
My Life, My decisions, My Career

How Pathway Programs helped me succeed



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Foreword

I designed this eBook to help students all over the world with the knowledge I gained and used to make the most of Pathway Programs.

There are numerous ways to benefit and get ahead in your life and career. In terms of overseas education and career, Pathway Programs are one of the best means to head start your career. By reading this book you will know how to maximise in each area and get to where you want to be:

- How to save time and not give up on what is important.
- How the time saved in turn saves you over AU\$39,000 or more
- How you can develop your skills and be job ready in less than one year. Say goodbye to just paying bills, use the pathway program to build your profile in more ways than one.
- This eBook also highlights how you can move overseas if you wish to or how you can utilise your skills to maximise opportunities in your own home country
- Lastly, and the most important point, you will see how I used the soft skills acquired from the pathway to my advantage.

A pathway can open more doors than one. Seize the opportunity as Aston College has tailored this program through personal experience and made it better. We have been there and done that and now we bring it to you the way we would have had it in the first place!

Best Wishes,

Harmeen Kaur

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What is a “Pathway Program”

I think most of us at a young age have been told that our fates are written before hand and that there is nothing we can do to change it.

Usually most of us choose to either accept whatever comes our way so we rejoice when things go right or curse fate when things go haywire. Or we evaluate what we have and make choices taking every opportunity making our own path.

Why am I explaining this?

Well, in simple terms a pathway is a course of action we take to achieve specific results to attain a much-desired final outcome. In the context of overseas education, Pathway Programs are designed to prepare you for the move so that you can better achieve your ultimate goal. I for one have been down both paths; I once just let circumstances take whichever course they wanted. The most important one is that I evaluated what I had and paved my own way on my terms.



I used my Diploma studies as a pathway to University. This pathway changed my life and I no longer blamed fate. I took action. This step saved me money, time and helped me succeed in more ways than I can mention.

I now run a Registered Training Organisation that delivers Pathway Program, which gives students the opportunities that were not open to me immediately. We bridge a genuine gap in skills and Higher Education through this program. If it were not for Aston College many students would be like me when I initially rolled with life with no direction. My opportunity costs were higher than I realised, however with Aston we have tailored the program as best as we could.

Even though I saved a bit of time and money, had I been given a program like Aston's Pathway, I would have saved a lot more and not had a massive financial burden. Decision-making would have been easier saving me a lot of money and perhaps I would have helped my parents earlier than my current position. How? If you read on you will see how to maximise on your benefits and get a head start than the crowd. Don't make the same mistakes I did, instead take benefits of what we bring to your home country.

My long story short

As I earlier mentioned I was a small town girl from an African country, Zambia. I had to give up my dream of being a doctor in Canada or U.K. and pursue business studies. Many factors played a role in this but it all came down to my family and my lack of commitment.

My family placed me into a Diploma of Business in Australia. When I first arrived, I stayed with my uncle. He was a great support and extremely generous, however he did not know the issues I would face as an international student nor did he know of the visa regulations and how every step would affect my eligibility for Permanent Residency. I had to struggle on my own, as I did not want to burden him more.



After a few weeks of being in the country, I had to apply for a work visa as back then it had to be done separately. I then looked for jobs to support myself. It seemed like an impossible task, as I did not even have my Tax file number or relevant documents. I later found ad hoc jobs in hospitality; I kept looking for better opportunities and finally landed myself a job as a receptionist. I strongly believe if my English Language skills were not above par I may have not landed a great opportunity. I had neither friends nor a support system to help me transition to the new country. You have to agree at the age of 19 leaving everything I knew back and moving forward was a BIG MOVE.

Using my skills developed in the Diploma of Business I had enrolled in I found a better paying job as a student support officer in a college.

Why is it a *mistake*? Had someone told me, I would have saved two years of money and time? (The 'how' later in the book)

I completed my Advanced Diploma studies and was not sure what direction to take. My visa was running out and I could not stay, as I did not meet the requirements. I was lost again. I did not want to study another three years to complete the Bachelors degree but at the same time I knew it would open up prospects. A dear friend of mine that I met via work who was a migration agent guided me on how I could get my bachelors degree in less than two years. Things fell into place after that. I completed my Bachelor Degree in Business, worked in Senior Management positions and also became an Australian Citizen.

