

DP TRAINING

GRADUATE CAREER SERIES



Certificate III to Career

Resume & Interview Guide

For Certificate III in Individual Support Graduates

A practical, step-by-step guide to securing your first paid role in aged care, disability support, or community care

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WELCOME

From Student to Support Worker

Congratulations on completing your Certificate III in Individual Support.

You have invested time, effort and genuine care into developing the skills needed to support people through some of the most significant moments of their lives. Whether you are heading into aged care, disability support, home and community care, or residential care, you are entering an industry where skilled, compassionate workers are needed more than almost anywhere else in the Australian workforce.

But finishing your qualification is only the first step. The next one — turning that qualification into a job offer — is the one most graduates find hardest, because nobody actually teaches it. Questions like these are completely normal at this stage:

- “I’ve never had a paid job in care — how do I write a resume that looks credible?”
- “How do I make 120 hours of placement sound like real experience?”
- “What do I actually say in an interview when I’m nervous?”
- “What are employers really looking for from a new graduate?”
- “How do I compete against applicants who already have years of experience?”

This guide answers each of those questions directly, with real examples, templates and worksheets you can use immediately — not just theory.

By the end of this guide, you will be able to:

- ✓ **Write** a professional resume that gets past both a human reader and an ATS (applicant tracking system)
- ✓ **Turn** your placement hours into genuine, employable experience on paper
- ✓ **Write** a cover letter that makes a hiring manager want to meet you
- ✓ **Understand** what NDIS and aged care employers are actually screening for
- ✓ **Answer** the interview questions support workers are asked most often, using the STAR method
- ✓ **Avoid** the small mistakes that quietly cost graduates job offers
- ✓ **Search** and apply strategically instead of randomly, using a real 30-day plan

How to use this guide

Read it end to end once, then come back to it as a working tool: fill in the worksheets in Chapters 16 and 18, copy and adapt the sample resume and cover letter in Chapters 6 and 8, and keep the interview cheat sheet in Chapter 12 open while you rehearse out loud.

CHAPTER 1

Understanding the Individual Support Industry

Before you send a single application, it helps to understand the sector you're entering — because that understanding is exactly what employers are listening for at interview.

The care sector is one of the fastest-growing parts of the Australian economy. Demand keeps climbing because of:

- Australia's ageing population and rising demand for home care packages
- Continued growth of NDIS-funded disability support
- Expansion of home and community care as more people choose to age or recover at home
- Ongoing workforce shortages across metro, regional and rural areas

Common job titles for Certificate III graduates

Depending on the setting, the same qualification opens the door to several different job titles. Search for all of these, not just one, when you're job hunting:

- Personal Care Assistant (PCA) / Care Assistant
- Aged Care Worker / Residential Care Worker
- Disability Support Worker
- Community Support Worker / Home Care Worker
- Support Worker (a broad title used across all three settings)

What employers want most

Here's something that surprises a lot of new graduates: employers rarely expect years of paid experience from a Certificate III graduate. What they are assessing is whether you can be trusted with a vulnerable person on day one. That comes down to attitude and values as much as skill.

Organisations can teach their own systems, paperwork and shift routines. What they cannot easily teach is:

- Compassion and patience
- Reliability — turning up, on time, every rostered shift
- Professionalism and respect for privacy and dignity
- Integrity, especially when no one is watching
- A genuinely positive, can-do attitude

Remember this line

Employers hire for skills. They keep people for attitude. Every resume, cover letter and interview answer in this guide is built around proving both.

CHAPTER 2

Understanding NDIS and Aged Care Employers

New graduates often apply to every listing that mentions “support worker” without realising that aged care and disability support are regulated differently — and employers expect you to know the difference. Understanding it will help you tailor your resume and sound confident at interview.

Aged care employers

Aged care providers (residential facilities, home care package providers, and Support at Home services) are regulated under the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and must meet the Aged Care Quality Standards. Interviewers in this space often ask about dignity, choice, falls prevention, and supporting people living with dementia.

