

& TRAINING SKILLS COMMISSION

VET programs for school students

A good practice guide for South
Australian secondary schools



**Government
of South Australia**

Training and Skills
Commission

Better Skills, Better Work, Better State

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Training and Skills Commission
GPO Box 320, Adelaide SA 5001

Telephone: (08) 8226 3462

Facsimile: (08) 8226 1523

Email: tasc@sa.gov.au

Website: www.tasc.sa.gov.au



Message from the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills

The State Government is committed to ensuring young people make a successful transition from school to further study and work. Central to this commitment is ensuring that all young people receive a solid primary and secondary education, with the flexibility to plan study programs tailored to their post school ambitions.

Each year, more and more young people learn skills for work while they are still at school. By combining senior secondary education with vocational training, these young people are gaining industry skills which put them on a pathway to a job or further study.

The Training and Skills Commission has estimated that South Australia's vocational education and training (VET) system will need to deliver more than 200,000 qualifications over the next five years. Young people can get a head-start by starting a qualification while they are completing their secondary education.

The Commission believes, as I do, that young people deserve the highest quality VET experience possible. We also believe that school staff including principals, teachers, VET coordinators and careers counsellors must have access to clear, comprehensive information about the VET system, so they can assist students who want to combine schooling with vocational training.

This guide has been produced by the Training and Skills Commission, in close consultation with the schooling sectors, to respond to these imperatives.

I trust it will be a valuable resource for school staff working with young people to develop quality VET programs.

Tom Kenyon MP

Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills

About the guide

The Training and Skills Commission has developed this guide as a resource for staff working in schools who are responsible for developing, accessing or delivering vocational education and training (VET) programs for senior secondary students.

Over the past two years, the Commission has undertaken extensive work in relation to VET programs for school students, in collaboration with stakeholders including the SACE Board, the three schooling sectors, training providers, industry and unions. This work has focussed on ensuring that there are adequate quality assurance mechanisms in place, and that pathways issues are a primary consideration in policy and program development. It has also highlighted the importance of empowering schools, students and parents to make informed decisions about VET in schools.

This guide is a direct result of that collaborative work.

The guide provides schools with information and advice to assist in making informed decisions when choosing or developing VET programs.

This includes information about:

- the options schools can choose from to access VET programs for students
- the legal and practical responsibilities of schools
- how to identify local industry demand for skills
- what to look for to ensure quality training arrangements
- how to develop partnerships with training providers
- useful resources, including who to contact with quality concerns.

The guide has been developed in consultation with the three schooling sectors in South Australia, the SACE Board of South Australia, Business SA, SA Unions and the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology (DFEEST).

This guide is available on the Commission's website: www.tasc.sa.gov.au or in hard copy from the Office of TaSC (contact details inside front cover).



Training and Skills Commission

The Training and Skills Commission is established under the *Training and Skills Development Act 2008* to advise the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills on skills and workforce development priorities for South Australia.

The Commission is responsible for monitoring quality assurance of VET, and promoting pathways between the secondary school, VET, adult community education and higher education sectors.

In March 2012 the Commission's regulatory functions relating to the registration of training providers and the accreditation of courses moved to the national regulator Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). However, the Commission maintains a strong watching brief on the quality assurance of VET in South Australia including VET programs for school students.

The Commission retains its regulatory responsibility for traineeships and apprenticeships (including school-based traineeships and apprenticeships) under the Act.

“The guide provides schools with information and advice to assist in making informed decisions when choosing or developing VET programs.”

What is vocational education and training (VET)?

Vocational education and training (VET) is nationally recognised training and assessment that results in a qualification or Statement of Attainment, based on the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

The AQF is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It incorporates the qualifications from each education and training sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework - from senior secondary school to higher education.

Qualifications in the VET sector provide students with pathways to work and further study that are recognised across the nation. They are delivered by registered training organisations (RTOs).

To be registered as an RTO, an organisation must demonstrate to the registering body (ASQA) that it meets the national registration standards which ensure a consistent, high quality VET system. Once registered, an RTO can issue qualifications and Statements of Attainment under the AQF.

