



Future-proofing the South Australian apprenticeship and traineeship system

Summary of Feedback

Skills for Future Jobs 2020 Series
December 2018

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Foreword



Michael Boyce OAM
Chair, Training and Skills Commission

The *Skills for Future Jobs 2020 Series: Future Proofing the South Australian Apprenticeship and Traineeship System* Discussion Paper was an exploration of the challenges that face the apprenticeship and traineeship system.

The Training and Skills Commission has long championed industry as a driving force in program and policy design, and I am pleased that industry took the opportunity to shape the future of apprenticeships and traineeships in this state by responding to the Discussion Paper.

Feedback was collected from a broad representation of stakeholders and reflects the diverse users and high value of the apprenticeship and traineeship system. This report is a summary of what stakeholders have told us.

The Training and Skills Commission will use all the collected feedback to inform the enhancement of the apprenticeship and traineeship system to ensure every industry has access to the skilled workers they need across the state.



Michael Boyce OAM
Chair
Training and Skills Commission



Adrienne Nieuwenhuis
Chair, Traineeship & Apprenticeship Committee

As Chair of the Commission's Traineeship and Apprenticeship Sub-Committee, I wish to acknowledge the overwhelming response to the Commission's *Future-proofing the South Australian Apprenticeship and Traineeship System* Discussion Paper. We have heard from industry, apprentices and trainees, training providers and various industry groups.

Through this summary, the Commission would like to share with all our stakeholders what you told us and what we heard. By sharing your experiences, your successes and your frustrations, as well as your suggestions for change, you have provided us with invaluable insight into the system. You have told us what works and what does not work and most importantly what we need to do together to improve the system.

I look forward to continuing to work with you as we shape the Commission's advice on strategies to ensure South Australia's apprenticeship and traineeship system is meeting the needs of our industries and providing the best platform for the development of a skilled workforce.



Adrienne Nieuwenhuis
Chair
Traineeship & Apprenticeship Committee
Training and Skills Commission

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The Training and Skills Commission is pleased to provide this summary of the extensive and valuable feedback to its *Future-proofing the South Australian Apprenticeship and Traineeship System* Discussion Paper.

The Discussion Paper presented data, research and a snapshot of the state of apprenticeships and traineeships in South Australia.

There were 34 questions posed to stakeholders of the system in order for the Commission to gain a full understanding of the challenges and opportunities that exist.

Introduction

Response Summary

The Discussion Paper was released on 15 June 2018 and closed to feedback on 21 September 2018. During that period, there were multiple channels through which stakeholders could submit feedback:

- online survey submission
- phone call
- work or training site visit
- focus groups and forums
- direct email.

The Commission received 69 submissions to its online survey, the majority of those coming from employers, apprentices and trainees, and RTOs (see Figure 1). A variety of industries were also represented in the online responses, as per Figure 2.

Share of online responses by industry

The Commission also held 16 workshops, forums and focus groups across Adelaide and regional locations. In total, 458 people attended and provided feedback directly about their experience with the apprenticeship and traineeship system. The Commission also met with 14 industry associations and conducted 12 phone interviews with trainees, apprentices and parents.

The feedback received through all consultation channels has been collated, analysed and categorised for presentation here. This summary document is not intended to be a reflection of every word of feedback collected, rather it provides a view of the issues and themes raised most often and by the most stakeholders.

