



# Strategies to grow apprenticeships and traineeships in Western Australia

Findings from the State Training Board's State-wide industry consultations

## Strategies to grow apprenticeships and traineeships in Western Australia

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## Chairman's Message



The Minister for Education and Training, Hon Sue Ellery MLC, requested the State Training Board to lead consultations with industry to look at ways to increase the take up of apprenticeships and traineeships across Western Australia.

The State Training Board hosted a series of forums across Western Australia between August 2017 and March 2018. We initially hosted three forums in Perth, followed by one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders and nine regional sessions. We have travelled more than 9,000 kilometres by air and road, north to Broome, Port Hedland and Geraldton, south to Albany, Pingelly and Bunbury and east to Kalgoorlie, Merredin and Esperance. The Board also received 33 written submissions.

The consultation was part of the State Government's election commitment to create jobs and revitalise the State's training system. The State Government's *Plan for Jobs* is a blueprint to maximise employment for Western Australians. The *Plan for Jobs* aims to diversify the State's economy so that it is less vulnerable to boom and bust cycles by developing key transport and other economic infrastructure to maximise opportunities for Western Australians to get jobs, including through apprenticeships and traineeships.

The *Plan for Jobs* places priority to the employment of apprentices and trainees on major infrastructure projects and manufacturing projects including METRONET and defence contract work. Non-trade and para-professional jobs including healthcare, community services, tourism, hospitality, education, agriculture, science and technology are equally important to the economic development of the State. Many of these industries have not traditionally used an apprenticeship and traineeship model of employment and learning.

The consultations have helped the Board to understand industry's needs and will guide strategic decisions about the State's future training needs. Through the consultations the Board has identified the common barriers faced by employers and apprentices. This will inform the design and provision of more targeted support through TAFE and the broader VET sector.

Through the consultations we have listened to a wide range of issues and opinions about the apprenticeship system in Western Australia. Whilst we would have liked to cover all topics, it is not practical to transcribe every issue or opinion verbatim in this report. We have attempted to address as many issues as possible, particularly those that were most common across the State.

There was agreement across the consultation sessions that apprenticeships and traineeships are important to Western Australia's future. This State was built by tradespeople and relies on tradespeople to keep it going. Apprenticeships and traineeships provide valuable pathways for young Western Australians entering the workforce as well as older people wanting to upgrade or reskill to find new employment opportunities.

Unfortunately, our State's apprenticeship and traineeship commencements have been in decline since 2012. If the State wants a skilled workforce into the future, we must take steps to arrest this decline and restore the apprenticeship system.



A common view across stakeholders is that the apprenticeship system is complex and difficult to navigate. Western Australia needs a modern apprenticeship system (incorporating both apprenticeships and traineeships) that can keep up with the rapid pace of change in the labour market. The State needs an apprenticeship system that is flexible, innovative and not held back by bureaucratic processes.

We observed that the apprenticeship system appears to be less complex and easier to navigate in close-knit communities, such as Geraldton and Esperance, but appears more dysfunctional and complex in the Perth metropolitan area and larger regional centres. We believe the secret for Esperance and Geraldton is in the close relationships built in the community. Each participant in the system knows their role and responsibilities and keeps each other to account. In each of these communities there is a strong business chamber and strong network of participants, including Australian Apprenticeship Support Network, group training organisations, service providers, training providers and employers each willing to do 'their bit' for the community.

In Perth and larger regional towns these relationships are harder to form and maintain and leaves many employers, apprentices and trainees to self-navigate the system.

This report proposes five strategies for the State Government to consider. The State Training Board appreciates that some of the issues raised in this report are complex and not easily fixed. The Board also is aware that some of the strategies will require investment which is difficult in a tough fiscal environment. Whilst the strategies in this report are directed to the McGowan Government the State Training Board believes there is a role for

industry, employers and service providers to help rebuild the system. We also believe the Australian Government has its role to play in helping reduce the 'red tape' that continues to plague the system.

We thank the large to small employers, industry associations, unions, industry training advisory bodies and government agencies that participated in the consultation process and took time to provide feedback. Your input has been invaluable and has helped the Board understand the training system from your perspective.

The State Training Board is confident the State Government is able meet its obligations under the *Plans for Jobs* to build strong partnerships with industry to increase training options and create apprenticeships and traineeships at every opportunity. The State Training Board recognises the challenges the State Government faces to implement initiatives with limited resources. The State Training Board believes through a shared responsibility with industry and business, realistic goals can be achieved over time to make a positive difference and increase the skills base to support the economy.

By working together, the State can grow our apprenticeship and traineeship numbers and the proportion of people with post-school qualifications and provide opportunities for all Western Australians to participate in the labour market.



**Mr Jim Walker**  
**Chair, State Training**  
**Board**

# State Training Board

The State Training Board is the peak industry training advisory body to the Minister for Education and Training in Western Australia. The State Training Board's functions are set out in Part 3 of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*.

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The Board's role is to provide independent high-level expert advice to the Minister on matters relating to VET including preparing policy which aims to improve the links between specific industry developments and VET to ensure optimum employment for Western Australians.

Our members come from a range of industries and are dedicated to training and skills development. The Board provides a direct link between industry and government. We are committed to fostering strong partnerships with industry, unions, peak bodies, and employers to identify training and skills needed by Western Australian industries for Western Australian jobs.

Members of the State Training Board<sup>1</sup> are

- Jim Walker (Chair)
- Vanessa Davies
- Chris Hall, AM
- Captain Angela Bond
- Fran Kirby
- Professor Cobie Rudd
- Wayne Muller
- Meredith Hammat
- Ray Sputore

## Industry Training Advisory Bodies

The State Training Board recognises industry training advisory bodies (also known as industry training advisory bodies) from which the Board takes advice in relation to VET matters, including the establishment of apprenticeships and traineeships. The current industry training advisory bodies recognised by the State Training Board are:

- Community Services, Health and Education Training Council Inc.;
- Construction Training Council;
- Financial, Administrative and Professional Services Training Council Inc.;
- Food, Fibre and Timber Industries Training Council (WA) Inc.;
- FutureNow: Creative and Leisure Industries - Creative and Leisure Industries Training Council;
- Logistics Training Council;
- Resource Industry training advisory body;
- Retail and Personal Services Skills Advisory Council;
- Utilities, Engineering, Electrical and Automotive Training Council Inc.;
- Public Sector Commission; and
- WA Local Government Association.

## Executive Summary

**Western Australia's economy relies on industry to be productive, efficient and innovative to compete with domestic and international markets. The State's industries require and demand a skilled workforce. A skilled workforce is developed and supported through a robust and responsive vocational education and training (VET) system. Without it, the State would face significant skill shortages and be dependent on skilled migration to meet the skill demands of industry.**

In today's labour market most workers will need to complete a VET or higher education qualification to be successful<sup>2</sup>. Entry-level, low-skilled<sup>3</sup> jobs are disappearing. According to the Business Council of Australia<sup>4</sup> there are 20 percent fewer full-time entry-level, low-skilled jobs for young people in today's labour market than there were in the Baby Boomer era. This means that without qualifications, entry into the labour market is more difficult for our young people. This situation is expected to worsen as automation and other technological advances hit the Australian labour market and more low-skilled job roles disappear.

Through a robust VET system, the State can deliver real jobs for Western Australians. Apprenticeships and traineeships enable workers, particularly young people, to gain qualifications with an employer by combining employment-based practice with formal technical training.

Western Australia's apprenticeship system covers a diverse range of industries and occupations and caters for almost all ages<sup>5</sup> and interests. Western Australia's training system offers more than 650 apprenticeships and traineeships ranging from Certificate I to Advanced Diploma level.

The State Government aims to foster strong partnerships to increase training opportunities and create apprenticeships and traineeships at every opportunity. The State Training Board believes this will only be achieved using a collaborative approach with industry, government and the VET sector each accepting responsibility for their part of the process. The needs of apprentices, trainees and students must be fundamental to any collaborative process.

Conditions need to be right for both the employer and the apprentice/trainee

Critical to the existence and success of apprenticeships and traineeships is the relationship between the employer and the apprentice/trainee. Conditions need to be right for both parties for a successful outcome.

For employers, the decision to invest time, resources and staff to train a person on-the-job can be daunting. The business must have the right culture to support the apprentice's journey. Employers also need to consider whether they have the capacity in the business to provide the full breadth of on-the-job training and skills development required for the full term of the apprenticeship or traineeship. If employers feel they lack the resources or don't have the capacity to cover the full requirements of the apprenticeship they may consider partnering with a Group Training Organisation (GTO).

Employers may be eligible to receive financial support from the Australian or State Government depending on their industry, the occupation or qualification level, or the age of the apprentice. Support is also available for apprentices with disability and their employers.

Apprentices and trainees come from all walks of life. Apprentices and trainees are now older, with less than half of all apprentices and trainees today aged 19 years and under<sup>6</sup>. Apprenticeships and traineeships are no longer limited to entry-level occupations but now also cover higher level and specialist occupations. For this reason, we can no longer develop apprenticeship and traineeship policies or programs that are solely aimed at young people.

Apprenticeships and traineeships aren't for everyone. For a successful outcome it

requires the right person, with the passion and willingness to learn and work in the trade. Apprentices and trainees need to accept that in the first year they are likely to be doing menial and repetitive tasks until they gain the confidence and skills to do the job correctly. If they stick with the apprenticeship, they will be rewarded with a skilled job and a more secure future.