NDIS employers

Disability support work is largely funded through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Many providers are NDIS-registered and must meet the NDIS Practice Standards and Code of Conduct. Interviewers here often focus on person-centred practice, choice and control, dignity of risk, and behaviour support.

The three types of employers you’ll come across

Employer type	What it means for you
Registered provider (agency)	You are employed by an organisation (rostered shifts, supervision, ongoing training, usually the easiest entry point for new graduates).
Individual / self-managed platforms	Apps such as Mable and Hireup connect you directly with participants or families. More flexibility, but you manage your own bookings and, on some platforms, your own ABN.
Government and community programs	Home care package providers and community health services, often funded through aged care or NDIS packages, with structured supervision similar to a registered provider.

Interview tip

If a job ad mentions NDIS, mention person-centred practice and choice and control in your answers. If it mentions aged care or a residential facility, mention dignity, falls prevention and the Aged Care Quality Standards. Small changes like this show an interviewer you’ve done your homework.

CHAPTER 3

Building a Resume That Gets Noticed

Your resume is usually your first impression — and most hiring managers spend less than 30 seconds on a first read before deciding whether to keep going. A clear, well-structured resume dramatically increases your chance of being shortlisted.

The basic resume structure

Every strong support-worker resume follows the same six-part structure. Use this as your checklist, then read on below for how to write each section well.

Section	What goes here
Contact details	Name, phone number, email, suburb or city
Professional summary	A short summary of your strengths and goals
Key skills	Your most relevant abilities
Education	Certificate III in Individual Support and any other training
Experience	Placement, volunteering, casual work, or related experience
Referees	People who can speak about your work ethic

1. Contact details

Include:

- Full name
- Mobile number
- A professional email address
- Suburb and state (a full street address is not necessary)
- LinkedIn profile (optional, but worth setting up)

Get it right

- ✗ Nicknames or unprofessional email addresses (e.g. partygirl1998@email.com)
- ✗ More than one phone number — pick the one you actually answer
- ✓ A simple first.last@email.com address (e.g. jessicasmith@email.com)

2. Professional summary

Three to five lines, written in the first person or as short statements, covering who you are, your qualification, your key strengths, and what you're aiming for.

Example

Dedicated and compassionate Certificate III in Individual Support graduate with practical placement experience in residential aged care. Demonstrated ability to provide person-centred support while maintaining dignity, privacy and safety. Strong communicator, reliable, and committed to delivering high-quality care while continuing my professional development.

3. Key skills section

Tailor this section to each job ad — mirror the exact words the employer uses wherever it's true of you. This matters more than most graduates realise (see Chapter 4 on keywords).

Technical / role-specific skills

- Personal care assistance
- Infection prevention and control
- Manual handling awareness
- Documentation and progress-note reporting
- Medication assistance / prompting awareness
- Mobility support and use of aids
- Dementia care awareness

Soft skills

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Empathy
- Time management
- Problem-solving
- Emotional resilience
- Cultural sensitivity

4. Education

List your most recent and most relevant qualification first. Keep this section short and factual — the detail belongs in your Experience section, not here.

- Qualification name and code (e.g. Certificate III in Individual Support — CHC33021)
- Training provider and location (e.g. DP Training, Gold Coast QLD)
- Completion date, or “expected completion [month/year]” if you're finishing shortly
- Any other relevant training — First Aid, CPR, Manual Handling, Mental Health First Aid, short courses

If you completed Year 12 or other study before your Certificate III, you can list it briefly underneath — but your Certificate III should always be the first, most prominent line in this section.

5. Experience

This is usually the longest section of your resume, and the one new graduates worry about most. It should include your placement, any paid work (even outside care), and volunteering — all of it counts as experience employers want to see.