Figure 1: Share of online responses by cohort

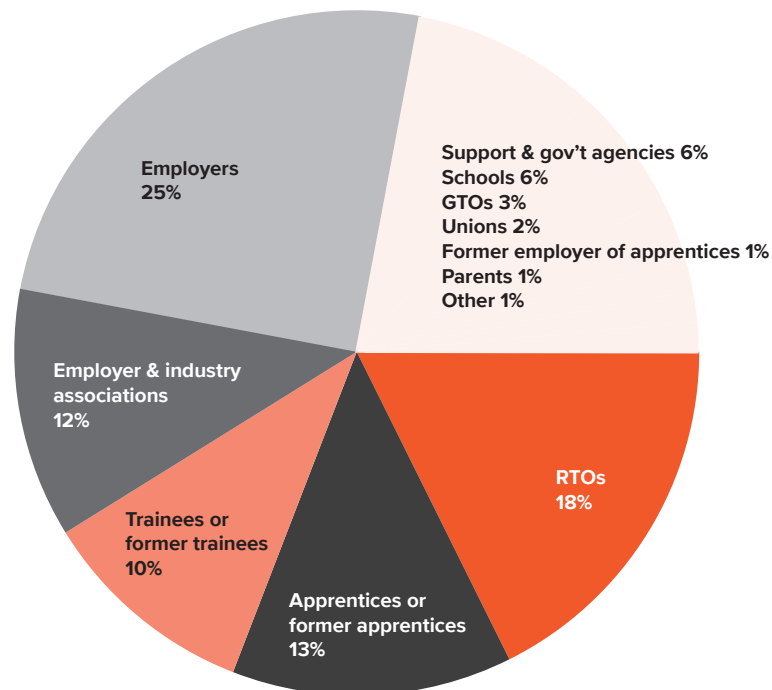
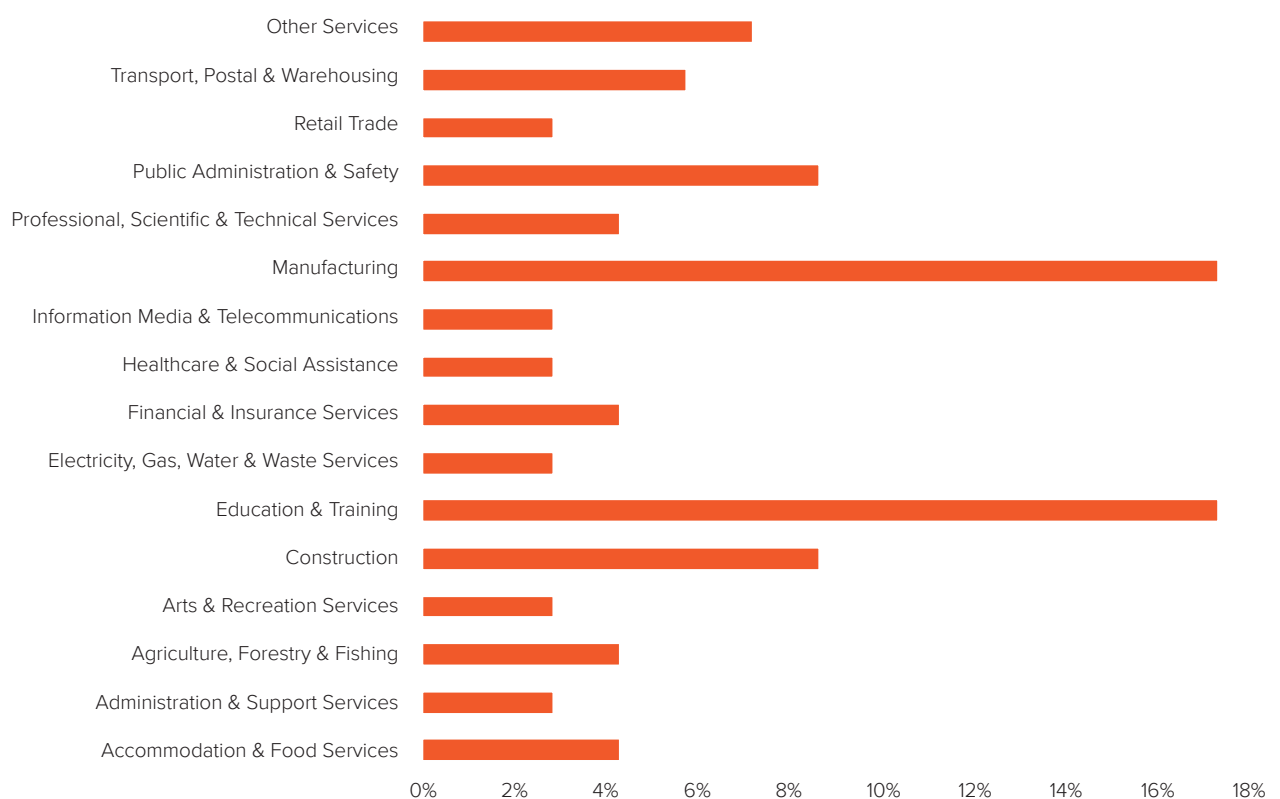