Best part? I am now co-founder and owner of Aston College! This is where we can share our passion of Education helping thousands of students' head start their life.

How precious is your “Time”?

One of the hacks I have incorporated into Aston College is the factor of TIME!

As you remember, it took me three years to complete one Diploma and two Advanced Diplomas. Had I been guided properly, I would have completed one Diploma and my Bachelor degree in three years, as the Advanced Diplomas did not really do much for me. Never the less with the given circumstances I used those qualifications to save myself time and completed my degree in a lesser timeframe.

With Aston College we came up with something better. You gain a Diploma and a Bachelors Degree in just under three years. **How?**

- Our Diploma is to be completed by you in 9 Months (typically a one to two year course in Australia). We have condensed learning with no term breaks and additional hours to gain your qualification quicker with more value than a normal Diploma.
- Just like I did, you too can gain up to 4- 8 Credits that form part of the first year of your Australian University Degree. This means essentially you are closer to or in the second year of University when you arrive in Australia, far ahead of the students choosing to go through directly
- You English Language and Soft Skills will be improved dramatically. Whilst doing the Diploma course you will spend time on Soft Skills and English courses (check our website on what soft skills we have on offer). This will help you with better job opportunities and be a better professional with great interpersonal skills that these days most people lack.
- Whilst studying we will organise your admission into second year of Bachelors Degree in Australia and assist you in preparing your entire visa documents. This will happen simultaneously while you are studying and have your visa lodged upon successful completion. This process without the Diploma normally takes up to 7-8 months or longer if you have to keep doing English tests.



How would this save your time? By doing all these things am I not setting myself behind? Read on.

Take a scenario of yourself and your friend.

You take up Aston College and your friend takes up a direct entry option into Australia. It will take you 10 months and your friend 7-8 months to complete the process. You will be spending extra 2 months in your home country before moving to Australia.

YOU:

In 2017, you will commence the Aston College Pathway program. The following simply highlights a few fun facts in addition to completing your Diploma within 9 months:

- You will gain skills and knowledge on Australia and its way of life in the work place and social setting.
- You can successfully sit for your English exam without having to go for extra English classes.
- You will be job ready and have an Australian qualification before even setting foot in Australia
- You will go into second Year University giving you two years to complete your studies.
- Towards the end of 2019, you can apply for visa options available at the time for post study visas, at the moment students are given 2 years post study visa options.
- By 2021 if you are eligible and wish to and have been following the right steps you have an opportunity to apply for PR.
- If you do not wish to stay post studying then you may return to your home country with a wealth of knowledge and experience to expand on.



YOUR FRIEND:

In 2017 your friend either engages with an agent or they do their own paperwork. It typically on average takes about 6-9 months for a student to prepare to move overseas. (There are cases of shorter periods, but are not the norm). Your friend has to:

- Look for a reliable agent or informant & Education provider
- Attend and pay for extra English Language Tutoring
- Sit for the Official English Exam, if failed then do the above again
- Spend time on choosing a University and then spend time on documentation for University application
- They have to commence Visa documentation and have proper Finances
- They then lodge the application and wait till visa approval.
- If they have gotten the visa they commence studies in their first year of University.
- If they do not get a visa it is time and money gone to waste.

Going with the same timeframe as yours lets assume your friend got a visa approval the same time as you or perhaps a few months earlier if they really quickened the process. Your friend will start 1st year Bachelors in the year 2018 and finishes in 2020.

Can you spot the difference? While your friend is preparing to go to Australia, you have a Diploma, money and time saved and extra skills to help you get ahead.

Difference in TIME saving? HUGE.

The difference?

You may have used extra two months to get to Australia (for arguments sake), however you finish your course earlier to get two years of work visa followed with Permanent Residency and Citizenship.

You reach Australia with an Australian Qualification, better English communication skills and better job skills. You embark on your career a year earlier compared to a friend, which means while s/he is studying, you have started earning.

I could go on with the benefits of how you save time, perhaps you can list some that I may have missed out on writing and give me some feedback.

I personally had completed some vocational courses that helped me save time off the Bachelor Degree even though I was late to the party due to poor decision-making but it got me the exemptions granted at that time. It got me to my career outcomes a lot quicker and also led me to making Australia home. Remember, by doing the Diploma program, I was able to find better jobs compared to my other friends.