- Student placement — always include this, written the way Chapter 5 shows you, with specific tasks and responsibilities, not just hours completed
- Volunteering — aged care, disability, community, or even unrelated volunteering shows reliability and care for others
- Casual or part-time work — retail, hospitality and customer service jobs all demonstrate reliability, communication and teamwork, which are directly transferable
- List experience in reverse chronological order (most recent first) and use action verbs for every bullet point

For a full worked example of how to describe placement experience specifically, see Chapter 5.

6. Referees

Most employers ask for two referees who can speak to your reliability, attitude and (where possible) your care skills. Choose people who know your work firsthand, not just character references from friends or family.

Good referee choices

- ✓ Your placement supervisor or a staff member who directly oversaw your placement
- ✓ Your trainer or assessor at DP Training
- ✓ A current or previous employer, even from an unrelated job — they can speak to your reliability and work ethic

Before you list anyone

- ✗ Never list someone as a referee without asking them first
 - ✗ Don't use a friend or family member as your only referee
 - ✓ Let your referees know when you've applied for a role, so they aren't caught off guard by a call
- Format it simply — name, job title, organisation, phone number and email. If a job ad doesn't ask for referee details upfront, it's fine to write "Referees available on request" instead, as shown in the sample resume in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 4

Top 20 Keywords Employers Search For

Many aged care and disability employers — especially larger providers — use an applicant tracking system (ATS) or a recruiter keyword scan before a human ever reads your resume. If the exact words from the job ad don't appear anywhere in your resume, you can be filtered out before you're seen. Use the words below wherever they genuinely apply to you, and always mirror the specific phrasing used in the ad.

Category	Keywords to use where true
Person-centred practice	Person-centred care · dignity of risk · choice and control · duty of care · informed consent
Core clinical / physical support	Activities of daily living (ADLs) · personal hygiene support · manual handling · mobility assistance · medication assistance
Specialist care areas	Dementia care · palliative care awareness · behaviour support · complex care needs
Safety & compliance	Infection prevention and control · Work Health and Safety (WHS) · incident reporting · NDIS Practice Standards · Aged Care Quality Standards
Documentation	Care planning · progress notes · case notes · documentation and reporting
Interpersonal	Communication · cultural safety / cultural sensitivity · teamwork · empathy · reliability

How to use this list

Don't just paste every keyword into your resume — that reads as generic and can look dishonest. Pick the ones that genuinely reflect your placement and training, and weave them naturally into your key skills section and placement bullet points.

CHAPTER 5

Turning Placement Experience into Employable Experience

The single biggest mistake graduates make is underselling their placement. Placement is real industry experience — employers know that new graduates won't yet have paid experience, and they read placement sections closely to judge what you're capable of.

The difference is entirely in how you describe it.

Weak

X Completed 120 hours of placement.

Strong

Student Placement — Residential Aged Care Facility

- Assisted residents with activities of daily living, including showering, dressing and grooming
- Supported personal hygiene needs while maintaining dignity, privacy and choice
- Maintained infection control procedures and workplace safety standards
- Communicated effectively with residents, families and care staff
- Observed and reported changes in resident wellbeing to supervising staff
- Contributed to person-centred care delivery under supervision

Notice the difference: the strong version demonstrates capability, not just attendance. Use action verbs (assisted, supported, maintained, communicated, observed, contributed) and describe what you actually did, for whom, and how.

If you had more than one placement

List each placement separately with its own heading and bullet points — don't merge them into one vague block. Different settings (residential aged care vs. community/home care vs. disability) show breadth, which is worth highlighting.

CHAPTER 6

Sample Resume: Before and After, Plus a Full Template

Below is a complete, ready-to-adapt resume for a fictional graduate, Jessica Chen. Copy the structure, replace the details with your own, and delete anything that doesn't apply to you.

JESSICA CHEN

0412 345 678 · jessicachen@email.com · Southport, QLD · linkedin.com/in/jessicachen

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Dedicated and compassionate Certificate III in Individual Support graduate with hands-on placement experience across residential aged care and community disability support. Demonstrated ability to provide person-centred, dignified care while following safety and infection-control procedures. Reliable, calm under pressure, and committed to building a long-term career supporting people to live with independence and quality of life.