Figure 2: Share of online responses by industry



Feedback highlights

One thing that stood out during the Commission's engagement process was that there are few issues that stakeholders can unanimously agree upon. Each industry and industry sub-sector has its own economic, business and skilling contexts that influence its ability to interact with the apprenticeship and traineeship system. However, three themes emerged as common to every industry and cohort we heard from:

1. Promotion and attraction

Stakeholders were vocal about the need for better attraction and promotion strategies to ensure both a strong supply of young people eager to undertake apprenticeships and traineeships, and employers willing to offer them. People believe that not enough employers know enough about apprenticeships and traineeships to even consider them as an option, and that what they do know seems to be incorrect or out-of-date. For young people and those who influence their post-school choices, stakeholders believe there are deeply held beliefs about the social value of being an apprentice or trainee and VET itself that discourage apprenticeships and traineeships as post-school pathways.

2. Administrative inefficiencies and red tape

Stakeholders expressed a desire for the administration processes of the system to be made more efficient and better cater to the way participants understand and use the system. Stakeholders saw the difficulty of navigating the system as a major barrier for SMEs since they tend to have less time and resources to devote to researching and understanding how to employ an apprentice or trainee, and how to solve problems that arise.

3. Focus on achieving completions, not commencements

Stakeholders expressed concern that if the focus is on achieving high commencement numbers the quality of the apprenticeship and traineeship experience will be diminished, which will be reflected through decreasing completion rates. If increasingly large numbers of young people are to take up apprenticeships and traineeships we must also ensure successful outcomes so the apprenticeship and traineeship system retains its value to the employers offering opportunities.

While the feedback from stakeholders revealed some areas for improvement in the current system, it also demonstrated that the apprenticeship and traineeship system is highly valued.

We asked *Why use an apprenticeship or traineeship?* and industry and employers told us they employ apprentices and trainees to:

- pursue workforce development goals and future-proof the business
- grow business and industry, taking advantage of commercial opportunities
- demonstrate a training culture to the workforce
- community and social responsibility
- transfer knowledge to next generation
- train our way
- secure reliable source of skilled workers
- succession planning
- provide recognised training (VET qualification)
- meet regulatory requirements.

Apprentices and trainees use apprenticeships and traineeships to:

- get a head start on a career straight from school
- earn while learning
- pursue a passion
- have satisfaction in their work and career
- have reliable skills to fall back on
- enjoy the lifestyle (trade).

Key messages

The following section provides an overview of the challenges and issues presented by stakeholders, which have been sorted into the following themes:

- **System**
 - knowledge and promotion
 - industrial relations & Commonwealth-State interplay
 - usability
 - supervision guidelines
- **Access, participation and social issues**
- **Business confidence, capacity and capability**
- **Support**

System knowledge and promotion

- Some businesses, especially SMEs, struggle to find the information they need when they want to hire an apprentice or trainee
- Some employers don't seem to understand what they can expect or request from RTOs, and have little understanding of the VET system generally
- Both employers and apprentices and trainees seem too often unaware of the expenses they will face during the Training Contract, which leads to friction later and impacts the relationship with the RTO when training fees are requested
- Employers and apprentices and trainees are sometimes confused about the role of ASNs, ISMAAs, RTOs, TAS and other industry mentor schemes
- Apprentices and trainees report being unsure where to find help when they need it after commencement, or are hesitant to request help for fear it will affect their employment
- Apprenticeships and traineeships, and VET generally, suffer from an image problem amongst young people and those who influence them; part of this may be the strong market presence universities have, and how schools measure Year 12 and post-school success
- Both young people and employers report difficulty sourcing candidates/apprenticeships/traineeships; industry peak bodies commented that they struggle with making connections with schools and linking school leavers with information to make choices
- The opportunities to try-before-you-buy are limited for young people; work experience is challenging for some sectors due to WHS requirements, school resources are stretched and there are challenges in connecting industry with young people
- Stakeholders thought pre-apprenticeship and pre-vocational programs and courses could be better used to develop work-ready skills, and some thought they should be compulsory

What you told us...

