ROADS AND PAVEMENTS CAREERS | QUEENSLAND

IS A CAREER IN ROADS RIGHT FOR YOUR FAMILY?



A TRADE IN ROADS IS A SMART, SECURE PATH, NOT A FALLBACK.

University is a great path for a lot of young people. But it isn't the *only* smart one. For a young-adult who learns by *doing*, it may not be the best one.

There's a whole industry that builds and maintains Queensland's roads, and it's crying out for people. It pays from day one. It carries no debt. And it hands your child skills the entire country is short of.

This isn't the consolation prize for kids who 'didn't get the marks'. For a practical, capable teenager, it's one of the smartest moves available right now.

	THE UNIVERSITY PATH	THE CIVIL / TRADES PATH
YEARS 1-4	Full/ Part-time studying with little or no income	Working and earning a salary from week one
DEBT	Finishes with an average $30,000+ HECS debt	No debt — training is government-funded
FIRST REAL PAY	Competative, uncertain job market. Salaries start around $65k–$70k after graduating	Secure, in-demand skills on $60k+ in year one, $80k–$100k by year four or five.
AFTER 5-YEARS	Beginning their career, paying off a loan	Years of experience, savings, and a head start

THE SALARY AND OPPOTUNITY GAP HAS CLOSED

Australia's road industry provides a career with a clear ladder — from first job, to skilled operator, to running a whole site, often past $120k. From there: their own business, or university later with credit for what they've already done. Their qualifications are nationally recognised and never expire.

Some university careers do earn more over a lifetime — if your child is set on medicine, law or the like, back them all the way. But for a great many degrees, the gap has closed.

A skilled trades career now competes with, and often beats, the average graduate outcome, without the debt or the wait.

THE MONEY

THEY EARN, THEY DON'T OWE

Paid from the first week. No HECS debt. In Queensland, government-funded training means the apprenticeship costs your family nothing.

THE SERCURITY

ALWAYS IN DEMAND

Australia is short around 300,000 construction workers by 2027. These skills are needed in every state and don't go out of date. It's one of the most secure bets going.

THE FUTURE

IT'S NOT A CEILING

A trade opens doors, it doesn't close them — supervisor, business owner, or university later. Your child keeps every option open.

WHERE COULD A CAREER IN ROADS TAKE YOU?

FURTHER THAN YOU THINK.

WANT IN?

Scan the code. See real jobs near you. Come chat at the booth, we'll tell you exactly where to start.

WHERE A TRADE ACTUALLY LEADS.

The worry is that a trade is a dead end. It isn't. Here's the honest path and the pay at every step. Your child can start with no experience, and climb as far as they're willing to work.

FIRST JOB, ON A CREW No experience, no debt, earning now	**$60–$75K**
QUALIFIED OPERATOR / TRADESPERSON Ticketed, skilled, in demand	**$80–$100K**
LEADING HAND / SUPERVISOR Running a crew and a site	**$100–$130K**
MANAGER / SPECIALIST / OWNER Runs projects, or their own business	**$140K+**

*Salary ranges are indicative of industry salary ranges as of August 2026.

IT COSTS YOU NOTHING

In Queensland, apprenticeships for under-25s are government-funded. Your child earns a wage while they train.

REGULATED, SAFE INDUSTRY

Modern construction is safety-first and tightly regulated. Every worker is trained and inducted before they set foot on a site.

HAVE THE CONVERSATION

Scan the code together to see real local jobs and the funded pathways.

And it doesn't stop at roads. The same start can lead into engineering, surveying, project management, or a business of their own — often with university credit for the qualifications they've already earned.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS PARENTS ASK

What if they change their mind? Road industry qualifications are nationally recognised and can count toward further study, including uni. Nothing is wasted.

Do they need to finish Year 12? Not for many entry roles. A school-based apprenticeship lets them start training while they finish school.

Is it physical labour forever? No. Many people move from crew work onto machines, then into supervising, within a few years

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