Apprentices and trainees have strong employment prospects with most remaining in employment well after training. 90% of apprentices in traditional trades and just below 80% in non-trades areas were employed after training<sup>7</sup>. In comparison, the rate of university undergraduates in full time employment four months after completion of their degree is 71.8%<sup>8</sup>.

## Factors contributing to the decline in apprenticeships and traineeships

Despite the strong employment prospects, apprenticeships and traineeships commencements have been in decline across Australia since 2012. The State Training Board is aware that some reasons for the decline will be difficult to overcome and may require several different approaches to overcome them.

### Economic and labour market conditions

Some of the decline in apprentices and trainees can be explained by the moderation in the labour market, particularly in Western Australia. Western Australia is currently experiencing challenging conditions in its domestic economy, which have flowed through to a softening in the labour market. Apprenticeships and traineeship commencements tend to follow the labour market and economic conditions of the State as this will impact employers' willingness to employ new workers, particularly those requiring a training contract under an apprenticeship.

Employment growth has slowed over the past four years in Western Australia. Overall, there was a slight fall in the State's average employment level over 2016/17 compared to the previous year. The State recorded a contraction

in employment of -0.4% over 2016/17, compared to 0% growth in 2015/16. This growth rate was significantly lower than the equivalent growth rate nationally over the past year of 1.3%, and it was well below the State's average yearly rate recorded over the past decade of 2.1%.

### Decline in construction apprenticeships

The construction industry employs more than 45% of the State's apprentices (including electrical)<sup>9</sup>. There has been an overall decrease in construction apprenticeship commencements of 18.6%<sup>10</sup>.

In part, the reduction in residential construction apprenticeships can be explained by the growth in resource construction employment during the investment and construction phase of the resources boom. At the same time, Western Australia had a buoyant residential construction market resulting in peaks in apprenticeship commencements in 2010 and 2014<sup>11</sup>. Many resource construction workers were largely recruited from other types of construction, with around 45% of resource construction workers during 2008 to 2012 having been previously employed in the construction industry<sup>12</sup>.

As the resource construction phase ended many of these workers have returned to their previous construction work, thus reducing the need to employ apprentices and trainees. Employers are less likely to employ an apprentice or trainee when they can secure a qualified tradesperson.

### Government incentives drive behaviour

The State Training Board, through the consultations and its own research, believes that incentives and other government subsidies, including payroll tax exemptions, drive the behaviour of some employers.

Incentives were first introduced by the Australian Government in the mid-1990s to help offset the costs of apprenticeships and traineeships and to encourage more commencements<sup>13</sup>. The economic rationale for the incentives is that they offset wages and other costs associated with apprenticeship and traineeship training and encourage employers



to offer more places. Other incentives or payments have also been paid directly to the apprentice or trainee to offset the low wages and to encourage targeted cohorts to engage with the training sector.

Government incentives and programs were designed to drive the take up of apprentices and trainees. For example, the Australian Government's Productivity Places Program (PPP) that operated from 2008 to 2012 saw an increase in the take up of apprenticeships and traineeships, particularly existing worker traineeships. Between 2008 and 2010 Western Australia experienced significant growth in traineeship numbers, thanks largely to the PPP and a buoyant labour market, including 362% increase in mining, 233% increase in light manufacturing and 193% in process operating<sup>14</sup>.

As the Mitchell Institute demonstrates the overall decline in apprenticeship and traineeship commencements were "principally driven by a fall in non-trade (traineeship) numbers following a change in Commonwealth employer incentives in 2012"<sup>15</sup>. The Mitchell Institute rightly points out that in 2012, when commencements were at their peak, over 130,000 'trainees' were not starting with a new employer primarily because of 'existing worker incentives'. Nationally, in 2012 there were more trainees aged over 45 years (42,804) compared with trainees aged 20-24 years (40,593) due to incentive driven growth in existing worker trainee commencements<sup>16</sup>.

### **Non-economic drivers**

There are other non-economic drivers that may also be contributing to a decline in apprenticeship and traineeship commencements in Western Australia, particularly in the traditional 15-19 year cohort. Young people today have more options immediately following high school than previous generations, including travelling, taking a 'gap year', employment or alternative study options such as university.

There has been an overall decline in students choosing VET over university in recent years<sup>17</sup>. In addition, the changes to the Western

Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) have seen VET become a key part of the senior school system. In 2016, just over 70% of year 11 and year 12 public school students enrolled in about 200 certificate qualifications provided by 150 training organisations. Despite the uptake during school many schools, career advisors and parents encourage students to work towards university, leaving VET as a second-tier option by youth and not something to pursue post-school. At the same time the uncapping of university places has seen more young people choosing university. Many young people don't see apprenticeships and university degrees as being equal<sup>18</sup>.

### **Key findings from the consultations**

The State Training Board set out to understand Western Australian industry needs and understand the common issues and barriers that employers face when employing apprentices and trainees. It is evident that there are wide-ranging issues and diverse opinions about what is needed to help grow apprenticeships and traineeships.

Through the consultation process it became evident to the State Training Board that the VET system would benefit from a review. A fundamental issue appears to be the multiple tiers of government agencies in the system, both State and Australian governments, and the crossover of roles and responsibilities of each, as well as other various agencies involved in the system.

The consultation process identified the common barriers reported by employers associated with apprenticeships and traineeships; sought initiatives to encourage employers to employ apprentices and trainees; and showed the challenges in attracting quality candidates. Industry feedback was also requested on apprenticeships and traineeships in schools; pathways to apprenticeships; career taster programs; structured pathways and mature age apprenticeships and traineeships. The State Training Board aims to do further consultation to gain student feedback at a later stage.

### Issue 1:

#### **The apprenticeship system is complex and difficult to navigate.**

- The business processes and regulatory arrangements of the apprenticeship system are not easily understood by stakeholders and can be difficult to navigate.
- The two tiers of government (Australian and State Governments) are heavily engaged and invested in supporting the apprenticeship system resulting in responsibilities for policy, funding and services being split between multiple players leading to processing delays and frustration.

### Issue 2:

#### **There are cost pressures associated with the employment of apprentices and trainees.**

- The Australian Government incentives do not adequately cover business expenses of employing apprentices/trainees, particularly for part-time trainees.
- The increase in training fees in Western Australia was unwelcome and has contributed to a decline in apprenticeships and traineeships in Western Australia.

### Issue 3:

#### **Apprenticeships and traineeships are not widely promoted or understood by young people and the community.**

- The vocational education and training (VET) sector is misunderstood and undervalued by the Western Australian community, schools and employers.
- There is an absence of promotion and marketing of apprenticeships and traineeships in the wider community.
- Young people need to receive quality career advice linked to labour market information.

### Issue 4:

#### **Businesses want greater flexibility from the training sector.**

- Many employers don't understand or are unaware of the training options available to them.
- Regional employers require greater flexibility, particularly around the scheduling of block release for apprentices.

### Issue 5:

#### **Jobs and Skills Centres need to collaborate with industry and VET stakeholders to support users of the system.**

- There is opportunity to close the gap in the services currently provided by the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASNs) and the services offered by the State Government, such as mentoring and support for both the employer and the apprentice or trainee.
- Industry needs TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres will need to provide training information from TAFE, private training providers and not for profit organisations in a competitive market.



# Strategies to grow apprenticeships and traineeships

The State Training Board proposes the following interim and long-term systemic strategies to help grow apprenticeship and traineeship numbers:

## Strategy 1:

### Make it easier for participants to navigate the apprenticeship system.

- The establishment of a single portal website to provide up-to-date information that is relevant to employers, apprentices/trainees and other stakeholders on course availability, training locations, fees and government funding, subsidies and incentives.
- Make information publicly available that helps employers, apprentices/trainees, students and parents navigate the system more easily.
- Provide a 'map' of the training system that identifies the roles and responsibilities of each party/agency and include relevant contact information.
- Review the roles and responsibilities of the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) and the Apprenticeship Office and develop a Memorandum of Understanding around coordination, communication and referral protocols to alleviate confusion and duplication.

## Strategy 2:

### Reduce costs for employers and apprentices/trainees to make training more affordable.

- The State Government could consider and trial pilots aimed at reducing the costs for employers and apprentices/trainees, such as:
  - Providing employer subsidies or reducing TAFE course fees for non-trade priority occupations including social assistance and allied health industries (aged care, disability support, child care and allied health) and growth areas identified in *Plan for Jobs* such as hospitality and tourism.
  - Introduce State Government employer grants or incentives to encourage the uptake of apprentices/trainees in new and emerging industries to help diversify the State's economy.

- Provide wage subsidies or allowances to increase the employment and training in priority occupations for people with disability, Aboriginal, long-term unemployed, mature-aged and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- The State Government to monitor and review the State's TAFE fees, funding and policy positions to ensure they are flexible enough to address emerging issues, such as workers displaced by technology and innovative advances.
- The State Government to campaign the Australian Government to review the *Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Programme* to ensure that payments are keeping in line with employer and apprentice/trainee costs.

## Strategy 3:

### Promote the VET sector and the opportunities available through apprenticeships and traineeships.

- The State Government undertake an extensive promotion and marketing campaign to promote young professionals from the VET sector, with a focus to bust stereotypes and showcase excellence in VET careers using social media, technology applications, radio advertising, industry training advisory bodies and the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network.
- The TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres to be used as hubs of information, hosting open days through the calendar year for the community and the school sectors to promote training, provide up-to-date information about jobs and skills needed by the State's economy.
- Use the industry training advisory bodies to educate and promote industry and employers about apprenticeships and traineeships.