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) has recently published a *Guide to Vocational Education and Training in Australia*, available at www.ncver.edu.au

What is VET for school students?

VET in schools (as it is commonly known) simply refers to any recognised VET study that students undertake while they are still enrolled in a secondary school. Significant numbers of school students in South Australia undertake VET while at school.

The options for accessing VET while still enrolled at school are outlined in this guide. It is important to note that school students who study VET programs do so in a variety of settings (which may or may not be at a school) and under a range of different arrangements.

Prior to handing over to ASQA its function of regulating RTOs, the Training and Skills Commission introduced additional requirements in South Australia, preventing RTOs from delivering to school students without prior approval from the Commission. These requirements were introduced to promote quality outcomes for students by ensuring providers have in place appropriate delivery arrangements and learner support services.

The list of RTOs approved by the Commission, together with details of the qualifications they have been approved to deliver to school students, is available from the Commission's website. While schools are free to choose more broadly (from any provider listed on the national register - www.training.gov.au), the Commission's list provides schools with some assurances that the RTOs listed have been through a separate quality assurance process in this State, specifically focussed on the needs of school students.

From 1 July 2012, State Government subsidised training for school students in South Australia is funded under *Skills for All*, through the Training Guarantee for SACE Students (TGSS) scheme and through school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. Only *Skills for All* approved providers will be eligible to deliver government subsidised training. The *Skills for All* provider list includes RTOs that have met the additional requirements to deliver to school students under TGSS. These requirements build on the Commission's earlier approval process. For more information, visit the *Skills for All* website: www.skills.sa.gov.au



VET and the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE)

The South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) is designed to provide students with flexible options, including the opportunity to have diverse forms of learning and achievement recognised, including recognition of VET towards the SACE; and the capacity to count VET towards the calculation of an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) and/or TAFE SA selection score.

The *SACE Recognition of VET Policy* outlines the arrangements for VET in SACE, including how students can earn credit towards their SACE through undertaking VET.

To complete the SACE, students must achieve 200 SACE credits, 180 of which can be gained through the recognition arrangements for VET. Within these 180 VET-based credits students must also fulfil the literacy and numeracy requirements of the SACE. The remaining 20 credits are derived from the Personal Learning Plan (10 credits) and the Research Project (10 credits). Students can use a vocational context in completing these subjects.

Any VET qualifications that students undertake as part of their SACE must be listed on the national register: www.training.gov.au, the repository for all nationally recognised VET qualifications. To gain recognition towards SACE, students will need to be resulted by an RTO in a listed qualification, and the school must notify the SACE Board of these results.



The SACE VET Recognition Register is a guide to how VET may be recognised towards the SACE. It provides information about whether the SACE credits earned for a particular VET qualification will be recognised at Stage 1 or at Stage 2 of the SACE, and provides an indication of how many credits students may achieve should they complete the full qualification. The Register does not contain all the qualifications listed on the national register - only the ones most commonly undertaken by school students and claimed as part of their SACE. If a qualification is not on the Register, the SACE Board should be contacted for information on the SACE Stage level and SACE credits.

When providing advice to students about options, schools should check the Recognition Register to see whether any pathway issues have been identified for particular qualifications.

SACE Recognition Register:

www.sace.sa.edu.au/subjects/recognised-learning/recognition-register

For information about the implications for a student's ATAR or TAFE SA selection score, schools should contact the South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC): www.satac.edu.au

Options for providing VET for school students

Schools can choose from one or more of the following options to provide VET for their students:

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships – through a training contract with an employer

The Training Guarantee for SACE Students (TGSS) scheme – where eligible students can access subsidised training under *Skills for All*

Direct purchase agreements – schools can purchase VET directly from an RTO(s)

Auspicing agreements – where the school enters into an agreement with an RTO to collaboratively deliver and assess a VET program

As an RTO – schools can apply to become RTOs in their own right.

Regardless of how a student accesses VET, they should be eligible to claim credit towards their SACE.