KEY SKILLS

- Personal care assistance & activities of daily living (ADLs)
- Manual handling & mobility support
- Infection prevention and control
- Dementia care awareness
- Documentation, progress notes & incident reporting
- Person-centred care & dignity of risk
- Communication with residents, participants, families & care teams
- Cultural safety & working with diverse communities

EDUCATION

Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing, Disability) — CHC33021

DP Training, Gold Coast QLD — Completed [Month Year]

PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE

Student Placement — Sunrise Residential Aged Care

80 hours · [Month Year]

- Assisted residents with showering, dressing and grooming while maintaining dignity and privacy
- Supported meal-time assistance and monitored fluid and food intake
- Followed infection control and manual handling procedures at all times
- Reported changes in resident wellbeing promptly to supervising care staff

Student Placement — Community Access Disability Services

40 hours · [Month Year]

- Supported participants in community access activities, promoting choice and independence
- Assisted with personal care tasks in line with individual support plans
- Communicated respectfully with participants with diverse communication needs

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Retail Assistant — Coles Supermarkets

Southport, QLD — [Month Year] to Present

- Provided friendly, reliable customer service in a fast-paced environment
- Worked flexible shifts including early mornings, evenings and weekends
- Recognised by management for punctuality and teamwork

CERTIFICATIONS

- Certificate III in Individual Support (CHC33021)
- First Aid & CPR (HLTAID011, HLTAID009)
- National Police Check — current
- NDIS Worker Screening Check — current

REFEREES

Available on request.

Before and after: turning a weak bullet into a strong one

Before (weak)	After (strong)
Helped residents.	Assisted residents with activities of daily living, including personal hygiene, dressing and mobility.
Did placement at an aged care home.	Completed 80 hours of supervised placement at a residential aged care facility, supporting person-centred care delivery.
Good with people.	Built trusted relationships with residents and families through calm, respectful communication.
Learned about safety.	Applied infection control and manual handling procedures in line with workplace policy.

CHAPTER 7

Creating a Winning Cover Letter

Many applicants skip the cover letter. That's a missed opportunity — it's the one place you get to explain, in your own words, why you want this role and why you're a good fit for this specific employer, not just "a job".

Keep it to three or four short paragraphs on one page:

- Paragraph 1 — the role you're applying for and why it caught your attention
- Paragraph 2 — your qualification and the strengths your placement demonstrated
- Paragraph 3 — why this organisation specifically (mention something real about them)
- Paragraph 4 — a confident closing line inviting an interview

Full sample cover letter

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to apply for the Disability Support Worker position advertised on Seek. Having recently completed my Certificate III in Individual Support with DP Training, I am eager to begin my career supporting people to achieve greater independence and quality of life.

During my placement with a community disability service, I supported participants with personal care and community access activities, always working to promote their choice, dignity and independence. I also completed placement in residential aged care, where I developed strong communication skills and a solid understanding of manual handling and infection control procedures under supervision.

I was drawn to this role because of your organisation's reputation for person-centred, community-based support, and I would welcome the opportunity to bring my reliability, patience and genuine care to your team.

I have attached my resume and would welcome the opportunity to discuss how I can contribute to your team. Thank you for considering my application.

Kind regards, Jessica Chen

CHAPTER 8

Essential Documents Employers May Request

Many graduates focus only on the resume, but most care employers require additional documentation before you can start. Getting these sorted before you apply — not after you get an interview — puts you ahead of most other applicants.