#### Strategy 4:

##### **Make training adaptive to industry needs and foster structured partnerships.**

- The State Government to ensure apprentices and trainees can access the training they need locally in Western Australia.
- TAFE to introduce key metrics to assess that they are meeting the training needs of industry. For example, measures to gauge whether employers and apprentices/trainees are satisfied with course offerings, locations and block release arrangements.
- Training providers collaborate with industry and other stakeholders to establish and build structured and enduring partnerships with local industries, so they clearly understand industry needs and the emerging trends to deliver effective and meaningful training.



#### Strategy 5:

##### **Be customer focused and provide reliable information, advice and support through the TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres.**

- Take a holistic approach and provide a true one-stop-shop service to support students, employers, mature aged workers, parents and schools.
- Provide an information hub with trained and experienced frontline personnel, as well as having a website portal that contains all the information in one place.
- Provide positive messages and information on training available and the various agencies involved in the system. Information and support could include:
  - good career advice for both academic and vocational pathways (including VET in Schools, apprenticeships and traineeships, general VET courses and pre-apprenticeships);
  - a joined-up integrated approach to service delivery by directing people to the right agencies involved in the system;
  - reliable and up to date information on funding, incentives, wages, industry information and dispute resolution.
- Provide impartial training information to clients including information on TAFE, private training organisations and not for profit organisations to ensure the best outcome for employers, apprentices and trainees.
- TAFE staff to upskill and increase their industry knowledge, to be more familiar with latest technology and equipment and industry trends.

# Common barriers associated with the apprenticeship system

The State Training Board set out to understand the common barriers associated with the apprenticeship system that, if overcome, could potentially help grow the number of apprentices and trainees in Western Australia. Most of the barriers identified through the consultation process were from employers and other industry stakeholders that use the system on a regular basis.

## The complexity of the vocational education and training system

One of the most repeated statements about barriers to the apprenticeships system is the complexity of the vocational education and training (VET) system itself. This is a persistent debate for the VET sector, particularly as it has two government levels of decision makers, funders, regulators and policy setters<sup>19, 20</sup>.

The State Training Board recognises that the Western Australian VET system sits within the Australian system. The State's apprenticeship system, a component of the VET sector, involves a diverse range of stakeholders including employers, apprentices/trainees, Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), Group Training Organisations (GTOs), unions, parents, schools, teachers, trainers, support organisations, industry associations, licensing bodies, training advisory bodies, the Fair Work Commission, the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN), Australian and State government agencies.

Figure 1 shows the complexity of the VET system in Western Australia. It does not cover the full system and it is no surprise that many employers, apprentices/trainees and their parents find it difficult to navigate.

The apprenticeship system is shaped by the Australian and State governments. The principal legislative and administrative responsibility for the apprenticeship system lies with the State Government through the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*. The policy and funding settings operate through agreements between the Australian Government and State/Territory Governments

but are largely set the by the Australian Government through national partnerships.

Over the past decade or so, the system has been influenced by changes at both State and Australian levels with changes to policy, funding and administration settings. The changing landscape has delivered both benefits and costs for the system and consumers. This has led to greater confusion for users of the system, particularly employers, apprentices and trainees.

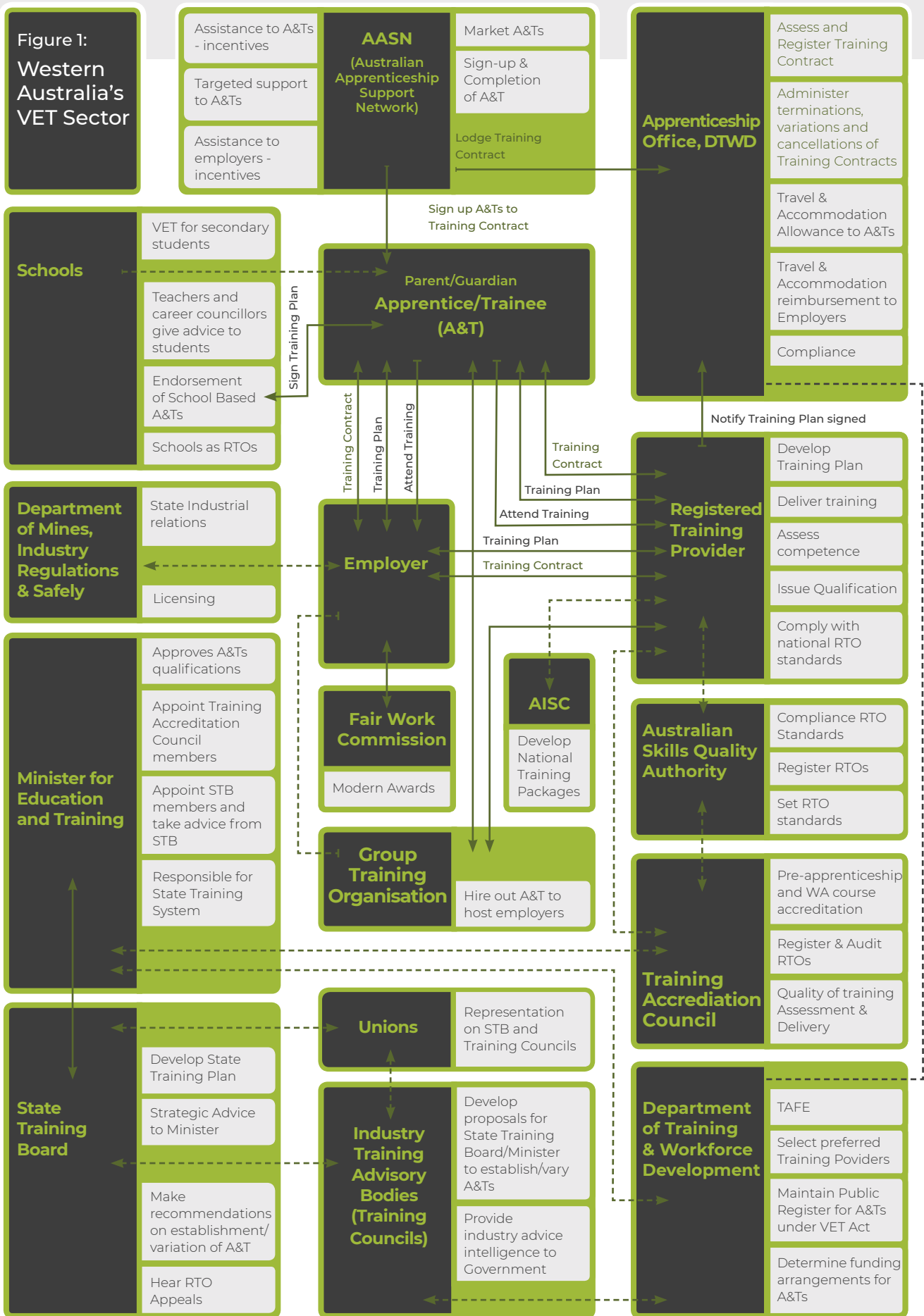
The State Training Board acknowledges that the Minister for Education and Training will have limited influence on Australian Government policy and funding settings. In the interests of people using the State's apprenticeship system there are measures that can be put in place in Western Australia to combat the reported complexity issues.

## Support employers, apprentices and trainees to navigate the system

The State Training Board recommends measures to make it easier for employers, apprentices and trainees to obtain the information and support they require from the system throughout the lifecycle of the apprenticeship.

Many employers reported their frustration in trying to navigate the numerous bodies and websites to obtain up-to-date, relevant information including the rules, regulations, the availability of courses, government subsidies/financial supports available or the fees or costs of hiring an apprentice or trainee. Many small and medium businesses, the bulk of employers of apprentices, advised that don't have time and don't have dedicated HR





departments to get the information they need to make informed decisions. These businesses need to be able to obtain accurate information in a timely manner.

The complexity in the current apprenticeship system lies with the perceived lack of coordination between the various agencies and different tiers of government. Employers reported that they were being over-serviced by the current administration arrangements with one employer reported being visited by two separate agencies on the same day to discuss the same issues. Employers are frustrated by being pushed between the various agencies because there is a lack of understanding about which agency is responsible for each part of the apprenticeship journey.

Employers were particularly confused by the roles and responsibilities of the State Department of Training and Workforce Development's Apprenticeship Office and the AASN contracted by the Australian Government. The agencies themselves are also frustrated. One regional AASN reported that they were unable to fix a problem with the training contract because they did not have access or authority to modify the training contract as this is State responsibility. They could only refer the employer to the Apprenticeship Office.

Employers told the State Training Board that they preferred the ApprentiCentre model of service delivery with industry-aligned field officers, a helpline and website to answer queries and resolve problems. Employers liked that there were dedicated industry field officers that knew the nuances of their industry and could 'talk the talk'. ApprentiCentre officers also provided up-to-date information on pay and conditions. Additionally, ApprentiCentre officers would visit the business and discuss issues between the apprentice and employer, reducing the need to go to mediation or cancellation of the training contract. Employers specifically liked the Jobs Board and being able to advertise for apprentices and trainees through a single portal.

The traineeship/apprenticeship centres don't seem to have enough field consultants and often gaining that first discussion with an employer/jobseeker is delayed and becomes frustrating. Not enough information out there for employers and no incentives.