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships combine secondary education with vocational education. The apprenticeship and traineeship system in South Australia is regulated by the Training and Skills Commission. The Commission approves traineeships or apprenticeships as school-based under the following conditions:

- the prospective school-based trainee or apprentice is in Year 10, 11 or 12 at the beginning of their school-based training contract
- the prospective school-based trainee or apprentice has completed a general occupational health, safety and welfare awareness program (note: this is the school's responsibility to organise)

- the school Principal (or their delegate) has acknowledged and endorsed the proposed arrangement as an integral part of the student's school curriculum by signing the Training Plan attached to the Training Contract. It can then be registered as an Australian School-based Apprenticeship
- the employer and prospective school-based trainee or apprentice acknowledge that the contract will change to full-time when the school-based trainee or apprentice has finished secondary school.

These conditions are outlined in the *Guidelines for the approval of school based traineeships and apprenticeships*: www.tasc.sa.gov.au

School-based apprenticeship and traineeship qualifications are subsidised under *Skills for All*.

The Training Guarantee for SACE Students (TGSS)

The Training Guarantee for SACE Students (TGSS) scheme is also subsidised under *Skills for All*. The scheme enables SACE (or equivalent senior secondary certificate) students who are ready to commence a planned vocational pathway to receive quality VET training that extends beyond their schooling and supports their transition into further education, training or employment.

Eligible students undertake subsidised training in prescribed qualifications delivered by an approved RTO as part of their SACE, as well as relevant work placement. When they complete SACE and leave school, students are guaranteed a place with the RTO to complete a Certificate III qualification (or higher).

Training at Certificate II level is fully subsidised under *Skills for All*, so there are no VET tuition fees for students. Certificate III training is subsidised to 80 per cent (on average). While the student/guardian is personally responsible for any gap, the school may wish to consider how it can contribute. The school is responsible for preparing the Education and Training Plan (ETP) for each student.

The scheme does not apply to school-based apprentices and trainees, whose arrangements are outlined above, nor does it apply to students who are doing VET that does not form part of a Certificate III completion pathway. Innovative Community Action Networks (ICAN) students can access the scheme through modified arrangements.

For further information and access to templates (Education and Training Plans and Workplace Learning Log Books) visit the website: www.skills.sa.gov.au/training-learning/training-for-school-students/training-guarantee-for-sace-students.

Direct purchase agreements

Schools can purchase VET directly from an RTO. The RTO will deliver all the training and assessment – at the RTO's premises, at a school, in a workplace, or a combination of these. Direct purchasing may suit schools with a small number of students in VET programs and/or those who do not have qualified staff or the resources to deliver the training (either in its own right, or in an auspicings arrangement with an RTO – see below). It is recommended that direct purchase agreements between a school and an RTO be formalised in writing and signed by all parties. Schools should ensure that the agreement covers all matters relevant to student and school needs.

The national register lists all the RTOs and the qualifications they are approved to deliver: www.training.gov.au.

Auspicings agreements

Schools can enter into an auspicings arrangement with an RTO. Auspicings refers to arrangements where school staff deliver and/or assess all or part of the VET, but the RTO issues the qualifications and/or Statements of Attainment and has responsibility for ensuring that the training and assessment meets national quality standards.

The extent to which a school can be involved in the training and assessment is determined by the RTO, based on the national standards.

As with direct purchase agreements, it is recommended that auspicings arrangements between a school and an RTO are documented in a written agreement signed by all parties. Schools should ensure that the agreement covers all matters relevant to student and school needs.

When an RTO enters into an auspicings arrangement with another party (including a school) to jointly conduct and/or assess VET, the RTO is required to notify the national regulator (ASQA).

This is separate to any contractual arrangements between the school and the RTO referred to above.

Schools as RTOs

To become an RTO a school must apply to the national regulator, ASQA. It must meet the same requirements as other organisations applying to be RTOs. For information visit: www.asqa.gov.au.

Schools that have been approved as RTOs will then be listed on the national register, together with the qualifications they have on scope to deliver.

Developing or accessing a VET program

School responsibilities

Regardless of the option(s) chosen to access training, it is the school's responsibility to screen, select, and counsel students for VET in schools programs. The school also has a responsibility to monitor the progress of each program, providing support throughout the duration of the training. This can effectively be achieved through establishing and maintaining close working relationships with the RTO(s) involved.

