

In this study, the participants were very engaged in exploring different factors influencing them and seemed empowered as their awareness of the influences shaping their experience increased. In particular, the personal and cultural role models that students indicated were important to help them explore their personal situation on a deeper level. The co-reflection process assisted students in uncovering the complex interplay of contextual influences shaping their experience. The storied discussion on role-models, characters and settings that the participants were naturally drawn to through the cultural texts they engage with provided richness and meaning. The discussion of role-models and why the students admired them and connected to the challenges that they faced helped the students reflect. It also provided an opportunity for the development of self-narratability skills to help students organise their understanding of what was important to them and to clarify why it was important. This in turn helped them to build confidence in their ability to make decisions and to take action steps. The co-reflection process incorporated storied discussion, facilitating self-clarification and empowering individuals to develop confidence in achieving their goals, curiosity to seek new learning experiences, positive concern to reflect and engage in the career planning process to provide more control of their life course and direction (Savickas, 2012).

Engagement with media also provided significant influence. In an information-enriched age, the sphere of cultural influence for young people is extended beyond traditional physical boundaries and they are more frequently engaged through wider networks of socio-cultural influences. This can be both positive, in opportunities for access to more

diverse media and information, and negative, in accessing media and information that may have hidden agendas. Given this, young people should be supported in school to build awareness of the influences shaping their development and to engage with their influences in more critical and discerning ways. Many socio-cultural influences on young people are curated representations often with embedded bias rather than direct or authentic real-world connections. The recent advances in artificial technology further underline the need for critical thinking skills when engaging online with a subculture of deep fake images created by artificial intelligence already emerging. It is important that students be provided with time and support to develop strategies to understand themselves and how they fit in the world. The inclusion of a reflective process to understand the influences that shape the formation of vocational interests is also important and could enhance the effectiveness of the career learning process.

7.2.4 Formation of vocational interests

The emergence of themes including school subjects, feedback on strengths, perceived value of effort, network connections and understanding of self all contributed to the formation of vocational interests. Understanding an individual's interests and connecting their interests to education and labour market opportunities is seen as a key role of career guidance practice (Cedefop et al., 2019). Interests are formed through a sense of curiosity combined with positive experiential feedback in three main ways: magnification; transformation and appropriation. Magnification occurs when an individual's engagement in an experience provides a positive outcome and the individual seeks to engage in similar experiences providing a developmental cascade effect. Transformation is when an individual combines different experiences based on positive outcomes into a new combination of interest activity creating a unique interest area; and appropriation is when an individual uses others' experiences as feedback to engage in new interest areas (Silvia, 2001). In particular, vocational Interests are developed when individuals view themselves as competent in the activity and anticipate that continuing to perform the activity will produce positive and valued outcomes (Blustein et al., 2011; Healy & Bourne, 2011).

This study provided insights into how students formed vocational interests and the knowledge-base they used for their career-related decision-making. The formation of vocational interests is an important part of the learning process so that students can see relevance in their education journey. In this study, students relied significantly on their experience of school subjects to help define their future interests. While curiosity of

discipline content provided a foundational interest it was tempered by the feedback the students experienced on their proficiency within the subject. If students perceived positive feedback on their strengths related to the discipline it impacted on their motivation and the value they placed on the continued effort needed to develop within the discipline area. Unfortunately, proficiency feedback within the school system is not based solely on personal mastery but also comparatively to the rankings of other students. This caused conflict when a student had an interest in the subject but received negative feedback based on their progress benchmarked against other students or standardised age-based grade descriptors. Students sometimes had to withdraw from subjects they had an interest in due to grade-based feedback. Students found this frustrating as often they indicated that if they had more time and learning wasn't driven by a perceived assessment-first regime they would have more chance of personal mastery. This meant students were making subject decisions not on curiosity or interest but on what they could score the best on for the higher education admission process.

Further to these limitations of accessing school subjects that support the development of vocational interests the subjects themselves did not always provide the most effective learning of the discipline in real world practice. Students were often learning content that can be easily assessed to allow for a ranking process rather than applying their knowledge to real world scenarios or simulated situations (Masters, 2011; Milligan et al., 2020). This was a missed opportunity within the learning experience if the goal of learning is to support the formation of future aspirations, so students make well-informed decisions for their futures. A perceived relevance of subjects to the student's future also impacted decision-making. Students wanted to ensure they were expending their learning efforts into something worthwhile and would have positive outcomes for their future.

While school subjects did influence the formation of vocational interests the students' network connections also played a significant role (Charania & Freeland Fisher, 2020). Students made references to career-related thinking and ideas appropriated from their peers, family and wider communities that they were engaged within. Students often combined feedback on their strengths from a range of sources to develop a more salient understanding of self and the possibilities that they had for the future. While interests can be appropriated through connections with others stronger vocational interests are formed through direct experiences.

Direct career-related learning experiences can be planned through a scope and sequence from the commencement of schooling if a whole school approach to career development is supported. While exposure at the younger years is important to develop vocational awareness it becomes even more important in a secondary school setting as young people need to make informed decisions and choices as they plan for post-school opportunities. Direct experiences such as participating in authentic real-world activities through excursions, work experience, or work taster activities at open days, expos or workplace visits can have significant benefits (Turner, 2020). There is also the opportunity for direct vocational experiences to become personalised and curated with and for the young person rather than a standardised approach.

Furthermore, simply having the experience is not enough unless it is supported by a pedagogy that scaffolds the students' reflection and discussion of the experiences to understand the personal relevance and the links to their own context. This can provide a deeper understanding of a young person's strengths and engagement throughout vocational activities and see the real-world value of their strengths and interests and the opportunities that may arise from further engagement and development in this vocational area.

7.2.5 Career development activities

Students in this study participated in a range of career development activities with themes emerging around employment, community engagement, extracurricular activities, personal travel and a sense of purpose. Engagement with the world around us is fundamental to the process of learning as individuals adapt to their experiences and environment.

Environmental stimulation affects brain development across the lifespan. An individual's brain develops and is shaped by their own unique set of experiences and environmental influences that provide opportunities to develop brain connectivity and more sophisticated representations of knowledge through generalisation, categorisation and problem solving strategies (National Academies of Sciences Engineering and Medicine, 2018).

Participation in a broad range of activities can assist in the developmental process. Participation in activities that require active engagement during direct experiential encounters can facilitate career-related learning and development. Although all activities can provide a platform for vocational identity formation; activities such as work exposure, work exploration and work experience can have a positive impact on the career-related

learning outcomes of students (Turner, 2020). This study provides insight into the disproportionate value placed on particular learning experiences over others. Too often the narrow academic focus of education disenfranchises other learning experiences that offer students so much more in the way of personal and career development. Employment, community engagement and extracurricular activities all contributed positively to student learning and development with as much value, if not more, than some of their academic studies.