*Employer, 21 August 2017*

There is no central website or database to find the right candidate. It is too confusing about where to start the search.

*Employer, 21 August 2017*

### **Create a seamless interface for employers and apprentices/trainees**

The State Training Board isn't proposing the re-establishment of ApprentiCentre but believes that some of the successful elements of the ApprentiCentre model should be returned to assist employers, apprentices/trainees and other stakeholders to navigate the system more freely.

The State's apprenticeship system would benefit from a seamless interface between Australian and State Government service delivery systems and bodies. The Business Council of Australia supports the creation of an apprenticeship system that is easy to use. This can be achieved by reducing duplication between governments and agencies and creating better alignment of programs, services and funding<sup>21</sup>.

This is particularly important at a time when the State Government is establishing the Jobs and Skills Centres in TAFE campuses around the State. It is important that these Centres don't simply duplicate existing services but provide the one-stop experience employers, apprentices and trainees are seeking. There is opportunity to provide a single website or portal to provide information from all tiers of

government, bodies and agencies involved in the apprenticeship system.

Western Australia could learn from other States and Territories in providing a one-stop shop website containing information about apprenticeships and traineeships. In 2014 Queensland launched the *Queensland Skills Gateway*, an easy to use one-stop-shop, enabling people to quickly research details on career pathways, including training locations, course availability and the level of government funding<sup>22</sup>. The Victorian *Skills Gateway* and South Australia's *WorkReady* websites also allow users to search courses, training locations and course availability easily. In contrast, the Department of Training and Workforce Development's website provides information but requires users to search PDF documents or follow links to other websites. There is no search engine on the website to bring up the information in a user-friendly format.

The one-stop shop web portal should be developed as a joint initiative between the Department of Training and Workforce Development, TAFE, the Australian Government and the Australian Council for Private Education and Training. Only then would we get a truly holistic view of the VET sector to educate employers, apprentices, trainees, students, and jobseekers who want to engage in the system but don't know where to start. If there was a collaborative approach to this problem, via the identified stakeholders, then it would be providing all sources of the truth.

### **Provide transparent information about course fees and public funding**

Employers and other stakeholders in both Perth and regional consultations reported confusion and frustration regarding the public funding and subsidies for traineeships. Employers wanting to upskill their existing workforce using a traineeship (known as existing worker traineeships) reported that the process for sign-up and eligibility criteria for funding was unclear.

The State Government funds a sizable portion of course fees. All new entrant apprenticeships and most traineeships are eligible for public funding through *Jobs and Skills WA*. Approximately 80% of the course fees, whether through TAFE or an eligible private RTO or GTO, are funded by the State Government. This provides employers with choice of training provider to suit the needs of their business and the needs of the apprentice.

In general terms, the State Government does not fund the provision of training for existing workers, except for Certificate IV and above traineeships that align with state priority occupations.

Whilst this issue of existing worker traineeships has been largely addressed through the State Government's payroll tax exemption decision in November 2017<sup>23</sup> it suggests that funding and subsidy arrangements are not easily understood. Employers would benefit from having the information readily available in a format that is easy to understand.

### **Make it easier to register and vary training contracts**

The State Training Board recognises that the administrative, regulatory and training requirements of the apprenticeship system have become more complex in recent years. This is having an impact on employers and apprentices/trainees in their ability to navigate the system. The State Training Board believes there is opportunity to reduce confusion and complexity in the system by streamlining the process.

A consistent theme across all consultations was the administrative burden employers experience when signing up apprentices and trainees. Many stakeholders advised that the current process of signing up an apprentice or trainee is onerous, complex, difficult and confusing.

It is difficult for employers to navigate the process and paperwork on their own. I have only ever seen it done with assistance from an industry body and TAFE in partnership.

*Industry association, 21 August 2017*

The process to get training contract is too long and difficult. There are compliance issues with the training plan. It is too confusing over who does what in the system between the RTO, the Employer, the AASN and DTWD.

*Employer, 21 August 2017*

An area of frustration reported by employers in Perth and regional consultations related specifically to question 3 on the training contract which requires the “intended occupation” of the apprentice to be listed<sup>24</sup>. The Apprenticeship Office uses this information when making an assessment on whether to register a training contract. Regulations allow the Apprenticeship Office to refuse to register a contract if they are not satisfied that the qualification matches the occupation of the apprentice during the contract (the apprenticeship). This regulatory requirement was introduced to prevent unscrupulous employer behaviour.

Since the introduction of the new regulation, employers in the Perth and regional consultation sessions reported lengthy delays in having their training contracts assessed and registered with the Apprenticeship Office. One employer in the Perth consultation reported that his training contract was rejected months after the apprentice had commenced work and was attending off-the-job training. This was a stressful time for both the employer and apprentice as they didn't know where they stood.

For most first-time employers and apprentices, the signing of a legally binding training contract can be quite daunting; particularly when they might not understand the terminology used in the contract or the timeframes that must be met under the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*. Many employers have never engaged or have limited engagement with the VET sector and have limited knowledge of qualifications, nominal durations, occupation outcomes, course fees and training requirements.

Unlike other jurisdictions, Western Australia does not currently have an online portal for employers, apprentice and trainees to access and manage their training contract information. Queensland, South Australia and New South Wales have online portals allowing users to complete a range of tasks related to their apprenticeship or traineeship including the training plan, updating personal information, varying the training contract and upload resources for assessment purposes.

The State Training Board understands that a portal is currently under development for Western Australia. This will benefit all users of the system.

## STRATEGY 1

### Make it easier to navigate the apprenticeship system

The State Training Board suggests the following strategies to help employers, apprentices/trainees and other stakeholders navigate the system and obtain the information and assistance they require.

- The establishment of a single portal website to provide up-to-date information that is relevant to employers, apprentices/trainees and other stakeholders on course availability, training locations, fees and government funding, subsidies and incentives.
- Make information publicly available that helps employers, apprentices/trainees, students and parents navigate the system more easily.
- Provide a 'map' of the training system that identifies the roles and responsibilities of each party/agency and include relevant contact information.
- Review the roles and responsibilities of the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) and the Apprenticeship Office and develop a Memorandum of Understanding around coordination, communication and referral protocols to alleviate confusion and duplication.





## Cost is a significant barrier for many employers

Employers reported that the major barrier to their participation in the apprenticeship system was the perceived rising costs associated with employing an apprentice or trainee. Costs need to be relevant and businesses are looking for a worthwhile return on their investment.

Data from NCVET<sup>25</sup> shows there is a substantial cost borne by employers particularly in the first year of an apprenticeship or traineeship, when they are considered to offer limited productivity. This cost burden can act as a disincentive, particularly for small, regional or remote organisations, to take on apprentices or trainees.

### Training fees and wage pressures

Employers were blunt – costs are a major barrier to employing apprentices and trainees.

The Fair Work Commission decision to include employer reimbursement of training fees for apprentices in most Modern Awards from 1 January 2015 has increased the cost burden to employers.<sup>26</sup> It should be noted that Modern Awards are administered by the Fair Work Commission and changes to them were aimed to improve the attractiveness of apprenticeships to young people and improve completion rates.

The recent increase in TAFE training fees in Western Australia was unwelcome and has contributed to a decline in apprenticeships and traineeships in Western Australia. Employers have welcomed the McGowan Government's decision to freeze TAFE fees but suggest that a reduction to fees is needed to encourage the take up of apprentices and trainees. A reduction in fees particularly for qualifications in industries such as health and childcare, where wages are traditionally low would be helpful. In some cases, due to competing policies, it is cheaper to do a qualification through fully fee-for-service training rather than through publicly funded training.

At the same time employers are facing wage pressures. In 2014, the weekly wage payable to first and second year apprentices increased by an average of 7-10%. At the same time TAFE fees increased and with more employers now required to reimburse the tuition costs of the apprentice under Modern Awards, the costs have become unaffordable.

The cost pressures for employing mature-aged apprentices is even more significant with adult apprentice (21 years or older) attracting a weekly wage that is 80% of the qualified tradesperson wage in their first year. Employers argued that it was not financially viable to employ mature-aged apprentices and many preferred to employ a semi-skilled trade assistant rather than engage a mature-aged apprentice with the additional burdens of a training contract.

### Recruitment costs

There are also recruitment costs to employ the right candidate and an opportunity cost for the employer, as someone is giving up their time to train an apprentice/trainee resulting in less productivity. This is a problem for small businesses when resources are limited, and they are required to train an apprentice or trainee and mentor them.

Many employers are also worried about making the wrong choice when it comes to employing an apprentice or trainee and many choose to employ the person in a trade's assistant role or junior position first to test whether the person is suitable. This vetting process can take up to six months to be sure that the person has the aptitude and attitude to undertake an apprenticeship.

This feedback suggests that employers are either unaware or unclear about the probationary period of the training contract. The probationary period, typically between one and three months in length, provides both parties (the employer and the apprentice) with a 'cooling off' period to determine whether the apprenticeship/traineeship will suit both parties. If the apprentice or the employer feels that the arrangement does not suit they

can terminate the contract without penalty. Employers also seem to be unaware that the probationary period can be extended.

### Government incentives

The Australian and State Governments contribute significantly to the apprenticeship system. The Australian Government pays a range of commencement and completion incentives to employers for full-time, part-time and school-based apprentices through the *Australian Apprenticeship Incentives Program*.