'... young people do not receive adequate careers information about trades and other VET occupations while at school ... Often this is because tertiary education providers can provide quality careers resources to teachers, whereas apprenticeship and traineeship promotion is more ad hoc.'

'A recent Year13 study found that 74 per cent of young people would not consider an apprenticeship or traineeship as a career. We believe this figure would be significantly improved if high school leavers gained proper exposure to [...] industry rather than basing their decision on second-hand information.'

'There is a lot of information about state and government funding but it isn't in one easy to locate place, or easy to apply for.'

**'It was very hard to find a job.
I rang 450+ people, drove
around building sites putting up
signs, six months later I finally
got an apprenticeship offer.'**

'Awareness in schools of school-based apprenticeship and traineeships is very low. Even if known about, there is not much support for students to get involved.'

'Our industry needs help to identify its career pathways and market that to parents and young people. And to identify opportunities to use traineeships at higher or different levels e.g. in administration support staff or allied health.'

'The millennial workforce is coming and traineeships need to be ready for that.'

'Even if the apprentice/trainee understands what should be happening, there is a power imbalance between them and the employer so they might be reluctant to ask for help or report problems.'

'A lack of opportunity to discover what an industry is really like is leading to poor decisions to begin apprenticeships or traineeships that aren't suitable. Work experience in schools is a variable experience, some schools do it well, others leave it up to students to arrange, others have cancelled it completely, replacing it with First Aid or other courses. School counsellors and parents have out-of-date ideas of what trades or traineeship pathways can offer.'

(PhillipsKPA (2018) [...] noted that around 60% of young people do not go onto higher education; and that school systems needed to recognise this situation and better cater for these students.'

'Pre-apprenticeships are well thought of within industry. Many employers who look for an apprentice will contact a training provider to ask if they have any pre-apprenticeship students that might be suitable. Some employers will make a pre-apprenticeship a prerequisite to employment as an apprentice. Employers value the exposure a pre-apprenticeship provides to workplaces, to workplace culture, to safety, and to some of the tools an apprentice will use.'

'The evidence suggests that information, career advice, and tasters such as VET in Schools, pre-vocational courses and pre-apprenticeships are all part of the support needed for the decision for entering apprenticeships and other VET courses.'

**'Word of mouth is still the
preferred recruitment method.
I found my apprenticeship
through the local footy club.'**



‘Adult apprentices are far too expensive. They are paid more than juniors but are not that much more productive, especially in the first year or so. Salons are paying for everything: time away from salon, time for training, training. It’s simply not cost-effective for sole traders.’

System industrial relations and Commonwealth-State interplay

- For some industries and employers, mature-age apprentice wages are reported to be a barrier to employment as an apprentice or trainee, especially for the 21–25 age bracket. Other employers and industries report they are happy to pay more for the more productive or committed older worker
- Award wages for apprentices and trainees compared to casual rates make a Training Contract less attractive to young people in some industries and regions
- The definition of an existing worker for the Commonwealth incentives is too short (3 months), as is the probation period for Training Contracts. Some employers report needing longer to make the decision to commit to a Training Contract
- Some employers feel that it is quite easy for apprentices to leave their Training Contract, but it is very difficult to release an underperforming apprentice
- National licensing standards are inhibiting apprentice opportunities in some industries
- The mixture of Commonwealth and State incentives and schemes is difficult for some users to understand

What you told us...

‘We get 350 applications each month for apprenticeships. Half of our applications are from mature people aged 21–25. It is difficult to find places for them because of the extra expense of the adult wage. At age 21–25 they are more work-ready, but are missing opportunities due to the cost compared to youth apprentices.’

‘To increase participation in the apprenticeship system, mature-age apprentices must be given a higher priority or at least the same consideration to be viable for employers to commence. As industries face continual disruption and employment in some sectors face re-adjustment, the ability to re-train and access new employment remains essential. Mature-age apprentices can provide a more stabilised commencement, bringing already developed employability skills to potential employers.’