Show Me the “Money”

Saving money is tied to the previous chapter of saving time. Whilst you have saved time, you simultaneously save the big buck. We usually pay a higher price to get things done quicker. However, with the formula that Aston College uses, it allows you to do save up \$36000 or more. Essentially you are achieving your dream quicker at lower investment. The money saved can easily set you up for the future.

The cost of studying Bachelors Degree in Australia is:

- Tuition fees ranges from \$20000 to \$24000 per year
- Living Costs for one first year are nearly \$19,800 (You being home for the first year saves you a considerable amount)
- Before one applies for student visa, normally they have to spend a considerable amount to study and prepare for official English Test. At times students have to appear few times for IELTS, PTE or CAE in order to achieve the required score. Alternatively they may do an English course before starting the Bachelors Degree. The cost for 10 weeks English course in Australia is \$3500.



Lets compute the total investment one has to make to complete a Bachelors Degree in Australia:

Particulars	Amount per year	Total for Three years
Tuition Fees	\$22000	\$66000
Living Expenses	\$19800	\$59400
English (If required)	\$3500	\$3500
Total	\$45300	\$128900

Now that is a huge investment. Won't you agree? Let me take you back to the scenario of yourself and your best friend and show you how you can save a whopping \$39000.

You have decided to pursue Bachelors Degree in Australia by joining Aston's Pathway Program, while your friend decided to go directly to Australia for his Bachelors Degree. The savings are in the 1st year of studies. Let us compare the investment made by yourself and your friend in the first year:

Particulars	You - 1st year	Your Friend - 1st yr
Tuition Fees	\$4000	\$22000
Living Expenses	\$2000	\$19800
English (If required)	NIL	\$3500
Total	\$6000	\$45300

Remember that you will get the following for your investment of \$4000 in the Pathway Program:

- Australian accredited qualification Diploma of Business
- English preparatory classes to ensure you achieve the required official English Test score and better communications skills
- Soft skills training to be better prepared for jobs in Australia

Your friend is not going to get all of the above by joining directly in the First year of Bachelors Degree.

Can you see the difference? By joining the pathway program you have saved over \$39000.

Would you agree that \$39000 is a huge amount and the savings made can yield good returns if invested smartly? Over two years while you are studying this can easily grow to \$45000 with interest. On completion of your course, this amount can easily set you up for your future.



Improve your “R.O.I.”

At Aston College, we do not see Education as an expense we see it as an investment. The investment in your education is what will help you build your career and achieve your dreams. A seasoned investor is very diligent before investing the money so that the returns are maximised while ensuring the safety. Similarly, while choosing study destination, the institute or university and the course, you need to be diligent and choose the best option.

We have already shown you how you can save almost \$39000 by choosing the pathway program. A smart investor will choose this option, as the desired outcome will be achieved faster and at a lower outlay of money.

For every investment one would ask what is the return on investment. The returns are normally calculated in monetary terms, however there maybe some massive intangible benefits that we tend to ignore.

Firstly, let's do the math for the monetary returns:

While you are studying you are allowed to work 40 hours a fortnight during semester session. When on break you can work full time for that period ONLY. With two compulsory semesters in a year, the total duration you will be studying is 28 weeks and breaks of 24 weeks. Hence, you can work legally for around 1560 hours.

Now go onto Google and search minimal wage in Australia. You will find that it is around \$18 per hour. Again, it depends on type of job you can find. Later on, I will show how you can increase your income above the minimum wage, for now let's consider the minimum rate.

With number of hours and minimum wages, you can legally earn \$28000 per year. Remember, how much is your living cost in Australia? It is around \$19800 per year. So by working during your studies, you will not only pay for the living cost yourself, but will also cover around \$8000 towards your tuition fees, reducing the burden on your parents for your studies. You are paying for your studies. Can you do this in your own country? The two years while you are studying in Australia, you will earn almost \$56000.



The party just started (sorry I get excited with numbers as you can see). Upon completion of your Bachelor Degree in Australia, you may be eligible to apply for a two years post study work visa. Now you can work full time and can typically earn up to \$45,000 per year (again figures are on the minimal front). Which means you can earn up to \$90,000 AUD in those two years.