Government incentives recognise that the skills obtained by apprentices and trainees are general and are designed to be transferrable. Government subsidies also recognise that “employers taking on apprentices and trainees may not recover the full value of their investment in the training, since it is not possible to prevent poaching of fully trained labour [and] there is also the risk of the apprentice or trainee not completing their training”<sup>27</sup>.

Many employers argued that the incentives are not enough and don’t cover the costs associated with employing apprentices and trainees. Employers also reported that incentives have remained stagnant and are not in line with the current costs employers face.

The State Training Board urges the State Government to campaign for a review of the *Australian Apprenticeship Incentives Program*. Research undertaken by the NSW Business Council has identified that Australian Government incentives have not increased in real terms for more than 10 years. Adjusting for inflation, incentives have effectively declined by over 40%.

The forums highlighted that the Australian Government pay less incentives for part-time apprentices/trainees despite employer’s recruitment and set-up costs being identical to a full-time apprentice. Representatives from health and community services sectors believe this is a concern particularly for their industry where part-time employment is preferred by many employees.

Inadequate employer incentives to cover the RTO fees and training and assessment in paid time for part-time employees. Most of our employees are part-time and therefore are only entitled to \$1500. It takes the same amount of money and time to train a full-time employee as well as a part-time employee.

*Employer, 18 August 2017*

Current incentives for apprenticeships and traineeships are mostly pitched at a Certificate III level and above. The removal of incentives for Certificate II level had a profound impact on the number of employers offering apprenticeships and traineeships at this level. Given industry has a requirement for Certificate II for entry level positions there is a need to look at possible incentives targeting qualifications at this level<sup>28</sup>.

The decline in [meat] processing commencements can be attributed largely to the removal of Commonwealth subsidies for Certificate II Level Traineeships, which form the bulk of the industry’s trainees.

*Jenny Kroonstuiver,  
MINTRAC Written submission*

### Return on investment

The State Training Board acknowledges that businesses invest a large amount of time and money in hiring and mentoring an apprentice or trainee. Apprentices and trainees also invest their time and effort into learning the trade. Apprentices are paid a training wage that increases as their skills increase.

Businesses need to recognise that all new workers, whether an apprentice/trainee or “off the street” hire will require some training

or an adjustment period to settle into the business. If a fully qualified tradesperson or skilled worker is not available, the business may consider leaving the position vacant. This could ultimately cost the business in terms of revenue or reputation through an inability to meet deadlines, turning down work or having to pay staff overtime to meet deadlines.

Many businesses recognise the value that apprenticeships and traineeships bring to their business. They can justify the costs associated with the apprenticeship and are prepared to commit to provide opportunities for apprentices. These businesses recognise the value apprenticeships bring to their organisation, the competitive advantage it provides in the labour market and the productivity gains from developing its own talent.

Unfortunately, some businesses cannot see past the initial cost outlays with an apprenticeship and prefer to use unskilled labour through a labour hire company. There is nothing wrong with this approach, but it may not necessarily meet the long-term benefits for the business. The State Training Board recognises that apprenticeships and

traineeships aren't necessarily the best option for some businesses.

Many employers cannot afford the costs associated with the Award requirements that they must pay the apprentice tuition fees as well as the apprentice wages. Many employers simply can't afford it.

*Industry association, 21 August 2017*

There is a lack of financial capacity in the social services sector to set up and administer training of apprentices.

*Industry association, 21 August 2017*

The costs associated with an apprentice or trainee varies between businesses and industries. The return on investment in an apprenticeship can be measured in many ways. Some benefits may be immediate, and others may take some time to develop. The common benefits of apprenticeship and their return on investment<sup>29</sup> can be measured as follows:

### Common benefits associated with apprenticeships and traineeships

Productivity Gains	Workforce	Business Culture
Output of apprentice is relative to their wages	Reduced turnover and recruitment costs	Employee loyalty and engagement
Higher post-apprenticeship productivity than other employees	Pipeline of skilled employees	Better relationships between employees through mentoring and supervision
Exposure to new techniques and technology through formal training	Upskilling of existing workers	Development of future managers and supervisors
Reduced errors, mistakes and business disruptions	Diverse pool of workers through targeted recruitment	Greater problem-solving skills

Employers, particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs) felt that when the labour market is down it is difficult for AASNs to meet key performance indicators (KPIs) and it is easier for them to target larger employers than engage with small employers.

### **Rural employers and apprentices face additional cost burdens**

Several regional employers pointed out the different cost pressures that young rural apprentices face.

Business communities in regional Western Australia are primarily made up of SMEs with limited staff and turnover. Often the costs associated with engaging an apprentice or trainee is far beyond what the business can afford, and the government financial incentives do not assist the business as many quality candidates are not eligible for the funding.

The cost of living is often higher in regional Western Australia. Rental accommodation, fuel and food costs are more expensive in regional Western Australia and this can be difficult for apprentices to continue with their apprenticeship.

Unless the apprentice/trainee has the full support of family, many young people are choosing not to engage in apprenticeships/traineeships due to the high cost of living in Broome and the West Kimberley. Median rental prices in Broome are \$480 per week, with the award apprenticeship wages being significantly less than weekly expense. Cost of other general expenses including food, utilities, fuel and transport costs, do not make it economical for candidates to engage in training.

*Broome Chamber of Commerce and Industry, November 2017*

A large outlay for employers in regional Western Australia relates to accommodation and travel costs associated with the apprentice's off-the-job training. In most regional locations apprentices can attend off-the-job training at their local TAFE for the first 12 to 18 months of their apprenticeship. As they advance through their apprenticeship they are required to travel to other regional towns or to Perth to attend off-the-job training in a block (typically 2-3 weeks).

Employers advised that finding accommodation that is safe, clean, affordable and close to the training provider is important. The current accommodation allowance provided by the Department of Training and Workforce Development does not adequately cover the cost of accommodation in Perth. Some rural employers choose to pay for better accommodation for their apprentices when they travel to Perth because they feel it is part of the duty of care<sup>30</sup>.

For some regional apprentices they have the option to drive to the regional centre or Perth to attend their block training. Whilst this provides freedom to the apprentice to travel it also places the apprentice at risk when driving long distances. Some employers refuse to allow their apprentice to drive. For rural and remote apprentices, the only option is to fly to Perth. The State Training Board was advised that this is adding between \$8,000 and \$10,000 to employer costs<sup>31</sup>.





### Strategy 2:

#### Reduce costs for employers and apprentices/trainees to make training more affordable.

- The State Government could consider and trial pilots aimed at reducing the costs for employers and apprentices/trainees, such as:
  - Providing employer subsidies or reducing TAFE course fees for non-trade priority occupations including social assistance and allied health industries (aged care, disability support, child care and allied health) and growth areas identified in *Plan for Jobs* such as hospitality and tourism.
  - Introduce State Government employer grants or incentives to encourage the uptake of apprentices/trainees in new and emerging industries to help diversify the State's economy.
  - Provide wage subsidies or allowances to increase the employment and training in priority occupations for people with disability, Aboriginal, long-term unemployed, mature-aged and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- The State Government to monitor and review the State's TAFE fees, funding and policy positions to ensure they are flexible enough to address emerging issues, such as workers displaced by technology and innovative advances.
- The State Government to campaign the Australian Government to review the *Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Programme* to ensure that payments are keeping in line with employer and apprentice/trainee costs.





## The supply of potential apprentices and trainees is declining

Despite the drive to employ more apprentices and trainees, employers from most industries, have reported a difficulty attracting young people into apprenticeships and traineeships. There are several reasons behind this decline.

Many stakeholders believed that the lack of candidates stems from a broader perception problem with the VET sector. Many young people are advised by their parents, teachers and career guidance officers about university pathways and are not encouraged to consider VET pathways. Many overlook the vast earning potential that trades can offer. Non-trade VET pathways are always certainly overlooked in favour of university pathways.

There are many examples where young people have an understanding of, and an interest in, a trade career. In general, though, the trades continue to suffer from poor perceptions and understanding, particularly relative to universities and the professions. These problems are magnified by broadening of access to universities through demand based funding (including for students with low ATAR scores), negative publicity about the VET system, and the perceived running down of TAFE.

*New South Wales Business Chamber<sup>32</sup>*

Stakeholders felt that trades have lost their value within society. In previous generations getting a trade was a celebrated achievement whereas today this doesn't appear to be the case. Stakeholders felt that we could overcome this by celebrating the success stories of people who have forged careers through a VET pathway. We could use this in a campaign for young people and their parents showing that an apprenticeship can be the start of a rewarding and successful career.

## We need to bust the myth that university is better than an apprenticeship

There was agreement across the consultations that there is a need to bust the myth that university is the only avenue to success. Many parents incorrectly believe that a university pathway will guarantee employment and provide better outcomes for their children.

Change the perception that a university education is the only worthwhile education.

*Industry association, 21 August 2017*

Apprenticeships and traineeships continue to be viewed a second-class choice to a university degree. This is despite nine out of 10 jobs predicted to have the greatest growth in the next five years can be achieved by training courses offered by the VET sector.

When it comes to employability, cost and earning potential, the traditional apprenticeships can be a better choice over a university degree for many young people. The skills and competencies the apprentice acquires from being in the working environment are very impressive. Apprentices and trainees can build skills quickly in the workplace because they are provided with practical hands-on opportunities to put into practice what they have learned in the classroom.