As discussed above, it is recommended that schools enter into a signed agreement with RTOs that outlines the roles and responsibilities of all parties (generally a school, RTO and student/guardian). The school principal is ultimately responsible for these contractual arrangements.

Schools and RTOs are bound by both state and national legislation relating to safety and well-being, such as the *Children's Protection Act 2003*. Schools should consider stipulating these requirements in contracts with RTOs.

To assist with identifying responsibilities, the final section of this guide provides resources and materials including useful checklists and templates. In particular, the former National Quality Council's *Partnerships for VET in Schools* resource includes useful information on the responsibilities of both schools and RTOs: www.nssc.natese.gov.au/nqc_archive/nqc_publications/publications/partnerships

Identifying industry demand for skills

DFEEST has developed a booklet to help students make informed decisions about their VET options, based on occupational and labour market information. *Career Choices in South Australia* provides information on South Australian industries and occupations. Students can use *Career Choices* when discussing options with their careers adviser or VET coordinator or as part of the SACE subject Personal Learning Plan. *Career Choices* can be accessed in hard copy from schools or at: www.skills.sa.gov.au/careers-jobs/choosing-your-career/search-careers-and-industries

Industry Skills Boards also produce a range of resources about career pathways and qualifications leading to jobs in their respective sectors. For more information, visit: [www.sa.gov.au/subject/Business, + industry + and + trade/Employing + people/Industry + programs/Improving + skills](http://www.sa.gov.au/subject/Business,+industry+and+trade/Employing+people/Industry+programs/Improving+skills)

Discussions with local business networks may also provide ideas about the locally available jobs and careers.

Other schools in a region may be prepared to share their knowledge of suitable VET programs. Additionally, schools may wish to collaborate on the development of a joint VET program, particularly for schools located in non-metropolitan areas.

How to choose an RTO

All RTOs and the qualifications they are registered to deliver are listed on the national register: www.training.gov.au. This allows users to search by RTO and by qualification.

VET providers include the public provider TAFE SA, as well as over 300 private providers registered to deliver in South Australia. A number of South Australian schools are also RTOs in their own right. Schools can discuss their requirements with a range of RTOs to see which ones best meet their needs.

In selecting an RTO the following should be considered:

- the connections between the RTO and local industry/employers
- the facilities available to deliver to industry standards in real or simulated workplace settings
- the extent of experience working with schools and school students
- the potential to develop a collaborative relationship
- the location of training and assessment and how this is likely to work in with school timetables and student needs
- the fees charged by the RTOs for training and, if relevant, tools and consumables
- whether the RTO provides opportunities for students to undertake work placements as part of their VET course.

“It is recommended that schools enter into a signed agreement with RTOs that outlines the roles and responsibilities of all parties (generally a school, RTO and student/guardian). The school principal is ultimately responsible for these contractual arrangements.”

There are two specific reference materials that are helpful here: *Partnerships for VET in Schools* published by the former National Quality Council www.nssc.natese.gov.au/nqc_archive/nqc_publications/publications/partnerships

and

the Department of Education and Child Development's Leaders Tool #1: *Guide for schools working with Registered Training Organisations to Auspice or Purchase VET* - www.decd.sa.gov.au/learningandwork

The 2004 *Workplace Learning Guidelines* developed jointly by the three schooling sectors in South Australia is another useful resource: www.decd.sa.gov.au/learningandwork/files/links/Workplace_Learning_Guidel_1.pdf

Considerations when entering into an agreement with an RTO

Once the school has selected an RTO(s), it is recommended that a written agreement be negotiated. This will specify the training delivery and assessment arrangements and the responsibilities of the parties to the agreement. In negotiating these arrangements, it is helpful if relevant school staff are broadly familiar with the national registration standards, available at: www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2011L01356. It is recommended that a signed agreement that specifies the responsibilities of each partner, the quality assurance arrangements and costs be completed before students commence training.

The school should ensure the agreement includes:

- the available learning materials, physical resources and equipment
- the costs involved in delivering the program
- a timeline of the training to make sure student results are submitted on time
- a formal process for complaints and appeals that is accessible and equitable
- an evaluation process which leads to systematic and continuous improvement.