Usually mandatory

- ☐ Resume
- ☐ Cover letter
- ☐ Certificate III in Individual Support (certified copy or Statement of Attainment)
- ☐ National Police Check (current, generally within 12 months)
- ☐ NDIS Worker Screening Check (for NDIS-registered providers)
- ☐ Working with Children Check (where the role involves younger clients)
- ☐ First Aid Certificate
- ☐ CPR Certificate (note: CPR typically needs renewing every 12 months, First Aid every 3 years)

Advantageous but not always required

- ☐ Driver's licence and access to a reliable vehicle (essential for many community/home care roles)
- ☐ Manual handling refresher training
- ☐ Dementia care training
- ☐ Mental Health First Aid

Save yourself time

Scan or photograph every certificate now and save them in one folder on your phone and email, named clearly (e.g. "Jessica_Chen_FirstAid.pdf"). You will be asked for these repeatedly — having them ready to attach in seconds looks professional and speeds up onboarding.

CHAPTER 9

Mastering the Interview

Every interview question, no matter how it's phrased, is really testing one of three things. Knowing this helps you understand what to actually emphasise in your answers.

1. Can you do the job?

Assessed through: your knowledge, your placement experience, and your understanding of core care principles.

2. Will you fit the team?

Assessed through: how you communicate, your professionalism, and your general attitude in the room.

3. Can they trust you?

Assessed through: your reliability, accountability, and how you talk about ethics and boundaries.

Before you go in

For every answer you prepare, ask yourself: does this show I can do the job, that I'll fit the team, and that they can trust me? If an answer only proves one of the three, add a sentence that covers another.

CHAPTER 10

The Most Common Interview Questions

Why do you want to work in care?

Strong answer

"I enjoy helping people maintain their independence and quality of life. I find real satisfaction in supporting others and making a positive difference to their day. Through my studies and placement, I realised a career in support work aligns closely with my own values."

How would you respond if a client refused care?

Strong answer

"I would stay calm and respectful, try to understand their concerns, and explain the purpose of the support being offered. I would respect their right to make decisions while following organisational procedures and informing my supervisor where necessary."

What does person-centred care mean to you?

Strong answer

"Person-centred care means placing the individual at the centre of every decision — respecting their preferences, choices, culture, goals and independence, while providing support that's tailored to their needs, not a one-size-fits-all routine."

Tell me about yourself.

Strong answer

"I recently completed my Certificate III in Individual Support, with placement experience in both aged care and disability support. Before that I worked in retail, which taught me reliability and how to communicate with all kinds of people. I'm looking to build a long-term career in a role where I can put that care and communication to real use."

Why should we choose you over someone with more experience?

Strong answer

"I understand experienced candidates bring a track record, but I bring genuine enthusiasm, up-to-date training, and no bad habits to unlearn. My placement supervisors noted my reliability and the way I connected with residents, and I'm fully committed to learning your systems quickly."

CHAPTER 11

Behavioural Interview Questions & the STAR Method

Many employers now use behavioural interviewing — questions that start with “Tell me about a time...”, “Describe a situation...” or “Give an example of...”. These are asking for a real story, not a general opinion, so prepare three or four placement stories in advance using the STAR method.

Letter	What to cover
Situation	Briefly set the scene — where and when this happened.
Task	What was your responsibility in that moment?
Action	What did you specifically do? (This is the longest part of your answer.)
Result	What was the outcome — and what did you learn?

Worked example

Question: “Tell me about a time you worked as part of a team.”

Answer

“During placement, our team was supporting several residents during a busy morning shift. I noticed a staff member needed help transferring a resident safely, so I offered support and followed correct manual handling procedure. As a result, the resident was assisted safely and the morning routine stayed on schedule.”

Prepare your own STAR stories now

Think of one real example for each of these, and jot down the Situation, Task, Action and Result for each before your next interview:

- A time you worked well as part of a team
- A time you handled a difficult or emotional situation calmly
- A time you noticed something wrong and reported it
- A time you had to communicate with someone who found communication difficult

CHAPTER 12

Interview Answer Cheat Sheet

A quick-reference table you can review in the car park before you go in. For each question, focus on hitting the key points — in your own words, not word-for-word.