University fees differ depending on degree and institution but range from \$6,000 to \$10,000 a year. An apprenticeship, on the other hand, is paid for by the employer so the apprentice can graduate without debt. Recently, it was estimated that an electrical apprentice can earn up to \$150,000 over the four-year apprenticeship<sup>33</sup>. In comparison full-time university students must rely on parents or part-time work to get them through.

The research shows that VET graduates have excellent job prospects, earn wages comparable, if not exceeding that of university

graduates. The median annual starting salary for a university graduate younger than 25 and in their first full-time job was \$54,000 in 2015. By comparison, NCVET finds the median annual income of a VET graduate working full time is \$56,000. For those employed in an apprenticeship or traineeship, the median was even higher at \$59,000. In the construction industry, newly finished apprenticeship can earn between \$80,000 and \$91,000 a year straight out of their apprenticeship<sup>34</sup>.

### **Raising of the school leaving age partly to blame**

Employers and industry stakeholders argued that the raising of the school leaving age had diminished the value of apprenticeships and traineeships with the wider community. When young people were freely able to leave school in Year 10 to do an apprenticeship this was supported by the broader community and seen as a valued career pathway. Now parents are actively encouraged to keep their children in school to complete year 12. Apprenticeships are no longer promoted as a suitable alternative to year 12.

Stakeholders believe that the primary focus by schools is on university pathways. Students that are not suited to an ATAR pathway are still encouraged to stay in school rather than pursue a VET pathway outside of school. The school sector drives students into higher education with little value placed on VET qualifications. A situation exists where both parents and schools are pushing candidates to stay at school. There appears to be a stigma associated with VET and this mindset in secondary schooling needs to change.

Apprenticeship not promoted in schools and can be seen as a fall-back option. Schools more focussed on university.

*Employer, 21 August 2017*

Research<sup>35</sup> also shows a trend that employers are requesting the highest qualification, such as degrees to filter candidates for jobs but then find those candidates do not have the practical skills. The chase for higher qualifications has resulted in four in five parents preferring their children attend university after school rather than undertake VET and that one in four workers is over-qualified for their job.

Young people that drop out of university and then try to get an apprenticeship or traineeship find it difficult because they are older and attract a higher wage. Further, Commonwealth incentives differ substantially between full time and part time apprentices and trainees. This can be a barrier for people wanting to re-enter the workforce as a part time apprentice or trainee.

Young people at school are not guided properly for a trade pathway and are pushed into higher education which they cannot handle and then they want to re-enter the trade pathway but are then too old. Employers find it hard to relate to the current generation of jobseekers.

*Employer, 21 August 2017*

### **Apprenticeships and traineeships not adequately promoted in schools**

Employers particularly felt that there was room for improvement with the way apprenticeships and traineeships are promoted in schools. Many stakeholders felt that schools only promoted university pathways because these were understood by the teachers and career guidance officers. Employers felt that young people were not encouraged to consider a trade pathway, and this was leading to a decline in apprenticeship numbers.

Skills and knowledge learned at school should be linked at the time to career pathways. For example, National Disability Services (NDS) use

the ProjectABLE employment program to run interactive workshops for students in Year 10, 11 and 12. Students apply their passions, skills and abilities to enrich their lives and the lives of others by pursuing a rewarding career in the disability and community services sector. The project is in response to the expected 70,000 new jobs that will be created in the sector by 2019. Workshops are held in school by people with disability who talk honestly and openly about their disability and are selected on their ability to connect with students. The workshops make students aware of the range of school-based traineeships for entry in the sector. This project linked schools and students to local RTOs who support school-based traineeships.

The Gateway to Industry Schools program in Queensland was also mentioned as a good example where the Queensland Government is building partnerships between schools and industry to enable young people to acquire the knowledge, skills and attributes to participate in the Queensland economy. The initiative allows hubs to be established in regions across the state. Industry bodies engage local schools and careers practitioners to organise demonstrations and visit schools.

There is a strong imperative to establish a closer interconnection between industry and schools to attract more high school leavers to the VET sector.

The nexus between industry and high schools is insufficient in informing students of the benefits of VET sector pathways. More widely the VET sector suffers from an overall negative perception amongst high school students in comparison to other post-school options.

*Restaurant and Catering Australia,  
written submission*

## The VET sector needs to engage young people and their parents

Recently published research found that young people do not perceive the VET sector to have the same value as a university degree. Only 33 per cent of survey respondents thought that university degrees and apprenticeships were of equal value. More alarmingly 74 per cent of young people stated that they would not consider an apprenticeship or traineeship as a career<sup>36</sup>.

Young people fail to recognise that an apprentice wage is a training wage. Many young people today opt to take on a part-time or casual job whilst still attending school and can earn \$20 per hour at McDonalds on a working wage rather than \$16 on training wages in an apprenticeship. Young people may not focus on the longer-term benefits of an apprenticeship or traineeship and for employers it is difficult to compete.

The best successes are young people wanting to leave school at year 10 and want to learn on the job. They can learn on the job and earn a living while they live at home and cannot drink alcohol. By the time they are 17 they have earned their own car. At 18 they can be a qualified tradesperson. The rate of pay is not such a problem unless they start at 17 after year 12 [because] they borrow money for a car and the rate of pay for 1st year is an issue.

*Employer, 18 August 2017*

The unions advised that many parents, already stung by high interest loan schemes, are discouraging their children from entering an apprenticeship because of the *Trade Support Loan Scheme*<sup>37</sup>. Whilst the uptake of the loan scheme is optional many apprentices use the loan scheme to purchase the tools needed for their apprenticeship. Parents don't understand how the loan scheme works and are fearful that their children will be locked into a debt that they cannot repay.

The State Training Board believes that some of the misconceptions about university and VET stems from the lack of promotion and marketing by the VET sector. All Western Australian universities host open days for prospective students, they visit schools and have exciting events to entice young people to consider their university. These events are widely publicised through schools, print media, social media, television and radio advertising resulting in good engagement with the community. The VET sector needs to consider similar campaigns to encourage people back to TAFE and into apprenticeships and traineeships.

Coordinated and Leveraged Marketing: Extraordinarily, we have not had the benefit of a comprehensive State or Commonwealth Government marketing campaign to promote apprenticeships and traineeships for many years. There have been specific promotions, for example focused on incentive programs, however no comprehensive and integrated marketing campaign. In the past, State or Commonwealth campaigns were planned in conjunction with various stakeholders so that the whole system could support such a campaign and leverage the public investment.

*Busy at work, written submission*

## Career guidance influences young people's decisions

A major reason for the decline in apprenticeships and traineeships is poor career advice. One stakeholder believed that there is reluctance for school leavers to complete an apprenticeship or traineeship because there is a lack of information and industry need to be more involved in providing this. Direct communication regarding the benefits of the VET sector from an industry representative through classroom presentations from high profile industry figures would encourage students to pursue long term careers in that industry area. Additionally, the stakeholder felt it would help if schools were required to report on students who meet both university and vocational training courses and have KPIs to include a proportion of students enrolling in courses where there are identified shortages.

Feedback received was that career practitioners need more time to assist students. Research from the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA) was evidenced in a written submission showing that whilst parents are number one influencers on their children's career planning, career practitioners were second. The research also showed that nearly half of the career practitioners are full time and that the most effective forms of career development activities are limited by a career advisors time and resource allocation.

The most effective form of career development is interviews and only 53% of part time career practitioners can fully implement this activity in the schools they work in. Schools need to be funded correctly and career practitioners need to be suitably qualified, '*not the English teacher doubling as, or in a second role*'. School practitioners should have the Certificate IV in Career Development. CICA has published a School Career Development Service Benchmark Resource for principals and leadership teams to help them achieve the best value and outcomes from their career development services.

Quality career guidance inspires and assists students in making well informed decisions about further education, training or employment. It gives them invaluable insight into the world of work and what education and training paths they need to undertake to achieve their career goals. Schools also need to be equipping their students with the skills required to manage and grow their careers through a planned program of career education learning.

*David Carney, Executive Director of CICA*

### **Candidates overlook the opportunities within certain industries**

Some industries fail to attract quality candidates because the industry is overlooked as a potential career by many candidates.

The retail and hospitality industries reported that candidates failed to see their sectors as providing a promising and rewarding career. For many young people the retail and hospitality industries offer an entry-level job that allows them to earn money while they are undertaking study or training. Despite gaining valuable work experience and developing their employability skills they overlook the potential career opportunities, such as becoming a supervisor or manager, opening a café or restaurant and becoming a business owner. This makes it difficult for the industry to recruit potential apprentices and trainees.

The hair and beauty industry are not marketed through the education system as a priority. It is promoted as where to go if you don't get into university or don't know what else you want to do. It is not prioritised, respected or understood by educators/career advisers to be able to encourage the right applicants to join the industry.

*Employer, 21 August 2017*

The agriculture industry also faces barriers in attracting young people. Often, if a young person has not grown up on a farm or in a rural setting; agriculture can be perceived as driving tractors and being quite mundane work. This is a misconception. Agriculture is going through a very exciting change, involving great technological advances and changing farming practices. Furthermore, agriculture has many ancillary sectors including science, trading and marketing<sup>38</sup>.

### **Candidates are not adequately prepared for the realities of work**

Employers argued that there is inadequate screening of apprentices and trainees which leads to a high dropout rate. For small and medium businesses without HR departments the pre-screening of candidates is almost impossible.

