

Alternative education pathways

There are alternatives to teaching in the school setting. There are a range of organisations (e.g. museums, zoos, environmental parks, regional waste management groups) which require education officers. However, these positions are not easy to obtain:

- Most employment is sessional or short-term contracts
- Positions are dependent on availability of government funding
- Employment is unpredictable, and often full-time work is difficult to offer as the work is dependent on factors such as school groups/holiday programs bookings
- Positions in organisations such as Queenscliff Marine Discovery Centre, Science works, Melbourne Zoo, CERES are jewels in the crown of a teaching career and are often in high demand
- People often start as volunteers, may then be employed as sessional workers and then contract workers - they show commitment to the organisation and interest in what they do

Current recruitment practices

- Advertise in local papers and *The Age*
- Word of mouth is the most effective means of recruiting
- Many positions are also filled internally
- Organisations also advertise via relevant job sites such as [Envirojob Network](#)
- Advertise on the organisation's website
- Interviews are carried out and CVs are required

Disciplines/qualifications required

An Education degree is required for most Education Officer positions.

Extensive work experience in the area is highly regarded.

A degree in the field of employment is also highly regarded.

Identifying suitable applicants

These organizations used the following selection processes:

- CV
- Applications
- Interviews - also helps identify specific skills through hypothetical and competency based questions
- Trial periods

What sets one candidate apart from another

- The fact that the applicant enjoys working with children and/or adults
- The extra skills and experiences they can bring to the job
- Enthusiasm and passion for that field
- Flexibility
- Extra qualifications such as First Aid, Bronze Medallion
- The ability to be flexible in the delivery of their teaching

Advice for students

- You must be passionate about what you do
- Think outside the parameters of the classroom
- Volunteer for organisations now - get as much experience as possible
- Don't be afraid to reach out to the alternatives!

©This information has been collated on the basis of interviews conducted with various alternative education-related organisations in 2004/5 by Jobshop.