Question	What they're really assessing	Hit these points
Tell me about yourself	Can you summarise clearly & stay relevant?	Qualification → placement highlight → relevant past work → what you want next
Why this organisation?	Have you actually researched us?	Something specific and true about them — their values, services or reputation
Describe your placement experience	Can you turn hours into evidence of skill?	Setting, tasks performed, one specific outcome or piece of feedback
How do you handle a difficult client / challenging behaviour?	Can you stay calm and safe?	Stay calm → don't take it personally → follow the care plan → escalate/report appropriately
Describe a time you made a mistake	Are you honest and coachable?	Own it briefly → what you did to fix it → what you learned — no blame-shifting
What are your strengths?	Self-awareness relevant to the role	1–2 strengths tied directly to care work, with a brief example
What is your biggest weakness?	Honesty + growth mindset	A real, minor weakness plus a concrete step you're taking to improve it
Are you available for shift work, including nights and weekends?	Reliability and flexibility	Be specific and honest about your real availability — don't overpromise
How do you manage stress or a heavy workload?	Resilience and self-care	A real coping strategy, plus recognising when to ask for support
Do you have any questions for us?	Genuine interest in the role	Always have 2–3 ready — see the callout below

Always ask a question back

Good options: “What does a typical shift or day look like in this role?” · “What training or support is provided for new graduates?” · “What do you enjoy most about working here?” Asking nothing can read as disinterest.

CHAPTER 13

Red Flags That Can Cost You a Job

These small mistakes are more common than you'd think — and interviewers notice every one of them.

- ✗ Arriving late (aim to arrive 10 minutes early, every time)
- ✗ Criticising previous employers, teachers or placement supervisors
- ✗ Checking or using your phone during the interview
- ✗ Giving vague answers with no specific examples
- ✗ Interrupting the interviewer
- ✗ Wearing inappropriate or overly casual clothing
- ✗ Being unable to clearly explain what you actually did on placement

Simple fix

The single biggest protection against most of these is preparation: know your placement stories, dress neatly (smart casual is a safe default), and arrive early with your documents printed or saved and ready to show.

CHAPTER 14

Standing Out from Other Applicants

You don't need years of experience to stand out — you need evidence of initiative, professionalism and commitment. Here's what that looks like in practice:

Initiative

Example

"I completed additional online dementia care training after finishing my placement."

Professionalism

Example

"I regularly ask my supervisors for feedback so I can keep improving."

Commitment

Example

"I'm not just looking for any job — I'm looking to build a long-term career in this sector."

CHAPTER 15

Building Confidence if English Is Your Second Language

DP Training has graduates from a huge range of language backgrounds, and that diversity is genuinely valued in aged care and disability support — many clients and families prefer, or specifically need, a worker who shares their language or culture. If English isn't your first language, here's how to walk into an interview with confidence.

Before the interview

- Write out and practise your answers to the questions in Chapters 10–12 out loud, not just in your head — speaking is a different skill from reading
- Practise with a friend, family member, or classmate and ask them to ask you follow-up questions
- Prepare a short, simple, well-rehearsed version of your “tell me about yourself” answer — it's the one question you can guarantee will come up
- It's completely fine to write brief notes and glance at them if you're attending a phone or video interview

During the interview

- If you don't catch a question, it is professional — not weak — to say: “Could you please repeat that?” or “Could you rephrase that for me?”
- Take a short pause to think before answering — a considered answer is always better than a rushed one
- Speak a little slower than feels natural — clarity matters more than speed
- If you mention that you speak another language, frame it as a strength: many clients and families specifically value bilingual workers

A note on qualifications and confidence

You completed the same Certificate III as every other graduate. Your English doesn't need to be perfect — it needs to be clear enough to support someone safely and communicate with the team, which your placement has already proven you can do.

If you want extra support

DP Training's student support team can help with interview practice and English communication support — ask your trainer or student services team what's available before you start applying.

CHAPTER 16

Job Search Websites and Recruitment Agencies

Don't rely on a single website. Set up alerts on several, and check them a few times a week — new aged care and disability roles are posted constantly.