After the two years, you may wish to check the eligibility to apply for Permanent Residency or return home with your savings. If you are eligible for PR and able to get it, the opportunities there after are immense. Not to forget that once you get your PR, it leads to become a citizen of Australia. Now that is something to a lot of students dream of. I personally never thought I would make as far as becoming an Australian citizen, I can say it is a privilege not many count their blessings over or can attain.

We have seen above that studying in Australia is a good investment, and it is financially rewarding if you chose the pathway program option. Now let us consider the intangible benefits of the pathway program and how can further improve your monetary returns. For this let us go back to the scenario of yourself and your friend.

In the first year where you study the Diploma program in your own country, you are saving \$39000 and getting some additional benefits by way of better English communication and job skills. You will also be better prepared academically compared to your friend who goes directly to Australia in the First year of Bachelors degree.



Now consider this, both yourself and your friend are in Australia and start applying for part time jobs after starting your studies. You both have finished year 12 in your country; however, you have arrived in Australia with an Australian Qualification of Diploma level, better communication skills and job skills. Your friend has arrived with no further qualification, no job skills and poor English communication skills. Lets say you both applied for the same position to work in an office environment. Who do you think the employer will give preference to? I can confidently say I would be sure to pick you as the candidate for the position.

With the Australian Qualification you have already achieved, it will be easier for you to find a job in your area of studies expanding your knowledge and experience. Your friend on the other hand may have to settle for jobs not related to their area of study. You will be earning more comparatively.

You will also be ahead in the academics achievement compared to your friend. He starts his course in Australia without any knowledge of the Australian education system and what needs to be done in order to excel in studies. He will also have poor English skills required for better performance. At the same time, you have completed an Australian Qualification and will have better understanding of what you need to do to have better academic performance and stay ahead in the class.

I have been dealing with International student for years, and I have seen students with not much knowledge of Australian way of education failing in few subjects in the first semester. Every subject one fails costs an extra \$2750, increasing the financial burden. Which means one has to work more to pay it the extra fees. The student starts working longer hours (illegally) and has less time to study and improve the academic performance. This has a snowball effect; resulting in loss of

interest in studies and eventually the student loses their career path. To maintain and extend their student visa status they quit their Bachelors studies and move to one Diploma after the other. Eventually they are unable to extend it further and have to return back to their country with not much achievement to show. On the other hand, if you follow our guidance and stay true to your purpose, you will be able to achieve your future dreams.

Let me show you some more calculations:

For Pathway Option:

Particulars	Expense	Income	Cash Flow
1st Year	\$6000	Nil	(\$6000)
2nd Year	\$41800	\$31200	(\$10600)
3rd Year	\$41800	\$31200	(\$10600)
4th Year	\$19800	\$45000	\$25200
5th Year	\$19800	\$45000	\$25200
Total	\$129200	\$152400	\$23200

The above table shows that in 5 years you will not only finish your Bachelors degree, but also will pay it off yourself and have a savings of \$23200. Once you get your PR, your income will further increase and you will be on track for your brighter future at a very early stage of life. You can see that unlimited opportunities wait.

For Direct Entry Option:

Particulars	Expense	Income	Cash Flow
1st Year	\$45300	\$28000	(\$17300)
2nd Year	\$41800	\$28000	(\$13800)
3rd Year	\$41800	\$28000	(\$13800)
4th Year	\$19800	\$45000	\$25200
5th Year	\$19800	\$45000	\$25200
Total	\$168500	\$174000	\$5500

As you can see from above that you will be better off \$17700 in savings compared to your friend going for direct entry. You have a better Return on Investment.

Live your “Dream”

Australia is dream destination for many who aspire to study overseas and build their career. It is safe, developed and multicultural country with unlimited opportunities.

We have discussed how you can save time, money and have a great return on investment for your studies. At Aston, we go the extra mile to ensure our students achieve their Australian dream.

You may wonder what else you need to achieve your dream. Based on our experience, we have taken several initiatives to help our students.

Immigration Requirements

The Australian immigration is getting strict in approving visa applications. The reason is that Australia wants quality students, whose focus is on studying and bettering the country. They are looking for Genuine Temporary Entrant (GTE). Although, many students want to gain some work experience and that path is available, the primary reason for moving to Australia on a student visa is to pursue studies.