Although these activities are not core within the curriculum and valued in the same way that grades are the outcomes of recognising their value alongside academic proficiency could be significant. For example, activities that provide opportunities for work exposure through direct encounters with employers can reduce the risk of unemployment and can increase total salary earnings over a lifetime; address gaps in employability skills development; broaden career opportunity horizons and raise aspirations of students; and, improve engagement with academic learning through connection to the real world. Activities that provide opportunities for work exploration can improve understanding of up-to-date labour market information to improve career development decisions; improve student career planning skills; and, strengthen networks. Evidence also demonstrates activities such as work experience support students to develop and practise career management and employability skills; improve business, organisation and labour market understandings; gain important insights into their career interests and values; improve labour market opportunities and extend networks; provide valuable experience that all potential employers value highly (The Career & Enterprise Company, 2018). Participation in career development activities can improve life transitions.

In this study, all of the participants referred to career development activities including part-time employment, community volunteering and extracurricular involvement when reflecting on their aspirations, skills, interests and strengths. These activities were interwoven into their understanding of vocational self and contributed to their career decision-making evidence-base when students were planning for their future. Students discussed these experiences in comparison to their academic progress indicating that feedback from a range of areas was contributing to their growth and progress. Participants sometimes challenged academic feedback as being narrow and isolated and not as expansive enough when attempting to reconcile with their holistic lived experience of learning and development.

Career-related learning activities often transcend the bounds of the everyday classroom and are sometimes serendipitously collected on the peripheries of student experience without any planned pedagogical organisation of activities that allow students to reflect systematically on these experiences and connect them to their personal contexts. To empower young people with a greater sense of purpose a change in what is valued in the education process could occur; where a whole-of-person approach to learning and development is prioritised; rather than academic only. This could provide opportunities for unique learning experiences that are co-designed and crafted with the students themselves to allow them to access career-related learning and development activities that provide opportunities for more expansive personal growth, vocational identity formation, skills and capabilities development, accessing emerging mindsets and knowledge structures, building networks early and providing authentic feedback on their strengths and the value of these outside of the school classroom.

7.2.6 Career and life transitions

Themes around pathway and subject choices, support structures, self-efficacy, wellbeing support and clearer steps and strategies emerged through the study. Transitions in career development are normally thought of as points that align with age, stage or unexpected change. However, recent theory suggests individuals are participating in an iterative and ongoing process in both social pathway transitions and career development (Riverin-Simard & Simard, 2018). In schools, students have always received transition support when entering and exiting school; but are now seen as needing continuous transition support ‘through’ school (Careers New Zealand, 2014). This change in theoretical position has been driven by the increased complexity, diversity and mobility of social identities, roles, and pathways. Individuals may hold multiple social positions or be transitioning through multiple pathways that are each represented by acceptable social interactions, rules and behaviours. Roles provide individuals with cultural identity and meaning (Bakshi & Fialho, 2018). A range of factors combine to influence roles and pathways differently for everyone as socio-cultural background, identity characteristics and locational differences generate a diversity of social pathway flows and outcomes. This uneven and convoluted transitioning process may advantage some individuals and not others.

In this study, participants highlighted the need for transitions to be personalised rather than standardised to fully support the student in achieving their goals. Students often felt they were on an assessment merry-go-round without being given the time to explore their

unique interests and strengths and to find out the value of these beyond the school environment. Students indicated the intense pressure and stress to perform in high stakes assessments was detrimental to their wellbeing and eroded their self-efficacy. They also questioned whether the wellbeing strategies they learned in this setting, often under the rhetoric of resilience building, actually had any portability into less artificial situations outside of the school environment. Despite these questions, the students battled on as was expected and adjusted to the hegemonic expectations of the system. The journey and transition through senior schooling was one they could not wait to be over with so they could commence getting on with their lives. There is certainly an opportunity to improve transitions through secondary schooling if career development were considered as a core part of the transition process.

Career development is a lifespan process with transitions through different roles and pathways recognised as a continuous process. Individuals are not regarded as passive recipients; rather they have the agency to engage in actions and choices based on the opportunities and constraints of their historical and social context. Every individual may be experiencing a unique set of circumstances; therefore, understanding situational factors such as demographics, psychological resources, emotional awareness and resilience may also impact how individuals navigate transitional experiences. Continuous transition support can enhance and improve career development outcomes (Counoyer & Lachance, 2019; Schlossberg, 2011).

The dominant activities in senior secondary transition years could align more closely with students being able to make progress in understanding their vocational identity and exploring their interests, strengths, aspirations and ambitions and how they connect to real world and authentic work contexts. In this study, participants' focus was firmly on academic course completions and admission requirements for higher education. There is a continued dominance of university higher education as a preferred destination of choice for young people instead of technical vocational education. This preference appears to be motivated more by social status and cultural expectations rather than an objective view of local labour market conditions. This embedded socio-cultural view that connects success with the achievement of university education qualifications has created pressure and tension within the school education system. The focus of senior transition pathways from school education is disproportionality centred on high academic achievement culminating in examinations that form the basis for higher education admission. The narrow focus on academic achievement pervades the entire secondary education experience for students

with many schools organising learning experiences centred around students scoring highly in tests and examinations. Statistical data indicates that employment outcomes are driven by local labour market conditions and decisions around education pathways and qualifications are more relevant when informed by labour market information rather than by embedded cultural assumptions. While higher education completion can provide better employment outcomes this is not always the case with data indicating apprenticeships have a higher employment percentage rate than a Bachelor's degree by age 25 (National Skills Commission, 2021; QILT, 2021).

Moreover, with many admission pathways existing to higher education now there is no need to monopolise learning in school education as a conduit toward higher education admissions. Universities can provide entrance through sub-bachelor level preparation courses, articulation pathways via technical education achievements or portfolios of employability and work experiences. There is an opportunity to reframe senior secondary education to value a range of learning experiences that go beyond the focus on high academic results. A more holistic focus on the development of young people aligned with the skills and capabilities that empower them to define their own potential and success could be more rewarding and effective. To effectively reshape this area will require a collaborative effort between multiple stakeholders supported by a change in policy settings. Despite findings that point to an evidence-based strategy to achieve better outcomes for young people (Education Council, 2020) schools seem stuck within the entrenched systemic value network with school leaders prioritising stability and maintaining the status quo rather than innovating toward a learner-centred education paradigm (Arnett, 2022).

