

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### TOP OF THE CLASS: LAST YEAR'S ATAR HIGH ACHIEVERS SHARE ADVICE FOR 2022 GRADUATES ON THE EVE OF RECEIVING THEIR RESULTS

TAKE a deep breath, celebrate your achievements and keep an open and positive mindset about what comes next. That's the advice for Year 12 school leavers as they prepare for the release of their ATAR results on Friday, December 16.

Aditya 'Adi' Neurgaonkar and Samantha Atherton both lived the excitement and stress of the ATAR countdown last year as their secondary schooling came to a close.

While both were thrilled to secure the highest ATAR of 99.95, the different paths they've travelled during the past year showcase ATAR as an avenue of excitement and possibility, rather than the single defining moment of a young life.

Samantha, who attended Brisbane Girls Grammar School, is looking to become a doctor.

She decided not to go straight into her top preference of medicine, but to first study a three-year Bachelor of Health Sciences at Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra, with significant financial support through a Tuckwell Scholarship.

"I chose ANU in the end because I wanted to have the experience of college and moving out of home," she said. "I'm from a big family so having that independence was a pretty big drawcard."

Adi, who attended Brisbane State High School, did accept his first preference and is now studying engineering at University of Queensland (UQ). With his eye on a career in aerospace, and a list of desirable employers including Airbus and NASA, he's also training for his pilot's licence.

"It's really fun, but it's not nearly as epic an adrenalin rush as *Top Gun*, as I'm only flying a single-engine propellor aircraft," he said with a laugh.

Adi, who had always wanted to study at UQ for its facilities and access to research, didn't need his 99.95 ATAR for entry as his combined Honours and Masters program in engineering had a cut-off of 97.

But the result did see him secure both a Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship and a scholarship with the Liveris Academy, which helps future leaders develop in areas such as critical thinking.

It's meant he has spent his first year of tertiary study keeping his options open and enjoying the experience for what it is, an attitude he encourages among graduates ahead of their ATAR release.

"The first thing I would say is that these Year 12 students should be incredibly proud of themselves for putting in an enormous effort, not just for Year 11 and 12, but during all of primary and high school,"

he said. “Also, just to take in the experience, as it’s pretty unique and something that will never come again.”

Samantha agreed. “In the end you’ve done all you can, so have fun and recognise that this is also the end of your schooling.”

She also noted an ATAR score was not the be all and end all, with QTAC available to talk students through their options moving forward.

“I have plenty of friends who were concerned with their ATAR initially but have had amazing experiences this year,” she said.

“A lot of people also don’t realise there are so many opportunities to change your degree later on – many of my friends transferred to a different degree in their first semester.”

Adi said while ATAR might understandably seem like “everything” at the moment, students should remember it wasn’t the only pathway to tertiary study.

“One of my friends is looking at getting into engineering next year,” he said.

“He’s currently studying at TAFE and is doing similar content to what we’ve covered this year. So there are alternate pathways if you don’t get the ATAR you were hoping for.”

It’s all about treating the result as a starting point and then talking to QTAC about potential options and pathways to tertiary study.

ATAR results for Queensland Year 12 students will be released on Friday, December 16 from 8am. For more information visit [qtac.edu.au](http://qtac.edu.au)

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## ABOUT QTAC

*The Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) operates a centralised tertiary application service for 16 higher education providers in Queensland and Northern New South Wales, across both undergraduate and postgraduate admissions. QTAC has been providing potential students and education institutions, employers and governments with the opportunity to connect and create long lasting productive relationships over the past 40 years, by delivering a range of education opportunities*