PAUL is a Curtin AHEAD initiative designed to help adult learners gain confidence, motivation, capacity and aspiration to participate and succeed in higher education.

AIM

Many adults who enrol in higher education need to adjust to higher education’s academic requirements. They might have inadequate study skills, be unsure about the expectations of studying at university level, or develop anxiety about their study.

The aim of the program is to develop a resource that builds confidence and competency in key academic skill areas experienced in a university learning environment prior to enrolment at higher education level and empower students to deal with future academic roadblocks.

APPROACH

This free 5-week program will involve participants engaging in approximately 10–25 hours a week of online and face to face contact time.

An online platform is developed to connect participants to free available resources and to enable them to navigate such resources.

Each week participants have set tasks to complete along with a diagnostic quiz. The quiz is designed to identify the learners competency level in specific academic skills.

Further capacity building within PAUL involves career pathway planning and various on-campus activities to help demystify university life.

OUTCOMES

The program will ultimately equip participants with skills to confidently reconnect with studying and broaden their social networks.

After the program participants can enrol in an enabling course if they don’t meet university entry requirements or apply to study at an undergraduate level.
PARTICIPANTS

PAUL is designed for mature aged participants. The program will be offered to clients of partner organisations such as job service providers.

ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

Many mature age students find it more practical to study online due to multiple responsibilities and work commitments. However, many struggle to navigate through online platforms which can negatively impact on the learners motivation and ability to engage in their studies.

Therefore, PAUL is strategically positioned within an online platform to expose students to facets of typical university online platforms such as Oasis and Blackboard. Participants will go through the process of activating their account, navigating through online resources, interacting with peers through online discussion boards, submitting quizzes online and managing notifications.

ACADEMIC SKILLS

The program focuses on the following learning skills:

Literacy
- Writing style
- Paragraph structure
- Writing thesis statements
- Sentence length and complexity

Mathematics
- Basic maths
- Calculator skills

Study Skills
- Academic Integrity
- Referencing
- Team work

Professional Development
- Career development
- Pathway planning
- Interview skills
- Resume writing
- Leadership skills
- Tools for making change

Capacity Building
- Navigating online platforms & resources
- Digital learning
- Stress management
- Self-awareness

ACTIVITIES

University Campus Tour
Participants have the opportunity to experience a personalised tour of Curtin University and learn about university culture. A university information fair will be held at this event to connect students to campus health and support services, leisure facilities and various faculties.

Library Activities
The library activities will involve game-based learning and augmented reality technology to teach participants both digital and information literacy skills. Participants will be taught to use a variety of educational apps and technologies engaging them with the library's collections and resources, while improving their information searching, evaluation and referencing skills in an enjoyable way.

Career Development
This session will assist participants in making informed choices about their career and educational pathways as well as providing them with an appropriate method for good decision making.

Interview Skills
This workshop will explore how to prepare for interviews, strategies to overcome nerves and answer common interview questions. Participants will learn a variety of skills and techniques to help them perform effectively at interviews.

Resume Writing
This workshop is designed to equip participants with practical skills to help them find and secure employment. Participants will learn how to present themselves effectively to employers and recruiters on paper and in person, and develop strategies to help them stand out from other applicants.

Leadership Development
This workshop will explore what leadership means and provides a platform for participants to identify skills they already have and those they want to develop. These skills will enable them to have a positive impact in their community.

Tools for Making Change
Participants will discover the process of making changes in their life and learn tools that will enable them to kick old habits and stick to new ones. Overall, this workshop will explore how small changes can lead to great achievements.

Celebration Event
Participants will be rewarded with a final celebration event, where they will have the opportunity to receive formal recognition of their learning achievements and future ambitions.

This program receives support from the Australian Government Department of Education