All students should be supported on their pathway to economic independence whether traversing opportunities for open employment; entrepreneurship and small business; vocational and technical training; apprenticeships; or university education. All learning experiences and outcomes that allow students to grow and develop toward their economic independence should be afforded the same value in schools. Instead, there is a disproportionate value placed on academic excellence as the main focus of activity within schools. This systemically embedded way of thinking is detrimental to the learning experiences of many students in the school system and does not have equity as its central premise. This academic funnel disadvantages students and creates misalignment with the labour market, vocational learning opportunities and skills development.

7.3 Recommendations for future focus

This study was exploratory in nature to provide preliminary discussion on the findings and any insights that could provide future focus. The recommendations combine insights from the literature and students' perceptions to inform areas for future focus. These recommendations focus on areas for improvement and gaps in the current knowledge-base or school-based practices that offer opportunities for further academic research and school-based exploration. These recommendations acknowledge the limitations of the study in the size of sample and generalisability but still provide a foundation for further consideration. Recommendations for future focus that arose from this research study provide researchers and schools with opportunities that may improve practices or provide more effective career development activities and secondary school transitions.

The areas for future focus include: the research method; narrative guidance co-reflection process; holistic student development; relationships matter; personalisation of learning; awareness and reflective practice; career education in schools; real world, authentic projects; labour market alignment; understanding networks; professional learning for teachers, career educators and practitioners; and a focus on measuring career development outcomes.

7.3.1 Research method

A future area of focus could be the research method used in this research. The fit for purpose qualitative design of combining phenomenological, narrative research and case study approaches provided a novel way to answer the research question. It would be interesting if the phenomenarratives approach could be used in other studies and contexts. Further research into this model and its purpose and use in other research studies would be useful. Phase one involved collecting data through the career narrative journal field texts and the career narrative and individual guidance interviews. These data were then re-transcribed using the co-reflection career development themes. The data were then re-storied into chronological sequences of experiences across the three year period privileging student voice in the process. The resulting phenomenarratives provided a rich and textured data source to make visible the students' perceptions of the career-related learning and development experiences that shaped their career journey. Future studies that seek to make visible the participants' lived experiences of complex phenomena may find the use of the phenomenarrative approach useful; however, further research into this research method needs to be conducted. Researchers may even utilise different data

analysis techniques other than the content analysis used in this study to explore the efficacy of phenomenarresearch.

7.3.2 Narrative guidance in practice

A future focus is further research into the narrative co-reflection process. As the researcher utilised the new methodological approach it became evident that the data collection tools influenced and became intertwined with the way the narrative guidance was utilised during career guidance practice. Further focus on the narrative co-reflection process could provide greater insights beyond the initial insights in this study. While the student feedback on the narrative guidance co-reflection process was positive and the exploratory data suggests that this is a useful approach with positive outcomes for students in a secondary school context this would need to be investigated more rigorously with a larger population. The sampling size was small and restricted based on the research context, so further investigation into using this guidance process with larger sample sizes to improve reliability and validity is needed. Also, further testing and adaption of the narrative guidance co-reflection resource templates could be explored to improve practical application within the guidance field.

7.4.3 Holistic development

Another area for focus could be reframing the dominant approach and purpose in schools to centralise the learners' holistic development rather than only their acquisition of content-knowledge. Within the dominant education process the standardised testing of the acquisition of declarative facts as the main feedback on education success diminishes the importance of the young people themselves. Knowledge acquisition is deemed more important than the wellbeing of students. Young people are struggling to thrive in this paradigm. By prioritising the understanding of young people's personal contexts and backgrounds, stronger connections and positive, trusting relationships can be formed. This approach could improve social and emotional developmental outcomes for students and cognitive outcomes will likely be improved as well through engagement and motivation. A paradigm shift in education that centralises a guidance approach to learning and development where the process of building trusted relationships through mentoring and coaching is dominant could offer improvements to the current educational model.

7.3.4 Relationships matter

Considering the importance of relationships within schools could also improve the student experience. The literature and student perceptions indicated the importance of student and teacher relationships for learning to take place. While many schools have tutor, home or form group allocations these time periods are often administrative rather than offering planned learning experiences aimed at developing student-teacher connections, students' personal and social capabilities; developing wellbeing strategies; reflective practice; or activities to develop safe learning communities and a sense of belonging. All of these activities are currently subservient to the timetable allocations provided to content-knowledge acquisition. The time allocation for these activities could be increased and prioritised to ensure that all young people are supported with the quality relationships that they need to thrive. This could be a further focus for research and practice within schools.

7.3.5 Personalisation of learning

A future focus area could also be personalisation of learning. The literature and student perceptions indicated the importance of a personalised approach within schools. As many other industries have adapted their services and products to meet the unique needs of their clients and customers there is the opportunity for education to do the same. Tailoring the interaction and experiences purposefully and in collaboration with a young person has the opportunity to provide significant benefits beyond the current 'off the shelf' learning model. There is an opportunity to create a model with the right balance for students to demonstrate standards of mastery of particular skills and knowledge as is the current process but also to create space, time and opportunities for personalisation of learning experiences aligned with and co-created for the young person to help with their unique development. The dominant model prioritises processes such as age-based cohorts, separation of classes by academic discipline, teacher-led and single-paced schedule of instructional minutes and success measured by standardised tests. None of these processes are personalised. Personalised learning centres the learner at the heart of the decision-making processes developing individual agency and choice, intrinsic motivation, skills mastery and wellbeing. This approach could bring a greater sense of purpose, meaning and connection to the learner's experiences of education. There is a range of personalised learning models that exist; however, they are peripheral and alternative (Arnett, 2022). Further research on personalisation models and their impact on schools could be explored.

7.3.6 Awareness and reflective practice

A future focus area could also be developing opportunities for awareness building and reflective practice. As executive function skills start to develop in mid-adolescence there is the opportunity to prioritise the development of reflective practice to assist with the building of awareness of the complex socio-cultural contexts and influences shaping the young person's life. The skills and frameworks for reflective practice allow both students and adults to organise their thinking and challenge taken for granted assumptions of themselves, others and the world around them. This study highlighted the importance of providing time for structured reflection to help the participants organise their thinking and understand their unique situations in a deeper, more connected way.

7.3.7 Career education in schools

Career education is an area that needs continued future focus. The literature review and student perceptions indicated the importance of career development learning. This study highlighted that a more centralised focus on career education in schools through stronger policy settings and obligations could have many benefits. A scope and sequence of career-related learning and development outcomes could be embedded as a central tenet of any forward-looking curriculum with lifelong learning as its main goal. Quality career education has the potential to help young people develop a holistic understanding of self, a more nuanced awareness of the influences shaping their development, opportunities to develop transferable learning and work capabilities, a greater sense of meaning and purpose to guide their efforts, and, learning experiences that allow for greater reflection to enhance their career decision-making capital. Research into effective ways to implement career education across school systems as a core focus of schools could have many benefits.