‘An area of concern to industry for many years is the national inconsistency in approving apprenticeships and traineeships. What is an apprenticeship in one state is a traineeship in another, or sometimes nothing at all. This can be quite confusing and frustrating for companies that operate across state borders. Inconsistencies can impact on funding levels, enrolment fees, and even award pay rates.’

‘Almost impossible to get kids to get a traineeship when they can earn the same elsewhere not on traineeship for same work.’



Kristy Potter
2018 SA Trainee of the Year

System products

- Training Package relevance and alignment to real work is reported to be questionable in some industries
- Training Package upgrade speed to market is perceived as too slow. Consultation on proposed changes seems limited in some industries. Training Package qualifications can be too restrictive and not allow enough scope for customisation or updating to newer technology, equipment or plant
- Training providers are not always able to provide what employers want/need in terms of training content, location, times
- The quality of training provided by RTOs was reported to be variable. Some employers and apprentices and trainees have positive experiences, but an equal number reported seeing 'tick-and-flick' assessments and expressed concern about the quality of training graduates
- Some employers felt that restricted RPL offerings are limiting ability to decrease the length of Training Contracts
- GTO service offerings vary by location due to cost of travelling to regions
- Institution-based training is seen as vital, if not more important, than on-the-job training in some industries because apprentices and trainees have a chance to practice the breadth of skills they need in industry, not just the ones used at their place of work e.g. cookery, bakery

What you told us...

'I phoned [redacted] and they said the main issue that they can envisage is the fact that the apprentices and trainees need to be visited onsite at least six times per year, and sometimes in the first year it can be up to 12 times. This of course is not cost effective for the GTO.'

'GTOs are important because the industry is becoming more specialised and one employer can't offer the full scope of Qualifications.'

'One roadblock is the inability to diversify apprentice skill sets outside of the Qualification. This makes it difficult to embrace new technology because there is no space for adaptation of standards. The alignment to the AQF is restrictive. The industry does use innovative tech, but we cannot teach it under the apprenticeship due to the need to map to TP requirements; it also therefore attracts no funding.'

'Not a big believer in on-the-job training being superior, a training environment is better, where they have structure and broader exposure to different methods and techniques. It gives them the big picture and shows them opportunities, and they feel like they are part of a cohort and have peers, who they might never meet if not for trade school.'

'Despite the fact 83.7% of people engage with the VET system 'for employment related reasons', only 16.7% of people are employed at a higher skill level after training. The system is failing to provide workers with the higher-level skills that the economy needs.'

We need a well-resourced, high performing VET sector in which students, industry and the broader community has absolute confidence.

The VET sector in general, and the apprenticeship system in particular are critically important if South Australia is to realise its aspirations for prosperity and social resilience.'

System usability

- Apprenticeship and traineeship system is too complex to navigate easily; too much red tape and duplication of information collected. Conversely, the sign-up process provides little opportunity to capture the information key to successful outcomes
- Most view an employer registration process as useful and important to the quality of apprenticeship and traineeship experiences, but support finding a way to fast-track the process. Others view employer registration as unnecessary and would support removing it to fast-track commencement
- ATLAS and other systems for information communication between employers, ASNs, RTOs, Commonwealth agencies and the Department for Industry and Skills are not fit-for-purpose and hamper efficiency
- The Traineeship and Apprenticeship Pathways Schedule (TAPS) approval process needs to involve deeper consultation with industry. Occupational titles need to be reviewed, and ensure that pathways align to an occupational outcome
- Supervision requirements are a barrier for sectors that are dominated by sole providers, small business or funding derived from grant or project funding
- Electronic training diary is viewed by some as another administrative burden that is easily manipulated and doesn't necessarily reveal the reality of what learning has occurred
- One-size-fits all approach to policy and funding programs doesn't work for regional areas or for business that engage in seasonal or contract work
- Funding has not increased with costs over time, and the payments are weighted towards completion when the most expensive period for employers is the first 12–18 months

What you told us...

'Training Contracts are being signed before the RTO is selected or notified, conversations about what the qualification is, and whether that RTO is the right fit for that employer and apprentice/trainee are happening after sign-up is complete ... employers are not aware that they can choose a different RTO to suit their needs.'