DECD has developed a contract template that can be adapted to individual needs: www.decd.sa.gov.au/learningandwork

Schools are strongly encouraged to seek advice from their relevant school sector office when accessing VET programs and entering into contracts with RTOs. Contact details are provided in the Resources and Contacts section of this guide.

Who to contact when concerns are identified

The South Australian Training Advocate is an independent complaint handling body which investigates complaints relating to the provision of higher education, VET, education services for overseas students, adult community education and apprenticeship and traineeship contracts. The Office provides guidance, offers support, negotiates on behalf of clients, investigates issues, and advises the State Government on ways to improve the system. To contact the Office of the Training Advocate, phone 1800 006 488 or visit www.trainingadvocate.sa.gov.au.



The national registration standards require that RTOs address complaints and appeals efficiently and effectively. If there are unresolved concerns about the quality of training or assessment services, or unethical behaviour, schools can contact the national registering body which has a page on its website for lodging a complaint: www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/making-a-complaint.html

Concerns or complaints about an RTO delivering VET programs to school students may also be raised with the relevant schooling sector office.

Resources and Contacts

Resources

Partnerships for VET in Schools: A good practice guide for Schools and RTOs to working in partnership to deliver VET in Schools programs

– published June 2011 by National Quality Council and TVET Australia:
Please note: page 33 of the *Partnerships for VET in Schools* brochure has a useful Checklist for Choosing an RTO.
www.nssc.natese.gov.au/nqc_archive/nqc_publications/publications/partnerships

Department of Education and Child Development's Leaders Tool #1: *Guide for schools working with Registered Training Organisations to Auspice or Purchase VET* - www.decd.sa.gov.au/learningandwork

2004 Workplace Learning Guidelines developed jointly by the three schooling sectors in South Australia: www.decd.sa.gov.au/learningandwork/files/links/Workplace_Learning_Guidel_1.pdf

Did You Know? A guide to vocational education and training in Australia
National Centre for Vocational Education Research www.ncver.edu.au

SACE Board of South Australia
– information about the South Australian Certificate of Education
– Recognition Policy:
Recognition Arrangements for Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the SACE
www.sace.sa.edu.au/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=f1ee7ba9-30d4-4ee9-8b08-53c42e78f5d0&groupId=10336

SACE Board of South Australia - VET in the SACE Policy Circular
www.sace.sa.edu.au/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=79bd8af1-d042-4c78-a42e-586a6aedd9c&groupId=10336

SACE Board of South Australia
– Information about the SACE Recognition Register
www.sace.sa.edu.au/subjects/recognised-learning/recognition-register/vet-recognition-register

SACE Board of South Australia
– Understanding the VET Recognition Register
www.sace.sa.edu.au/subjects/recognised-learning/vet/understanding-the-vet-recognition-register

South Australian Training and Skills Development Act 2008
www.tasc.sa.gov.au/Aboutus/TrainingSkillsDevelopmentAct/tabid/125/Default.aspx

Career Choices – Career Choices helps students plan their career. It includes: where jobs are now and into the future; quick facts about industries, including wages; training options; occupations in the industry; and links to further information.
www.skills.sa.gov.au/careers-jobs/choosing-your-career/search-careers-and-industries

training.gov.au is the official national register of information on training packages, qualifications, courses, units of competence and RTOs.
www.training.gov.au

Contacts

Training and Skills Commission:
The Commission is responsible for monitoring quality assurance of vocational education and training (VET) in South Australia. It is established under the *Training and Skills Development Act 2008*. The Commission advises the Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills on skills and workforce development priorities for South Australia.
www.tasc.sa.gov.au

Telephone: (08) 8226 3462

Fax: (08) 8226 1523

Email: tasc@sa.gov.au

Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology (DFEEST): Skills for All
Skills for All supports people to enter training, progress to higher qualifications and on to employment. Students are able to select the training provider of their choice from TAFE SA and other approved training providers.
www.skills.sa.gov.au

Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services (TAS). Information about school-based apprenticeships and traineeships: www.skills.sa.gov.au/apprenticeships-traineeships/school-based-apprenticeships-and-traineeships
Freecall: 1800 673 097
Email: dfeest.tas@sa.gov.au

SACE Board of South Australia – Home Page
Information about the South Australian Certificate of Education and the SACE VET Recognition Register
www.sace.sa.edu.au

Association of Independent Schools of South Australia – the peak body for the Independent school sector in South Australia www.ais.sa.edu.au

Catholic Education SA – information about Catholic schools in South Australia www.adelaide.catholic.org.au/sites/CatholicEducationOfficesSA

Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) – information on government schools, including VET programs: www.decd.sa.gov.au/learningandwork. Vocational Pathways Section, **phone:** (08) 8226 3215

South Australian Industry Skills Boards - (ISBs) work with industry, community and government to identify workforce trends and emerging industry skill needs for the attraction and retention of a skilled workforce
www.skills.sa.gov.au/for-employers-business

Business Services Industry Skills Board SA Inc – www.bsisb.com.au

Construction Industry Training Board – www.citb.org.au

Electrotechnology and Water Skills Board – www.ewsb.com.au

Food, Tourism and Hospitality Industry Skills Advisory Council SA Inc – www.ftbskillscouncil.com.au

SA Health and Community Services Skills Board – www.sahcssb.com.au

Manufacturing Industry Skills Advisory Council – www.misac.com.au

Primary Industries Skills Council SA www.pisc.org.au

Service Skills SA www.servicesskillsa.com.au

Transport Distribution Training SA www.tdtsa.com.au

Training Advocate – provides an independent complaint handling process and investigates complaints www.trainingadvocate.sa.gov.au

SafeWork SA – State wages and conditions www.safework.sa.gov.au

*Fair Work Ombudsman – Federal wages and conditions
Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94
www.fairwork.gov.au*

South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre – processes applications for courses offered by tertiary institutions www.satac.edu.au

*The Young Workers Legal Service of South Australia
The Young Workers Legal Service is an initiative of SA Unions to assist young workers under the age of 30 with employment related issues.
www.ywls.org.au*

Registered training organisations

Australian Council for Private Education and Training – the national industry association for independent providers of post-compulsory education and training www.acpet.edu.au

*TAFE SA – South Australia's public provider of VET www.tafesa.edu.au
For courses offered by any of the three TAFE SA Institutes, schools are advised to contact the Youth Pathways and Partnerships Team on **phone:** 8348 4375 or 8348 1903 or visit www.tafesa.edu.au/apply-enrol/vet-in-schools/vet-contacts*

*training.gov.au is the official National Register of RTOs
www.training.gov.au*

Career advice and information

Career Choices – Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology www.skills.sa.gov.au

Job Outlook - Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations – provides career and labour market information www.joboutlook.gov.au

MyFuture – career information with links to articles and resources www.myfuture.gov.au

*Skills book – the bank account for skills and training – available as a downloadable app.
www.skillsbook.com.au*

The Job Guide

The Job Guide provides an in-depth look at a range of occupations and their education and training pathways. It also gives useful information about how to work out what occupations suit individuals, based on interests and abilities.
www.jobguide.deewr.gov.au

Skills One

Extensive series of videos about getting a trade or skill www.skillsone.com.au

Government and statutory organisations

*Australian Apprenticeships – resources for employers, job seekers, career advisors and RTOs
www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au*

Australian Apprentice Training Information Service – information on traineeship and apprenticeship job pathways www.aatinfo.com.au

Australian Qualifications Framework – information on the framework of qualifications in the school, VET, and higher education sectors in Australia www.aqf.edu.au

Australian Quality Training Framework – information on the standards for vocational education and training in Australia www.training.com.au/Pages/item91cdbaeb7a2bc0e2cd9ae78617a62dbc.aspx

Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2011

The national standards for registration can be accessed at www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2011L01356

Contact

Training and Skills Commission
GPO Box 320, Adelaide SA 5001

Telephone: (08) 8226 3462

Facsimile: (08) 8226 1523

Email: tasc@sa.gov.au

Website: www.tasc.sa.gov.au