7.3.8 Real world, authentic projects

Furthermore, how to embed more authentic and immersive projects within secondary schooling could be another area of focus. The literature and student perceptions indicated the importance of a curriculum that is authentic and has real world application and value. As we move into a knowledge-based economic landscape the volume and frequency of interaction with new information will continue to accelerate. It becomes more important for students to understand how to access the appropriate knowledge, based on the

experiential conditions of the situation, rather than rote learning of declarative facts that may not be transferable or add value in work contexts. Furthermore, young people need to understand the appropriate frameworks to generate new knowledge if they are facing emerging, untackled problems. To better understand and develop these skills students could be connected into real-world authentic projects as part of their schooling that allow them to develop conditional knowledge and problem-solving frameworks. This may prepare them more readily for the challenges of work than the dominant pedagogical practices within schools. Moreover, it will allow them to explore in more depth the world of work and focus on more complex work-oriented tasks. Further research into curriculum improvement and pedagogical innovation could be explored to enhance student learning.

7.3.9 Labour market alignment

As there is continued focus on the future of work it becomes apparent that the organisation of traditional school education discipline structures does not reflect local labour market opportunities. The literature and student perceptions indicated the complexity of transitions and a disconnect between classroom learning and the world of work. The pathways available to students should reflect the local labour market conditions to assist them in preparing for a more considered and efficient transition from school to further opportunities. While higher education offers a lot for some students a large portion of school learning may be considered a missed opportunity because activities and opportunities in school do not reflect a clear alignment with local labour market conditions. More investigation into understanding the structures in schools and the services that provide impartial advice on pathways could occur to empower young people with the understanding to engage in opportunities for a more successful and rewarding working life. Further research into the limitations of a one-size fits all curriculum and possible alternative place-based or situated learning frameworks may allow more curriculum flexibility linked to local labour market conditions to offer more effective school to work transitions.

7.3.10 Understanding networks

A future focus area could be on understanding student networks and their impact on future success and opportunities. As technology and globalisation continue to influence societal interactions it becomes more important to understand how to connect and build networks. Extended networks can offer communities of practice that offer rich feedback and diverse

perspectives outside of current thinking contexts that can allow people to grow. Furthermore, growing local networks can connect young people to the labour market earlier and provide more opportunities and better transition outcomes. If schools were supported with resources to prioritise the cultivating of student networks in strategic ways, based on the needs of young people, it could enhance the opportunities available to them.

7.3.11 Increased professional learning for teachers

Teacher professional and pre-service learning is a continued area of focus for many researchers. Teachers, like all workers, could be supported to develop a range of new mindsets and capabilities to shift the educational model toward a personalised learning approach that prioritises the utilisation of pedagogies that enhance the development of learners' social, emotional and cognitive capabilities in unison to ensure the education system prepares our young people for the future challenges that they will face. If teachers were supported and empowered to shift their focus toward the unique learners in front of them and away from the prescribed knowledge-content and subsequent assessment regime there is the potential to enrich the education process and engage our young people to develop the capabilities and mindsets they will need for their futures.

7.3.12 Increased professional learning for school career educators and practitioners

As recommended in 7.3.7 career education should be an area of future focus. As part of this school career educators and practitioners need support. The field of career guidance is continually evolving and it is important that practitioners in schools have the opportunity to ensure their requisite knowledge and skills have currency. New approaches to guidance counselling practice are showing some positive benefits and outcomes but school practitioners are often not supported to continually update and advance their understandings and knowledge in line with best practice. This is mainly because career guidance is not always seen as a priority in schools so time and funding are put into other professional learning activities based on mandated obligations and policy settings.

7.3.13 Career learning and development outcomes

Another area of future focus could be understanding career development interventions and their long term impacts. Opportunities exist for more robust longitudinal research into the benefits of career-related learning and development interventions. By undertaking more research including big data analysis on the types of career-related learning interventions

that can occur in schools and the outcomes of these interventions in later years there will be a stronger evidence-base for policy decisions. There is currently limited empirical evidence looking at what interventions matter most in relation to frequency and timing; and what the future outcomes are. Furthermore, research into career guidance counselling practice in schools and the types of guidance practice that work well for different demographics of students including those from culturally diverse backgrounds would be beneficial. This study explored the use of a narrative guidance co-reflection process; however, more research into new types of guidance practice that work well for adolescents could be undertaken that broaden understanding beyond the more commonly utilised theories of career development.

7.4 Summary

This chapter provided a discussion of the findings in relation to current understandings in the literature. It discussed the emergent themes that arose from the phenomenarratives and survey results through connection with the literature and made a range of recommendations for future focus. This study investigated and answered two research questions:

1. What are students' perceptions of the career-related learning experiences that shape their career development?
2. What are students' perceptions of using a narrative co-reflection process as part of their individual guidance and pathway planning?

The discussion of the emergent themes provided insight into the findings of this study with recommendations for areas of future focus including: the research method; narrative guidance co-reflection process; holistic student development; relationships matter; personalisation of learning; awareness and reflective practice; career education in schools; real world, authentic projects; labour market alignment; understanding networks; professional learning for teachers, career educators and practitioners; and a focus on measuring career development outcomes. Chapter Eight is the conclusion chapter and provides a summation of the research study, contributions of the study to the wider research field, limitations and significance of the study and a personal reflection by the researcher.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

The conclusion chapter provides the summation of the research and provides an outline of the contributions that this study has made including approaches to solving the research problem, synthesis of career development theory, narrative career guidance in practice, new perspectives and approaches as well as areas for future focus. It summarises the limitations of the study including the research context, research method, sampling of participants and positionality of the researcher. Furthermore, it provides a personal reflection by the researcher on their research journey.

8.2 Research summary and findings

This study emerged from the researcher being immersed in a career education and guidance role within a secondary school context. This research was designed to investigate the lived experience of secondary students as they participated in the career-related learning experiences that shaped their vocational identities and aspirations. It was designed to explore any common themes that may limit or support the career development of students. The core objective of this research was to investigate students' perceptions of their lived experiences of career-related learning and make visible the experiences that shape students' career development and vocational identity formation as they transition through senior secondary schooling. The secondary objective was to provide a preliminary understanding of whether using a narrative approach with a co-reflection framework within the career guidance counselling process could improve guidance practice. This study and the focus of research questions provided a variety of findings.