'The varied and seasonal nature of primary production requires a flexible and responsive approach by the training system. For example, when a certain industry experiences a decline in production there may be a short-term reduction in the number of individuals pursuing or enrolling in training and the capacity for employers to host apprentices or trainees in this particular field in the short term.'

'The current TAP Schedule approval process is appropriate to ensure that Training Contract arrangements are added in response to genuine industry needs. The weakness of the current schedule is the number of entries that are based on the desire to secure subsidies for particular qualifications where there is not a specific alignment to an existing vocation or trade. In our experience, for too long qualifications were added to the Schedule without proper regard to whether there was a legitimate occupational alignment for the qualification.'



Shanna-Lee Locker
2018 SA School-based Apprentice of the Year

Supervision guidelines

- There is not agreement on the appropriateness of the current supervision ratios; some industries would like them to remain as they are, others would support a change to the ratio, others would support removing ratios entirely
- The definition of 'supervision' may need to be updated to reflect current work practices and allow some industry sectors to access traineeships i.e. remote and digital work spaces
- The Supervision Guidelines are sometimes misunderstood, and some viewed them as 'wordy'
- Enforcement of the Supervision Guidelines, especially ratios, is viewed as inadequate
- SMEs are more likely to find the supervision requirements prohibitive than large employers due to the loss of productivity in having one experienced staff member supervise, and the cost of rostering on two staff when one would usually suffice

What you told us...

'Working hours of healthcare professionals means that supervision [of trainees] is a real problem ... you can't just send a trainee out to see a client. And the costing of jobs under NDIS doesn't provide any funding to send two people for one job. We can't bill against supervision so it becomes a large burden for the employer.'

'Current regulation of direct employer apprentices is not good enough; however, the supervision ratio ensures a certain level of compliance even when not monitored.'

'Supervision ratio can restrict the number of apprentices taken on, but supervision ratios need to stay both for safety and quality of training.'

'Supervision ratio is too restrictive for this industry. Employers are always on site so it is easy to supervise.'

'[Apprentice ratio] Should be 1:2. We don't have enough staff to have 1:1. With the way they have to train and work, 1 senior to 2 apprentices would be suitable.'

'Wouldn't want to remove the supervision requirements all together, but there might be something in looking at digital solutions [to line of sight requirements].'

'I'm amazed that it's [the ratio] the same for all industries. I'd prefer to see sectors split out, e.g. painting don't need two guys, but for electrical for the first eighteen months to two years, you do need direct supervision. But that doesn't mean every other sector does.'



‘It is presumptuous of policy-makers to believe young people can live at home while doing their entire apprenticeship. Regional youth need to leave home to seek work. Family dynamics often don’t support staying at home long after school, especially amongst the cohort that are encouraged to take up apprenticeships.’

Access, participation and social issues

- Cost of tools, travel to training and accommodation, and lack of awareness about those costs prior to starting apprenticeship or traineeship
- Low wages can be a turn-off when there are better paid options available; the long-term benefits are not always obvious or considered
- A workplace and trade culture that values a hazing phase is evident, whereby existing staff treat new apprentices roughly in order to test their dedication and resilience
- School-based apprenticeships and traineeships can be very positive experiences for young people transitioning to work, but certain supports must be present: employer, school and VET coordinator working together at sign-up and beyond
- Young people reported difficulty in finding an apprenticeship or traineeship opportunity
- Both employers and apprentices reported that expectations of young people about the world of work do not always match the reality i.e. responsibility level, pay progression, style of communication
- Employers report a dearth of work-ready skills amongst young people i.e. lack of language, literacy and numeracy, people skills, commitment to work and learning, discipline and resilience
- Apprentices and trainees can struggle to make good financial decisions e.g. in using the Trade Support Loan
- A falling desire to work in physical labour or outdoor work amongst young people is reported by some industries
- Broader social issues such as general unemployment, drug use and mental illness are impacting on the youth talent pool, meaning potential apprentices or trainees are found unsuitable e.g. fail drug tests

What you told us...