DP Training Talent Marketplace

- The DP Training Talent Marketplace is the connection point between students, employers, and industry partners.
- It is designed to transform industry partnerships into real opportunities by enabling workplace exposure, vocational placement, and career pathway development across multiple sectors.
- This platform supports DP Training's broader industry partnerships ecosystem across Australia.

Check out potential job opportunities at our [Talent Marketplace](#)

General job boards

- Seek — Australia's largest job board; set a saved search and email alert for "support worker" / "aged care" / "disability support" in your area
- Indeed — similar to Seek, often lists smaller and regional providers
- Jora — aggregates listings from many other sites into one search
- LinkedIn Jobs — also useful for following aged care and disability providers directly, so you see roles as soon as they're posted
- Workforce Australia — the Australian Government's free jobs service

Sector-specific platforms

- Mable — a platform connecting independent support workers directly with clients in aged care and disability
- Hireup — an NDIS-registered platform for disability support (also now offering aged care support work)
- HealthTimes — a healthcare and aged care-focused job board

Recruitment agencies

Specialist healthcare and community services recruitment agencies place candidates directly with aged care and disability providers, often for casual and temp-to-permanent roles — a great way to get your first paid shifts while you keep applying elsewhere. Search "aged care recruitment agency" or "disability support recruitment agency" plus your region to find agencies operating locally.

Don't forget direct applications

Many aged care facilities and disability providers list current vacancies on their own "Careers" page before — or instead of — posting to Seek. Make a shortlist of five to ten providers in your area and check their websites directly each week.

CHAPTER 17**Your 30-Day Job Search Action Plan**

Job searching without a plan leads to random, low-energy applications. This structure keeps you moving with a clear goal each week.

Week 1 — Get ready

- ☐ Update your resume using the template in Chapter 6
- ☐ Write your cover letter using the template in Chapter 7
- ☐ Gather and scan all documents from Chapter 8
- ☐ Create profiles on Seek, Indeed and any sector-specific platforms from Chapter 16

Week 2 — Start applying

- ☐ Apply for 5–10 suitable positions
- ☐ Contact your placement provider or trainer for a reference
- ☐ Join relevant Facebook and community employment groups in your area

Week 3 — Interview mode

- ☐ Practise your answers from Chapters 10–12 out loud
- ☐ Attend interviews — arrive 10 minutes early with documents ready
- ☐ Follow up on applications you haven't heard back from after a week

Week 4 — Reflect and keep going

- ☐ Reflect honestly on any interview feedback you received
- ☐ Keep applying — don't stop after one or two knock-backs
- ☐ Consider a short additional course (e.g. dementia care, manual handling refresher) to strengthen your next application

Set your own goals

Fill this in before you start:

My target job titles: _____

My target locations / travel radius: _____

My target start date: _____

Applications I will send per week: _____

My accountability person (who will check in on my progress):

Remember

Finding your first role may take time, but every application sharpens your resume, your confidence and your interview skills. Progress is progress, even when it doesn't feel like it.

APPENDIX

Interview Preparation Worksheet

Print this page, or copy it into your notes app, and fill it in before every interview.

Why do you want this role?

What did you learn during placement that's relevant to this job?

What are your three strongest strengths for this role?

Your best example of teamwork (Situation / Task / Action / Result):

Your best example of communicating with someone in a difficult moment:

Two or three questions you will ask the interviewer:

1.

2.

What you'll wear / when you'll leave to arrive 10 minutes early:

FINAL THOUGHTS

Every Experienced Support Worker Started Exactly Where You Are Now

The care industry needs compassionate, dedicated, professional support workers — and as a new graduate, you already carry real, valuable knowledge and hands-on experience from your studies and placement.

Focus on presenting your strengths clearly, showing your genuine commitment to person-centred care, and demonstrating to employers that you're eager to learn and contribute from day one.

Your first opportunity could be just one application away.