The findings from this study included a range of areas for future focus and research including: the phenomenological research method; the narrative guidance co-reflection process; a more holistic perspective on student development within schools; the importance of relationships for young people to thrive; a move from standardisation to personalisation of learning; the importance of supporting students to develop vocational awareness and reflective practice; the need for schools to prioritise a whole school approach to career education; the need to embed real world, authentic projects within the school curriculum; more focus on school curriculum and labour market alignment; the opportunities for schools to strategically cultivate networks for students; the importance of

professional learning for teachers to understand career education, as well as to further advance the skills of already trained career educators and practitioners; and, finally a focus on developing quality standards and a consistent approach to measuring career development outcomes.

8.3 Contribution and significance of this study

This research study contributed to knowledge creation through the investigation of the research problem, career development theory, career development practice, new perspectives and recommending some areas of future focus.

8.3.1 Research problem

A contribution of this study is the novel way it created a new method to solve the research problem. The core research question was to understand students' perceptions of the career-related learning experiences that shape their career development journey. To answer the question this study created a conceptual framework based on the educational and career development literature to understand the way that individuals experience career-related learning and development. Based on this framework and the methodological literature a new research method for collecting and organising student perception data was conceived. The field texts were analysed and organised using the new phenomenarrative method that privileged the participants' lived experiences and voices anchored within the phenomenological elements that defined the essence of the phenomena. This new approach provided a novel way to solve a complex and multi-layered research problem and offered an alternative approach that could be explored in more depth and utilised in other contexts.

8.3.2 Career development theory

This research contributed to the field of career development theory by synthesising pertinent literature to understand theoretical trends and concepts of value. This synthesis explored discourse on the world of work and provided context for the evolving theories of career development. It investigated underpinning career-related learning and development theory and explored the elements of career-related learning including developing new work mindsets, and a range of life, employability and career management skills. It investigated the theoretical foundations of developing a vocational cognitive network through a cognitive-epistemological perspective on career-related learning and the systems of

influence that impact vocational identity and aspiration formation. It also highlighted how work impacts personal wellbeing and strategies that are important to thrive in a world experiencing profound technological, social demographic and global change. Further to this, there was a focus on the process of career-related learning and development from a young age through to adolescence. The literature and theory on how school systems engage in the career-related learning and development process were also explored. In particular, how young people are supported to prepare for their futures including providing career information, education and vocational guidance counselling. The practice of personalised vocational guidance counselling was also synthesised through the broad elements of personal background, career planning and goals, influences on career development, career-related interest formation, career-related learning and development activities and life transitions.

8.3.3 Career development practice

While this research study contributed by providing a practical example through the fieldwork of how a narrative guidance approach could be used in practice; the reality of the intensive nature of this process would cause barriers for this approach to be commonly used in the same format within the existing confines of resources that schools have. However, there may be opportunities to explore alternative and less intensive ways of achieving similar goals through a whole school approach to career development. Approaches that utilise all staff within the vocational interest formation and vocational awareness building of the career development process may be more effective than utilising only the specialist career development practitioner. This would allow more advanced and specialised practitioners to focus on referrals of students who need additional support, building partnerships with industry and understanding the ebbs and flows of local labour market conditions to assist young people to connect to the appropriate learning and work opportunities based on their personal context.

8.3.4 New perspectives

This research offered new perspectives on existing theories and practices. In particular, the creation of a new conceptual framework for understanding how individuals experience career development and the phenomenological elements within this experience. The study provided insights into the career learning and education experiences of the students, the information young people use to make career-related decisions, how they respond to

personalised narrative approaches to guidance and how they understand the opportunity structure available to them. The students' perceptions of their journey also challenged the dominant understanding of what is valued within the school system. During their school journey young people placed more value on social belonging and acceptance, exploring their identity, having positive relationships, personal wellbeing and being supported to understand their hopes and desires for the future and how to achieve them. This was in contrast to the emphasis within the system that the most valuable thing is academic achievement and grades. There were often unintended side effects on mental wellbeing in schools from the relentless focus on content delivery and assessing academic proficiency. The lived experiences of the students highlighted the need for a reframing of the purpose of education with a mindset on holistic development of lifelong competencies through a personalised guidance approach.

8.3.5 Future focus

Another contribution is that this research study identified a number of areas that could benefit from further research. These areas include more research into the narrative guidance co-reflection process; reframing the purpose of education around holistic student development; the importance of relationships within schools to build trust and advance learning; how a more personalised approach to learning could lead to higher levels of engagement and better outcomes; the importance of developing cognitive skills and self-awareness through reflective practice; how career education could become central to the purpose of schools; the benefits of real world, authentic projects to develop transferable skills and applied learning; how curriculum alignment with the labour market could enhance school to work transitions; why strategic networking through education could improve social mobility; the importance of professional learning for teachers in innovation, futures thinking as well as upskilling of career educators and guidance practitioners; and, more focus on measuring career development interventions and outcomes on specific demographics of students.

8.4 Limitations of the study

There were limitations of this study including the research context, research method, sampling of participants, and the positionality of the study.

8.4.1 Research context

The research context was complex and nuanced and the case studies within this context were unique. This means that the results are highly contextualised and may not be generalisable without further research based on the insights from the study.

8.4.2 Research method

This study prototyped a new qualitative methodological approach combining elements of phenomenological and narrative studies to collect data on specific cases. As this methodology is a new approach there are limitations in understanding its efficacy and whether it could add value if utilised in other studies.

8.4.3 Sampling of participants

Due to the nature of this research a small purposive sample was selected as cases to study. While the depth and richness of the data collected in this study were an advantage; the limitations of a small sample size mean the findings are highly contextual and may not be generalisable outside of the research context.

8.4.4 Researcher positionality

This type of research involved an in-depth partnership between the participant and the researcher. A limitation of this study was that the researcher also maintained a professional role during the study. Given the nature and context of this study there was some overlap between the professional and researcher roles although there was a clear delineation between the time used for the research study and the type of personalised guidance practice utilised within the study.

8.5 Personal learning journey and reflection

The vision and motivation underpinning this study emerged from being immersed in a career education and guidance role within a secondary school context. My own professional journey commenced as an educator in 2005 and has involved a number of engagements as a teacher, trainer, instructional designer, school administrator and career guidance practitioner. Throughout this time I have always been interested in the 'bigger picture' of education as a vehicle for social mobility and to facilitate personal learning and growth in my students. In my roles I have undertaken significant professional development

to continue to learn and grow so I can add value to the lives of those I serve. As part of my ongoing professional learning I conducted exploratory action research into how young people experienced career-related learning and guidance. This knowledge and understanding allowed me to focus on gaps in existing knowledge and practices. The challenges adolescents are facing while living through a period of accelerated change, technological enrichment, academic pressures, complex transitions and career uncertainty are making the process of career-related learning and guidance more complex. Combined with my understanding of the pressures faced by schools operating in a complex network of competing value propositions, funding deficits, limited physical and human resources, and structurally and culturally embedded practices that reward adherence to maintaining a status quo approach in education provided impetus for undertaking this research study.