‘Require migrants to settle in regional areas where there are skills shortages--ensure that resettlement programs exist in those regional areas to support them’

‘Low wages make it challenging for older people to begin an apprenticeship, but they are really valued by employers due to life and work skills and dedication to completion. One solution might be to allow adult apprentices to salary sacrifice, as per employees of charities, to increase their take-home pay but not burden the employer.’

‘There are a lot of expenses for tools first year. I spent \$5000 on tools. Most apprentices don't know what they need and didn't know they would need to buy those things.’

‘Some employers don't supply anything, even down to clamps etc., nothing.’

‘Fuel is a huge expense. The travel allowance is not enough. And some employers don't pay the allowance anyway. We know workers that have been fired for submitting requests for travel allowances.’

‘For first two years [the Trade Support Loan] was helpful because I had big car loan and used it for that. The whole idea of it is not the best thing since it is a large amount of money (even though you only pay back \$16,000), people don't realise it is a loan and they don't know they have to pay it back. It's not about providing more information regarding the loan, it's more about providing financial literacy.’



Business confidence, capacity & capability

Capability

Businesses, and in particular SMEs, report that they lack:

- the people management, workforce planning and development, and economic forecasting skills required to make the decision to hire an apprentice or trainee
- apprentice and trainee recruitment skills
- capability to support apprentices and trainees when issues arise. Supervisors might be good at their jobs but aren't necessarily skilled at mentoring young people

Capacity

- There are businesses that would like to take on an apprentice or trainee but do not offer the scope of work required under the Training Package qualification. GTOs do not cover all industries and regions so cannot always help address this
- Businesses struggle with the loss of productivity related to training release and supervision of apprentices and trainees—this can lead to decisions to recruit already skilled workers
- The cost of training is too high for some employers

Confidence

- Businesses fear their investment in training being wasted due to non-completion and poaching by other businesses that do not have a training culture
- Some industries have specific IR or business environment issues that impact on their retention and completion rates, which make the traineeship and apprenticeship model a poor fit for skills training e.g. hairdressing and childcare, which are dominated by young female workers who take time to start families and often return to work part-time.
- In industries where work is seasonal or contract-based employers are not confident to commit to a Training Contract e.g. construction, food production, film

What you told us...

'Because of the competitiveness of the businesses, you have less available man-hours for training because it comes down to cost competitiveness. That first 12 months you've got the apprentice for, you know you're losing money. The apprentice is offline for training, and you're using someone to supervise them. Companies would rather pilfer staff from other areas than train.'

'Security of payments legislation is fine, but it doesn't work unless contractors read their contracts and don't sign up to dodgy ones. Education around payments and contracts is needed to prevent subbies being 'ripped off'.'

'The general cost of training is too high for employers to bear along with the cost of supervision. Not enough incentives to make it worth it to the employer or to the student.'

'Apprentices are well aware of their lack of productivity in the first years, some employers seem to view this as a failing, not a normal state for a new person to their industry.'

'Incentives to cover the cost of training, wages and supervision should primarily be focused on small business employers who otherwise would find it cost-prohibitive to engage an apprentice or trainee.'

'While not encompassing all elements of what potentially makes 'a good fit', research into the psychological contract between apprentices/trainees and employers demonstrates the importance of understanding, managing and meeting expectations of both the apprentices/trainees and employers (Smith, Walker & Brennan Kemmis, 2011)'

Support

Employers

- Employers need support in their mentoring role and to develop the relationship with their young apprentices and trainees
- The generation gap between employers and apprentices and trainees leads to friction; employers can struggle with how to address this

Support service providers

- The response time for issues reported to TAS and ASNs is too slow, allowing issues to fester before they are resolved
- Experiences of GTO support is variable: some employers are very happy; others report only receiving phone calls. Employers would like them to offer support from someone who is experienced in the relevant industry and consistency in their point of contact
- Experience of the effectiveness of ISMAAs is also variable, it seems awareness of the program is not high

Apprentices and trainees

- The expense of doing an apprenticeship or traineeship can be prohibitive, e.g. employers may reimburse travel and accommodation expenses but apprentices and trainees need to pay them upfront first
- Apprentices said that having a close support network was reported as integral to surviving the first stage of a trade apprenticeship
- School-based apprentices and trainees reported that having support in the form of a broker or VET coordinator to find an appropriate employer and negotiate through the sign-up process with the school, RTO and employer was key to their success, other stakeholders commented that there is not enough of this support

What you told us...