You might have heard that many students have been refused a visa grant. Why does that happen when all visa document requirements were complete? There are several reasons that make the students not prepared for the interview. Stress, misguidance and being misinformed make the top of the list. Students have not done their research and are too dependent on the Agents; this leads to miscommunication and missing out on some vital details the student needs to know.

While enrolled with Aston Pathway program, we will guide you to ensure that you are well prepared for the interview. With improved communications skill, a completed Australian Qualification, stress management course and well-researched Statement of Purpose and proper documents that we will prepare with you, your chance to get the student visa approval is very high.

Continuous Support

When I first moved to Australia, I did not have any one to guide me on my studies, job search and other needs. It is not very easy to move to a different country leaving behind your family who provided you with the safety net. We realise this, and we are there to support you at every step:

- Assist with accommodation and airport pickup
- Advise you on Job search and interview preparation
- Advise you on how to succeed with your studies in Australia

- Help with post study work visa and Permanent Residency in Australia

Once you become a part of Aston's family, you shall remain one at all times. We will be there to help you right from your own country till time you achieve your dreams. You are not alone in your journey. Your parents will also feel secured letting you go to new country.



Soft Skills or Employment Skills

Your studies will help you gain knowledge about the subject matter. What about the practical skills? What about the soft skills?

The employers not only look at your qualifications, but also want to know about your practical skills and soft skills. They are looking for people who can work in a team environment, can handle work pressure, work ethically, able to make proper presentation. There is a long list of soft skills required for good performance at work place.

When I first arrived in Australia after completing high school, I lacked in all these soft skills. I had to learn the hard way after losing a few jobs. If I had an opportunity to learn these skills before I arrived in Australia, my life could have been a lot easier.

Learning from my own experience, we have incorporated many soft skills to help you through your journey in Australia. These skills will help you find better jobs and perform better with opportunities of being full time employed on completion of your course. Remember the work experience counts towards the possibility of getting Permanent Residency.



Network = Net Worth

It is wisely said that a person's net worth is equal to its network. I have learnt over the years, that the company we keep either raises us or lowers us to the ground. I have met amazing people over the years through work but could not make many friends at College.

We all need friends. Apart from our family, they are our support system. You have friends in your home country, but when you move to Australia, it takes a lot of time to make friends. The loneliness and the initial struggle make things difficult. Will it not be great to have friends even before you arrive to Australia?

To help our students, we have formed a Facebook community group page. Every student from our campuses in different countries is a member of this exclusive community. They study together over

the online learning management system, communicate with each other, seek help when needed, essentially they become friends while they are in their respective countries.

Imagine that you are part of this community and are ready to fly to Australia. You need help in finding accommodation and airport pickup. All you will need to do is post it on the community page and help is readily available. Our previous students who are already in Australia can easily help you with job search or even with your studies. A strong community enables every member to grow together.



Define your Success by living your dream



My 'Why', your 'Choice'

Why I co-found Aston and what is in it for you and me?

THANK YOU for reading the eBook! As you can see, the entire idea of Aston's Pathway Program was from real life experience with lots improvement. We fine-tuned the details of it all to make it better for future students.

My why on this project? By working in the Education industry for so many years and having being an international student myself I could feel and see the many '*pain points*' in the industry. International students miss out on so many opportunities that could be life changing. By having Aston as a global platform I am part of the movement my team and co-founder believe in. My long-term plan includes having our graduates being part of our Talent crew growing our team. Together we can transform lives and strengthen communities through employment linked education and training.

What is in it for you? Perhaps grab a pen and paper or your smart phone, write down your current situation as well as the possible prospective way forward. Do not forget to add Aston Pathway Program to your list. I suggest you compare and see what best suits you on moving forward.

I hope you choose Aston College and be part of our Global team. We currently have operations in India, Pakistan, Philippines and Australia. With future openings in UAE, Africa, South America and South East Asia, we are coming to many countries and regions expanding on our love for transformations.

What next?

Here is an opportunity to save more towards your studies. Enrol now at one of our centres.

“Scholarship of AUD500 towards Diploma Course and up to 5% of tuition fees towards 1st Semester of Bachelors Degree in Australia”

Hurry!! Available for first 20 students only