As I researched the literature I discovered a gap around any sustained, in depth approaches to capturing data from a student's lived experience perspective. This led me to consider the elements of the phenomena students were experiencing; the lived experience of career development itself. I felt that I could add value by focussing on that gap in the research and that led me to create the conceptual framework supported by the literature. As I reviewed the research methodology there didn't seem an ideal 'fit' based on what I was trying to achieve so that led me to explore combining components of existing methods into a phenomenarrative approach. This approach turned out to be very useful and met the goals of the research; however, it was labour intensive as an individual part-time researcher to complete this research endeavour.

Undertaking the research with the students, getting to know them and connecting with them on a personal level was a highlight of the research process. Both the participants and I looked forward to the interview sessions and they were always engaging and surprisingly natural considering it was formal research. Observing the students' development and growth over the study was very rewarding. The feedback from the students on how participating in the research had given them confidence and support throughout their journey certainly made the countless hours of engagement and analysis spent on this study worthwhile. Especially when one participant provided feedback that I was a significant role model they admired due to balancing family commitments, full-time work and part-time study for the benefit of the student community.

I hope the outcome of this study is that it provides insight to others to consider how career learning and development can have a significant impact on the lives of young people. To

consider that if this area had a central focus in school education and was provided with the resources needed it could have such a positive impact on the lives of many within our community.

8.6 Summary

This conclusion chapter provided a summation of the research. It also provided contributions that this study has made including approaches to solving the research problem, synthesis of career development theory, narrative career guidance in practice, new perspectives and approaches as well as areas for future focus. It summarised the limitations of the study including the research context, research method, sampling of participants and positionality of the researcher and also provided a personal reflection by the researcher on their research journey.

In particular, this study has recognised the importance of prioritising career education and learning as a core deliverable in schools. This would provide students with more support for their positive vocational identity formation through a more personalised learning experience, that is purpose-driven, and builds strong social and emotional capabilities as well as cognitive ones; aligned to future education and employment opportunities. This study highlighted the perceptions of young people as key stakeholders in the education process as they lived the experience of senior secondary school. It provided rich contextual knowledge and new insights into how young people perceive their schooling and offered new directions for focus on how schooling may be reshaped from a one size fits all approach into a personalised, supportive place that helps all young people thrive as they transition from school into their futures, whatever they may be.

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Appendices

These Appendices includes templates of the research instruments used in this study.

Appendix A: Career Narrative Journal (CNJ) template

Transitions

1. You are currently preparing for subject selection. Explain in your own words:
 - a. Your current pathway and subjects
 - b. The successes you have had on this pathway
 - c. The challenges you have had on this pathway
 - d. Any changes you are considering
 - e. any positive or negative feelings you are having about subject selection

Aspirations and goals

1. What are your current career aspirations? Explain in your own words:
 - a. The industry areas you are currently interested in and what you currently know about them
 - b. The types of jobs you are interested in and what you currently know about them
 - c. Why you are currently interested in these industry areas / jobs
 - d. Any new ideas that have emerged around your career aspirations over the last year
 - e. Any previous ideas around your career aspirations that have been discarded and why
 - f. Any positive or negative feelings you are having about your career choices

Influences

1. Who are your current role-models / heroes?
 - a. List 3 people, other than your mother and father, who you admire. These people can be real people you know personally (teacher, neighbour), do not know personally (famous person), or fictional characters (books, TV, movies).

- b. For each person write down why you admire them including some things they have done and some of the characteristics / qualities they have that you like
2. What are your current 3 favourite TV shows or magazines? List all of the things you like about the magazine / TV shows
3. What is your favourite story that you have read / seen over the last year? (this can be a book or a movie)
 - a. Describe what happens in the story
 - b. Explain why you like the story
 - c. Describe your favourite character in the story and the qualities you like about them
4. What is your current favourite saying or motto that you live by? You may have more than one that you can list. If you don't have one, then write down something that is meaningful to you.

Experiences

1. Describe the school subjects you are studying that you like the most. For each subject that you like:
 - a. Describe what the subject is about
 - b. Describe some of the main activities / tasks that you like in the subject
 - c. Describe your academic performance in the subject
 - d. Explain why you like the subject
2. Describe any extracurricular school activities (e.g. sport, dance, camps, trips, music, drama, Ministry, student council etc.) that you have been involved in over the last year. For each activity:
 - a. Describe what the activity is about
 - b. Describe some of the main actions / tasks that you like in the activity
 - c. Describe the skills you use in the activity
 - d. Explain why you like the activity
3. Describe any hobbies and interests that you have done outside of school (e.g. sport, dance, reading, cadets, art, cars, video games etc.) over the last year. For each activity:
 - a. Describe what the activity is about
 - b. Describe some of the main actions / tasks that you like in the activity

- c. Describe the skills you use in the activity
 - d. Explain why you like the activity
4. Describe any part-time work, work experience or volunteering that you have done over the last year. For each job that you have done:
- a. Describe what the job was about including some of the main actions / tasks involved in the job
 - b. Describe the skills you needed to do the job
 - c. Describe some people that you have worked with and some of the characteristics that you liked or disliked about them
 - d. Describe the work environment and what you liked or disliked about it
 - e. Explain overall whether you liked doing this job and why or why not
5. Describe any other experiences that you have had that you think have impacted on the way you think about careers and work. For each experience
- a. Describe the experience
 - b. Explain why you think it is important

Appendix B: Career Narrative Interview (CNI) format

1. Introduction – **2 minutes**
2. Co-reading of Career Narrative Journal (CNJ) responses including discussion and co-reflection - **25 minutes**
3. Individual Pathway Planning – Goal setting (see template below) – **15 minutes**
4. Conclusion and feedback – **3 minutes**

Appendix C: Career Goal Table (CGT)

Type*	What	Why	Who	Where	How	When
1.						By the end of
2.						
3.						

Impact of external factors

What external factors can impact on personal plans and goals? How can these external factors impact on personal plans and goals?