Employers support pre-apprenticeships and other preparatory programs in schools. Broadening the scope of pre-apprenticeships to introduce more industries/qualifications may provide an opportunity to engage more students.

Pre-apprenticeships are a win-win situation for employers. Pre-apprenticeships may be a better model for employers over school-based apprenticeships and traineeships because it provides students with work experience and the employer does not have to pay a wage to the student.

### **Candidates are not 'job ready'**

Employers reported that many applicants have poor communication, social and interview skills and don't have the appropriate attitude or readiness to work. Employers said that many young people don't understand what is expected of them in the workplace and often have a poor attitude towards company culture or rules.



People want 'job ready' candidates but the description of 'job ready' varies. Also, employers often forget that they are hiring school students not people who have experience in the workplace, so they may be fine after a while.

*School, 21 August 2017*

The biggest barrier is accessing candidates that have 'work readiness' skills and are prepared to commit to a period of training on the job.

*Registered Training Organisation, 21 August 2017*

### **Candidates have limited knowledge of trades**

Many employers reported young people are arriving for interviews with limited knowledge or interest in the trade. Apprentices and trainees do not understand the sector. Stakeholders consider much clearer information is needed as employers and apprentices don't always fully understand what they are signing up to.

In some industries occupations have been glamorised by TV shows such as MasterChef or The Block. This is leading to a false perception that you don't need to be trained to do these jobs. What isn't shown on these reality shows is the work being undertaken by qualified tradespeople outside of filming or the intensive training provided off set.

A Pilbara employer reported that they were advertising for a Plumbing apprenticeship and received an application from a young man who was "willing to do anything" to secure an apprenticeship. Once the employer explained what the job involved he quickly withdrew his application.

It is hard to find the most suitable person for an apprenticeship or traineeship who has a genuine interest in our specific industry.

*Employer, 21 August 2017*

### **STEM skills**

The education system must ensure that all students not only acquire STEM knowledge, but also learn how to apply and adapt this knowledge to a variety of contexts.

The perception within the community and school sector is that VET pathways, particularly those in school do not require a young person to have STEM skills.

Many young people don't understand that many apprenticeships and traineeships today require students with advanced STEM skills, particularly in construction, manufacturing, electrical, engineering and automotive. These jobs require skills to undertake complex calculations and measurements that need advanced maths skills.

Some industries, such as the electrical industry have introduced a test for prospective apprentices to complete to demonstrate that they have the requisite skills needed to complete the apprenticeship. Other industries felt that they would benefit from similar testing for their apprenticeships.

Employers reported that many applicants simply don't have the right skills to enter a training contract.

### Strategy 3:

#### Promote the VET sector and the opportunities available through apprenticeships and traineeships.

- The State Government undertake an extensive promotion and marketing campaign to promote young professionals from the VET sector, with a focus to bust stereotypes and showcase excellence in VET careers using social media, technology applications, radio advertising, industry training advisory bodies and the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network.
- The TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres to be used as hubs of information, hosting open days through the calendar year for the community and the school sectors to promote training, provide up-to-date information about jobs and skills needed by the State's economy.
- Use the industry training advisory bodies to educate and promote industry and employers about apprenticeships and traineeships.

### Flexible approaches to apprenticeship delivery

Many employers believe the VET sector provides a standard approach to apprenticeship delivery that isn't meeting the needs of modern business. Employers demand more flexibility and more customised training solutions to meet their business needs.

There is lack of understanding of options for trainees/apprentices which may be suitable for the business. There is poor industry engagement and an inflexible TAFE system. It can be very expensive for little return.

*Employer, 21 August 2017*

Apprenticeship training can be delivered on-the-job, off-the-job or a combination of both. Many employers don't understand the training options available. Under User Choice arrangements employers can select the private provider or TAFE of their choice and can negotiate the timing, location and nature of the training. This information is captured

in the training plan, which is used to monitor progress and record achieved competencies during a training contract and must be negotiated and agreed to by the employer, the apprentice or trainee, and the registered training organisation.

The State Training Board consultations would suggest that employers want greater flexibility in the training system. Employers reported that apprentices are often not able to access training locally or within Western Australia and some TAFEs are not delivering qualifications they have on scope. This results in the apprentice or trainee having to travel further, and sometime interstate. This is a problem particularly in regional areas for young people and certain courses.

An opportunity exists for businesses to work together and partner with TAFE so that TAFE can be more responsive to meeting their needs. A good example is Rio Tinto working with the State Government to pioneer a new curriculum for the mining industry's jobs for the future; a model that could potentially be adopted by other industries.

## Regional employers need special consideration

Finding training providers in remote areas is often problematic, particularly for less common pathways. Consideration could be given to the provision of funding for training providers to intermittently travel to rural and regional locations to deliver accredited training. This could negate the significant costs for providers, associated with establishing permanent infrastructure in rural and regional areas as well as minimising cost and inconvenience for apprentices and trainees having to travel to urban centres for training<sup>39</sup>.

Agricultural traineeships have a very low uptake and one major impediment faced by agricultural enterprises is ensuring appropriate levels of supervision. Adequate and flexible training options that are tailored to participants in rural areas should be supported. Alterations to the current recommendations could include block training arrangements and web-based training<sup>40</sup>.

Block release training is often used, particularly for rural apprentices and trainees. This means the apprentice or trainee attends training in week blocks instead of one or two days per week. However, this is not always suitable for employers who report they frequently receive short notice for block training which affects business operations. When the apprentice/trainee is away for training the employer needs to ensure the work still gets done within timeframes and this can be difficult particularly for small businesses that rely on the apprentice/

trainee labour and must plan for this. Sending the apprentice/trainee for interstate training for weeks at a time is also a huge financial cost, particularly for regional employers and difficult for young people if support is not provided.

Employers in regional Western Australia feel that they are being overlooked by the TAFE sector. There is opportunity to grow more apprentices and trainees in the regions if TAFE offered the training they need. Many employers reported significant gaps in the training available locally. This was forcing them to send their apprentices to Perth or another regional centre.

Through the Department of Training and Workforce Development's travel policy employers can recoup some travel expenses. The travel policy also provides for lecturers to deliver training to groups of apprentices if it is academically beneficial and cost effective. However, some stakeholders report there is reluctance by lecturers to do this. Employers also believe that qualifications are not meeting their current or future needs and are choosing to do in-house training instead.

It was recognised by one stakeholder that there are structural issues with National Training Package development that will continue to haunt the system. A major impediment they believe is that we have compromised the relatively of our qualifications under the framework, that it is almost impossible to build understanding and integrity across qualification levels.

### Strategy 4:

#### Make training adaptive to industry needs and foster structured partnerships.

- The State Government to ensure apprentices and trainees can access the training they need locally in Western Australia.
- TAFE to introduce key metrics to assess that they are meeting the training needs of industry. For example, measures to gauge whether employers and apprentices/trainees are satisfied with course offerings, locations and block release arrangements.
- Training providers collaborate with industry and other stakeholders to establish and build structured and enduring partnerships with local industries, so they clearly understand industry needs and the emerging trends to deliver effective and meaningful training.

# What employers want from the VET sector

The State Training Board asked stakeholders about possible initiatives that would encourage the increase in apprenticeships and traineeships in Western Australia.


<p><b>Financial Incentives and Allowances</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campaign the Australian Government for a review of the Australian Apprenticeship Incentives Programme.</li> <li>• Provide State Government incentives for priority industries particularly for low-paying industries or industries experiencing skill shortages.</li> <li>• Reintroduce the tool allowance for apprentices.</li> <li>• Extend work cover rebates.</li> <li>• Make financial incentives tax-free.</li> <li>• Introduce incentives for host employers in GTOs.</li> <li>• Align State and Australian Government eligibility criteria and make information readily available about all incentives, wage subsidies and grants.</li> <li>• Increase allowances for regional apprentices and trainees.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fee Reduction</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce nominal hour rate, currently \$3.25/hr to reduce costs overall.</li> <li>• Reduce training fees for critical occupations and industries.</li> <li>• Fees need to align with earning potential (i.e. low-paying industries should pay less for their TAFE studies).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Marketing and Promotion</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad marketing campaign to raise the profile and importance of VET and the high-quality training options available in Western Australia.</li> <li>• Use the WA Training Awards to promote excellence in VET training and use as role models to encourage people to consider VET pathways.</li> <li>• Use high profile individuals who started their careers as apprentices and who have been successful in managing their own business or have become leaders in their industry sector.</li> <li>• Promote group training arrangements to encourage SMEs to choose apprenticeships and traineeships.</li> </ul>
<p><b>One Stop Shop</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a single 'source of truth' web portal containing information about apprenticeships and traineeships.</li> <li>• Establish a collaborative one-stop shop with Australian and State Government bodies being co-located to provide seamless assistance and support.</li> <li>• Provide support for SMEs to engage with the apprenticeship system.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Flexibility</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow private organisations to use TAFE facilities to conduct small or specialised training.</li> <li>• Provide alternative training options for regional employers.</li> <li>• Investigate alternative 'apprenticeship' models in recognition of the changing nature of work.</li> <li>• Promote skill sets to improve productivity and 'value for money' from the VET sector.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Partnerships</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build collaborative partnerships between industry and TAFE.</li> <li>• Western Australia should consider Victoria's Employment Ticket to Work to assist young people with disability engage with the VET sector.</li> <li>• Promote partnerships between education, TAFE and industry to provide work experience opportunities for students across all sectors.</li> </ul>

## Building partnerships

Building partnerships and working collaboratively is necessary. More alignment with the AASNs and providing support to organisations to improve employment and education outcomes through career development, work place preparation, work experience and school-based training was requested by stakeholders. More support for employers to understand their responsibilities, assist with human resource issues and mentoring was identified.