'... the employer needs appropriate systems for managing apprentices across both youth and mature ages, and materials for communicating the mutual obligations. This suggests that employers applying to have apprentices need to be assessed and supported to ensure they have these appropriate systems for managing and supporting the apprentice/s.'

'Effective supervision is a key determinant in the success or otherwise of an apprenticeship or traineeship. Most research shows that the most common reasons for not completing an apprenticeship are employment-related, including not getting on with the boss or others at work. A good supervisor can not only be a good workplace trainer, but can make an apprentice feel welcome and accepted within an organisation.'

'Employers need help to develop the relationship with their apprentices. Young people today are very different from years ago, and employers often have different expectations. The parents are also getting involved. The courtship process of bringing a new apprentice on board needs to be careful and happen before the Training Contract is signed.'

'Young apprentices and trainees might be earning a lot more money than they ever have, especially later in their apprenticeship. Or, they might start living out of home for the first time during their apprenticeship. But they lack the financial literacy to manage money well. So when it comes to buying tools or fuel for work they may not have the resources although they are paid well.'

'[Apprentice supervision courses] are currently offered at no charge in NSW, by the NSW Government. The SA Government may consider offering a similar program, especially targeting new employers, and employers in industry sectors that have poor completion rates.'

'I believe that school based apprenticeships are an ideal way to transition a student into becoming an apprentice. The student will also get a taste for the trade and find fulfillment and purpose rather than unfulfilling and irrelevant learning if they have no intention to pursue an academic career.'

'Employers need training on how to train apprentices: just because they can do the job doesn't mean they are good at teaching the job. Age gap, generation gap, cultural gaps between employers and apprentices means it is not easy to mentor and train sometimes. Apprentices should not be treated as lackeys.'



PEER

2018 SA Training Provider of the Year
2018 Australian Training Awards
Small Training Provider of the Year

Regional perspectives

South Australia's regions employ about 30 per cent of all apprentices and trainees, and feedback to the Discussion Paper from regions was strong. Some of the challenges in the regions are similar to those present in metropolitan areas, others are unique or are exacerbated due to remoteness.

- Prevalence of seasonal work requires a flexible and responsive approach by the apprenticeship and traineeship system
- Transport access presents a major challenge, both for employers seeking workers and young people seeking employment as an apprentice or trainee
- The inability of employers to offer the full scope of a qualification in regional areas makes them ineligible to host apprentices or trainees, and GTOs are not a solution as they might be in metropolitan areas due to the prohibitive expense of mentors travelling to visit regional work sites
- The expense of travelling to training makes apprenticeships and traineeships more expensive for employers, and apprentices and trainees who often pay out of pocket and are later reimbursed. Travel allowance funding rules also restrict regional employers' freedom of choice in training provider
- Social and economic issues in regional towns affects the quality of the recruitment pool for regional employers e.g. drug use, housing affordability

What you told us...

'Young people who don't have licenses or reliable access to cars cannot be considered for an apprenticeship in regional areas. Public transport options are often not suitable.'

'... when a certain industry experiences a decline in production there may be a short-term reduction in the number of individuals pursuing or enrolling in training and the capacity for employers to host apprentices or trainees in this particular field in the short term; this does not signal that there is not a need for this training when in the future years a production normalises or increases.'

'More funding needs to be allocated for the GTOs to make remote and rural locations more viable. Local training solutions need to be provided. Consider providing additional support and services for regional apprentices and trainees who are required to travel for training.'

'Our problem is finding staff; the local unemployed population would rather keep Centrelink than work. Our recruitment pool is just not work-ready.'

'Employability skills are continuing to be reported by our regional industry as a vital element in an employee successfully transitioning into sustainable employment. Employers repeatedly quote "we can teach skills relevant to the role required; we can't teach attitude".'

Next steps: the Commission will release its recommendations for legislative, regulatory and policy reform to the apprenticeship and traineeship system in the first quarter of 2019.

Better Skills Better Work Better State

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