***Types of career goals:** vocational research, self-awareness, developing skills or attributes, achievement (academic)

Appendix D: Individual Pathway Guidance (IPG) interview format

- c. Introduction – **2 minutes**
- d. Reflection and discussion of Career Goal Table (CGT) including any updates and amendments - **25 minutes**
- e. Conclusion and feedback – **3 minutes**

Appendix E: Survey (S) feedback questions

Survey 1 (Nov 2017)

Thank you for participating in the career narrative interview. In your own words describe your experiences. You may like to discuss:

- what happened and what the process was like
- whether the career narrative interview helped you in any way to better understand your career development experiences and plan your career goals
- any other feedback or comments about the career narrative interview process

Survey 2 (Nov 2018)

Thank you for your continued participation in the career narrative research study. In your own words describe your experiences. You may like to discuss:

- what happened and what the process was like
- whether the career narrative research helped you in any way to better understand your career development experiences and plan your career goals
- any other feedback or comments about the career narrative research process

Survey 3 (Feb 2020)

Thank you for your continued participation and completion of the career narrative research study. In your own words describe your experiences. You may like to discuss:

- what happened and what the process was like
- whether participating in the career narrative process helped you in any way
- any other feedback or comments

Appendix F: Student survey responses

The student survey responses are raw student feedback data collected on the exploratory use of a narrative co-reflection process as part of their individual guidance and pathway planning as per the template in Appendix E.

Student feedback (Nov 2017)

Student A

“The career narrative interview first started with us looking at what I wrote in my journal about my life, what my aspirations were and about my personality such as what I liked to do. We then discussed who I have become and how my early life has impacted who I am. The process was quite relaxed and it was like having a normal conversation rather than interview, which made the whole process comfortable. The interview helped me to perceive what type of steps I might take or need to take right now and in the future. It also helped me to understand how the people around me, such as my family and friends, and my interests help to shape what type of career path I take. The interview also helped to ensure myself that my current career path that I would like to take may not be what I follow in the future, which also helps to broaden my goals and not just restrict myself to a specific profession. It also helped me to recognise what I should be doing now and how these actions will impact my future. Putting together a plan, especially what grades to aim for during year 11 and 12 helped to understand just how hard I need to work in order to achieve a high enough ATAR to get into the courses that I want to and the universities that I want to. I think the career narrative interview process would be good for all students to have because it’s not just an interview where they choose subjects and then that’s it. We discussed current and future steps to take and this made me more confident in myself and my decisions.”

Student J

“In the career narrative interview we discussed my journal on my career pathway, background, hobbies, likes and dislikes and the impacts of these things on shaping who I am. The process took just over an hour and was a comfortable process that felt like I was just having a casual conversation with someone, thus making it feel comfortable to open up about things. Through the interview, I was better able to understand the impact that my experiences had on my career development. One

important aspect was discussing sex trafficking which has become a major factor into choosing what career pathway I want to take. This interview has helped me to understand the fact that I must not choose my career based on how much it pays, but how passionate I am about it. This reason has helped me to broaden my career choices and see which university courses are available for the work I want to do. The interview has helped me to plan my career goals based on my previous academic scores in Year 10 and what I should aim for so I am able to get into the university courses I want to get into. During the goals setting we discussed using 'pain points', a method that has worked immensely in ensuring that I am constantly on task with my schoolwork. I think that the career narrative interview process is extremely useful in helping students think more about their future career goals so that they are confident that what they're doing in the future is something that they are passionate about so they can have a good impact on the world through their job.”

Student S

“The career narrative interview to me seemed like a semi-formal conversation about my journal to discuss my past, my family's past and my future endeavours. The interview consisted of helping me to understand the road to acquiring both long-term and short-term goals which would eventually help me have the future I desire. It allowed me to distinguish between goals that were realistic and goals that just seemed achievable in my head. The interview allowed me to think realistically and understand the hard work and long process to achieving my goals. Since I hadn't really thought of a Plan B, in case my real goals failed, the interview allowed me to acknowledge the other pathways available to reach that goal. The interview allowed me to feel safe and comfortable with the goals I had set since at first, they all seemed impossible, but after planning and organising my route to that certain goal, it seemed more realistic and achievable. This process has helped in allowing me to plan my future which seemed so difficult that I thought it was impossible at first but then became realistic and achievable. This opportunity has allowed me to see my pathway very clearly and even if there were to be ups and downs, I now can see further pathways and backup plans which will help me achieve my goal.”

Student feedback (Nov 2018)

Student A

“In the career narrative process we looked at our own future career goals and how we could go about in achieving it through the school. This allowed us to break down our goal and see the steps needed to be able to achieve goals like entering into a specific course at a specific university. We also went through who I was as a person and how it relates to our goals. It kind of helped me to analyse my personality and showed the how and the why of myself. The process was really helpful in developing my understanding of the steps needed to achieve my career goals. Because it broke down those steps it seemed like a simpler and smaller goal rather than something daunting. I was then able to go forward and go in the right direction to achieve my goal. The process really allowed my goal to be broken down to easier stages. It kind of kept me focussed on my goal because I wasn't thinking about how scary or intimidating going to university was. At the end of the semester I was also kind of feeling disappointed with my results however through the process I was reminded that my results were in fact okay and matched my goal. I think going through the career narrative process was a really positive experience because it allowed me to see the little parts I needed to do in school to achieve my goals. I think it was really helpful and I feel like other students should have something like this, especially when they feel a little lost in what they want to do after high school.”

Student J

“During the career narrative process, I completed a career development journal which we used to discuss in detail my interests and specific experiences that may have had an impact on my career choices. We also went through predicted ATAR and I was helped through my ATAR courses to choose the best subject to drop. The career narrative interview helped me better understand that one's experiences and context have a major influence on the career pathways that we choose in the future. I gained a lot of knowledge and a big push towards my career goals as I was provided advice and given recommendations on how I could get closer to achieving such career goals. Through understanding the requirements of my preferred course as well as being given an insight into the future of my preferred career, the career narrative process has helped me plan to research more into law and given a better sense of awareness in my decision to go down such a career pathway. If it weren't for this career narrative process, I feel that I would not be in the place that I am now. Year 11 was quite a challenging year for me, but through this process I was able to confidently drop subjects that I wasn't performing my best in and also create goals

to grow a step closer to achieving my desired career.”

Student S

“My overall experience of the career narrative process throughout 2018 was really positive as it constantly allowed me to think through my current life decisions and how it can affect my overall future. During each interview session, I was able to open up about my life along with how it affected my goals and overall career. The career journals really affected me as it provided me the opportunity to allocate some time for me to think about my life goals and what is going on in my life. I am very grateful for this opportunity as it has really organised my thoughts regarding my future. It allowed me to allocate time to focus on my career pathways based on my current circumstances and school grades I learnt to think realistically about what I wish to do in the future. By creating goals during the interviews, regarding my career, along with sharing those goals, I was able to achieve most of them which allowed me to become one-step closer to my overall goals.”

5.4.3 Student feedback (Feb 2020)

Student A.

“I think the career narrative process was really good because I've actually got the bigger picture of what I'm really doing in my last two years of high school. In year 11 and 12, it's really easy to be caught up in just studying, studying, studying. But at the end of year 12, when you're applying for university, you need to stop and think about what to apply for, what the point of my two years of high school was. Lots of students don't know what to apply for. This process has helped me to understand what I want to achieve in the future.”

Student J

“The career narrative process has definitely 100% helped me with my career planning and goals. Meeting so many times in year 11 when I was so lost and so stressed about my future was really important. I really appreciated talking to someone who had expertise and could provide me with the advice that really helped a lot. I think I would have been a lot more lost and a lot more stressed with ATAR if I didn't have this to help me.”

Student S

“I definitely think the career narrative process helped me because my life is busy and I got to sit down and talk about what's actually going on in various aspects of my life. And really talking about it, because sometimes you may just touch upon some things. Then the process let me think deeper into and I realized, "Oh, I could do this better, or I shouldn't have done that." I get to think about it, reflect on myself, and being able to have guidance as well was very helpful. I feel like we are like the special students who got to be involved and yeah, it's helped definitely.”

The student survey feedback was collected during the study on an annual basis and provides insight into the students' perceptions of being involved in the career narrative guidance process.

Appendix G: Consent form

CONSENT FORM FOR PARENTS – CHILD PARTICIPATION

Consent Form

- I have read and understood the information letter about the project, or have had it explained to me in language I understand.
- I have taken up the invitation to ask any questions I may have had and am satisfied with the answers I received.
- I understand that participation in the project is entirely voluntarily.
- I am willing for my child to become involved in the project, as described.
- I have discussed with my child what it means to participate in this project. He/she has explicitly indicated to me a willingness to take part.
- I understand that both my child and I are free to withdraw that participation at any time without affecting the family's relationship with my child's teacher or my child's school.
- I understand that data collected from my child can be withdrawn at any time.
- I give permission for the contribution that my child makes to this research to be published as part of a PhD, provided that my child or the school is not identified in any way.
- I understand that I can request a summary of findings after the research has been completed.
- I have read and understood the Collection Notice and am happy for the collection of data through video or audio recording methods.

Name of Child (printed):

Name of Parent/Carer (printed):

Signature of Parent:

Date: / /

Appendix H: Information letter to parents

PARENT / PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

What is the Project About?

- Career planning is a complex process but is essential in helping students to learn about their career aspirations and set career development goals
- Recent research evidence suggests that constructing a career development narrative as part of an individual's career planning can improve self-reflection and provide a solid foundation for achieving positive career outcomes
- This project aims to find out the lived experiences of students as they journey through secondary schooling and whether using career development narratives in a secondary school setting also has positive outcomes
- This research is important as understanding the perceptions of young people as they experience career-related learning and development may assist educators to improve practices in schools
- We will require 3– 8 Year 10 participants for this research
- This is a pilot project

Who is doing the Research?

- The project is being conducted by Michael Openshaw
- This research will contribute to a Doctor of Philosophy higher education degree

Why am I being asked to take part and what will I have to do?

- Your son / daughter is being asked to participate as they are currently enrolled in the Year 10 Career & Enterprise elective
- This is a three-year study with a total commitment of 12 hours outside of school time
- The participation will involve some independent journal work, one group session and eight one-on-one interviews discussing their career development experiences, narrative journal and completing career goal setting
- The location of the study will be [REDACTED].
- The time line is:

Year 10 – Term 3	Introductory Group Session – one hour after school
Year 10 – Term 4	Individual interview – one hour after school
Year 11 – Term 2	Individual interview – one hour after school
Year 11 Term 3	Individual interview – one hour after school
Year 11 Term 4	Individual interview – one hour after school
Year 12 Term 1	Individual interview – one hour after school
Year 12 Term 2	Individual interview – one hour after school
Year 12 Term 3	Individual interview – one hour after school
Year 12 Term 4	Individual interview – one hour after school

Are there any benefits' to being in the research project?

- There may be no direct benefit to you from participating in this research
- Sometimes, people appreciate the opportunity to discuss their opinions and feelings on their career aspirations. This can help them make decisions.
- We hope the results of this research will allow us to:
 - enhance career development education in a secondary school setting

Who will have access to my information?

- The information collected in this research will be re-identifiable (coded). This means that the stored information will be re-identifiable. We will remove identifying information on any data or sample and replace it with a code. Only the research team have access to the code to match your child's name if it is necessary to do so. Any information we collect will be treated as confidential and used only in this project. Written permission will be requested if any information collected is to be used for any other purpose other than this research. The following people will have access to the information we collect in this research: the research team and, in the event of an audit or investigation, staff from the Curtin University Office of Research and Development
- Electronic data will be password-protected and hard copy data (including video or audio tapes) will be in locked storage.
- The information we collect in this study will be kept under secure conditions at Curtin University for 7 years after the research has ended and then it will be destroyed
- The results of this research may be presented at conferences or published in professional journals. You will not be identified in any results that are published or presented.
- Participant privacy and the confidentiality of information disclosed by participants, is assured except in circumstances that require reporting under Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) Child Protection policy, or where the research team is legally required to disclose that information.

Will you tell me the results of the research?

- We will write to you at the end of the research in 2020 and let you know the results of the research. Results will not be individual but based on all the information we collect and review as part of the research.

Do I have to take part in the research project?

- Taking part in a research project is voluntary. It is your choice to take part or not. You do not have to agree if you do not want to. If you decide to take part and then change your mind, that is okay, you can withdraw from the project. You do not have to give us a reason; just tell us that you want to stop. Please let us know you want to stop so we can make sure you are aware of any thing that needs to be done so you can withdraw safely. If you choose not to take part or start and then stop the study, it will not affect your relationship with the College or staff here.
- If you chose to leave the study, we will request your permission to use any information collected up to the date of withdrawal. You may choose not to grant this permission and the collected research will be destroyed.

What happens next and who can I contact about the research?

- If you have any questions regarding this research please contact Michael Openshaw on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

- If you decide to take part in this research we will ask you to sign the consent form. By signing it is telling us that you understand what you have read and what has been discussed. Signing the consent indicates that you agree to be in the research project and have your information used as described. Please take your time and ask any questions you have before you decide what to do. You will be given a copy of this information and the consent form to keep.

Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) has approved this study (HREC number 17/0406). Should you wish to discuss the study with someone not directly involved, in particular, any matters concerning the conduct of the study or your rights as a participant, or you wish to make a confidential complaint, you may contact the Ethics Officer on (08) 9266 9223 or the Manager, Research Integrity on (08) 9266 7093 or email hrec@curtin.edu.au.