The Chamber of Minerals and Energy recommends greater collaboration between the resources, training and the education sectors to help young people understand the apprenticeship and traineeship pathways available, including the skills and capability requirements to work in the sector. Opportunity exists to leverage off current initiatives.

**Get into Resources** - an annual three-day event designed to promote interest in resources sector careers by bringing together high school students, teachers and career advisers with young men and women employed in the industry. Students rotate through a series of hands on activities featuring insights into a range of occupations, facilitated by engaging industry employees. As part of the program, participant's tour through a simulated underground mining environment (the CUT) situated at North Metropolitan TAFE. The Australian Institute of Geoscientists, Chamber of Commerce and Industry Apprenticeship Solutions, City of Perth, CME, Department of Mining Industry Regulation and Safety, North Metropolitan TAFE, and a range of resources sector companies support Get into Resources.



**Goldfields Education Mining Industry Alliance (GEMIA)** - a volunteer not for profit organisation working to increase community education and career awareness of science, technology, engineering and mathematics in the WA goldfields. GEMIA's stakeholders include primary and secondary school students, teachers, and community members. GEMIA's key supporters include CME, Goldfields Esperance Development Commission, Inspiring Australia, Northern Star Resources and the WA School of Mines. Additional support comes from over 15 local resources sector companies.

**Earth Science Western Australia (ESWA)** is a not for profit organisation with the core purpose of supporting and promoting earth and environmental science education and career awareness in primary and secondary schools across the state. ESWA delivers a range of education programs with support from CME, Chevron, Conoco Phillips, CSIRO, Curtin University, Shell Australia and Woodside.

*Chamber of Minerals and Energy, written submission*



Training makes good sense and is an opportunity to optimise business. Rio Tinto has established a partnership with the South Metropolitan TAFE which is a community minded venture to capture curriculum for digital, data loop, business/process control and automation<sup>41</sup>. The partnership is about building training capability in Western Australia, not about bricks and mortar developments. The governance and partnership structure is the most important step because Rio Tinto does not want ownership of the project; rather they would like many industry sectors to be involved. So it will take time to work through this. The Mineral Council of Australia has also identified technology as being a critical success factor.

Rio Tinto believes Western Australia is at the forefront of technology. 'We have the biggest super-computer in the southern hemisphere. Education, including VET and university need to partner with industry as we have the opportunity to create something big and export our capability to the world<sup>42</sup>.

Victoria's Employment Ticket to Work model was cited as a collaborative approach by multiple organisations to support young people with disabilities. Another example, the 'School to Work' project through the National Disability Services (NDS), available to Year 10 and above students to access 150 hours of support, focuses on achieving employment. The NDS believes their Industry Plans can be used as a pivotal vehicle to reshape the VET system. A priority of the *State Training Plan 2017-2020* includes investing in the skills needed by our aged care, disability and allied health sectors and the State Training Board is already working together with this sector to develop a comprehensive workforce development plan for the healthcare and social assistance industry.

Another example is the State Government's Women Scholarship Program, a joint initiative of multiple government agencies aimed to assist in building the Western Australian workforce by encouraging women into trade and industry areas with low female participation.

The UK Education Business Partnerships (EBPn) model was referenced for further exploration in Western Australia. EBPn is a network of 80 experienced brokerage organisations throughout the UK who are specialist brokers building sustainable links with employers and collectively working to shape the next generation for employment. Through the partnerships, work experience placements are secured, secondary school students participate in work related learning activities and enterprise skills development; primary students work with employers to develop work related skills; students attend careers events, CV preparation and interview skills events; business professionals engage with young people to share insight into the workplace, practices and skills development; employers actively engage with EBPs; and substantial investments are made by employers to EBPs to broker work related learning activities to improve young peoples' preparation for employment.

The UK model partnerships may warrant further research and a similar model could support the *Plan for Jobs* goal for strong partnerships to be fostered with industry to increase training opportunities and create apprenticeships and traineeships at every opportunity.

## Additional initiatives

Having industry led mentoring services was preferred by the hospitality industry. This industry claimed that around 60% of students discontinue their apprenticeship or traineeship in the first year of training and that this is due to, in part, a lack of access to necessary support channels and guidance. It is believed that government investment in industry led mentoring programs would be an effective means of remedying this trend as it focusses on retention. For noting, the Australian Government announced \$60 million Industry Specialist Mentoring for Australian apprentices for industry to access. However, many employers are unaware of these programs. Stakeholders believe apprentices and trainees need the same support networks as university students do during their first year of study to maximise the likelihood of successful completion. Companies and representative associations recognise that training is a shared responsibility.

A successful model proposed by one stakeholder involves running residential workshops. The model allows the training academy's national training mentors and specialist trainers to cover important aspects of the apprenticeship face to face including:

culture and work ethics of the industry; selection of units for specialisations; career paths and future opportunities; progress in the student's apprenticeship (including any problems); hands on assessments; specialist workshops and site visits. The workshops are held at the beginning, middle and end of the apprenticeship program with duration of one week each.

Another stakeholder felt that the State Government should also be leading by example in growing apprenticeships and traineeships and should invest in skilling their own workforce. Initiatives could include the WA Public Sector workforce setting targets including for specific cohorts such as under-represented groups and disadvantaged.

Additionally, government project requirements for apprentices/trainees could be strengthened by mandating specific ratios and ensuring rigorous compliance to verify employers are employing apprentices and trainees. Under the Government's *Plan for Jobs*, the Department of Training and Workforce Development's Priority Start policy is currently being expanded and will have stronger compliance requirements.



Perth Consultations, 18 August 2017

# Pathways leading to apprenticeships and traineeships

A key factor for apprenticeship and traineeship success is the pathways available to young people. Stakeholders were asked a series of questions around the different pathways available and new ones that have been proposed.

## School based-apprenticeships and traineeships

Strong links between schools and local employers are a very important means of introducing young people to the world of work. A school-based apprenticeship or traineeship (SBATs) enables a secondary student, typically year 11 or 12, to work for an employer and train towards a recognised qualification while completing high school.

In most schools SBATs involve one or two days per week with the employer with the remaining time being spent in general education classes. SBATs contribute to the student's Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE).

School-based VET programs have many positive features, SBATs offer an opportunity for students to assess potential future roles and for the employer to develop future employees. For industries that are experiencing downturn or unsteady work, SBATs present an opportunity to have a part-time apprentice or trainee in the workplace for two years while work is low. The SBAT can then be converted to full-time once the student leaves school.

Despite the benefits to students and industry, the take up in Western Australia is relatively low compared with other jurisdictions. In 2016 only 3.6% of secondary students entered a SBAT with an employer. Understanding the reasons for the low take-up of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships may help identify programs or solutions to encourage employers to engage with the school sector.

There are many examples of positive SBAT programs across Western Australia. Rio Tinto supports SBATs with special programs targeted at indigenous students. One glazing company identified a need for SBATs as a taster for both the student and the business with positive outcome.<sup>43</sup>

The State Training Board notes that SBATs aren't for all industries. For some industries, such as the meat industry, the physicality of the work and nature of rostering systems limits opportunities for SBATs. However, opportunities in administration, environment and livestock handling should be encouraged instead. The electrical industry no longer supports SBATs because of the risks and hazards it poses to young people.<sup>44</sup>

The State Training Board was made aware of the frustrations felt by many within industry about the inflexibility of SBATs. Funding of VET programs in secondary school, including SBATs, appears to be a significant barrier for some industries.

The local hospital is willing to take some of these guys on to do real work experience and pay them for the work; with an aim of taking on the best as certificate 3 maintenance workers when they leave school. The school and the TAFE are refusing to release them from their current course as they the school and the TAFE both lose funding.<sup>45</sup>

Other industry stakeholders felt that school-based delivery compromised quality. One view was that too many schools are delivering training in the classroom and the students are not getting genuine experience on the job, putting them at a disadvantage when they are looking for employment after school.

Other reasons for not supporting SBATs include that apprenticeships are too short for host trainers and it doesn't help the host trainer as there is no pay back or advantage

of the system. A large construction company, that has employed more than 900 apprentices, believes SBAs do not work for their business model and that students are not mature enough or have the life skills or understanding of what is expected of them during Year 11 and 12. This company believes SBATs do not support small business and that we are putting too much pressure on them and this comes at a cost to the small business. As students

don't have a driver's licence the employer also needs to pick them up. Some apprentices are given the wrong start to an apprenticeship and want more money once they start and the wrong message is being delivered to students and parents. The traditional work placement method works well, providing work placements for apprenticeship outcomes.<sup>46</sup>

### Esperance Senior High School<sup>47</sup>

The State Training Board believes that VET delivery for secondary students can be successful when appropriately managed and supported by the school and local community. Esperance Senior High School is an example where VET is fully supported by the school and local community resulting in positive results for students and employers.

97% of students at Esperance Senior High School achieve their WACE. 92% of students have successfully completed a VET program.

In 2016 the Beazley Medal for Western Australia's top VET student was awarded to Esperance Senior High School student Tate Bertola. Tate has already secured his future career after receiving an apprenticeship at the local Esperance auto-electricians where he completed his work placement during his final year of schooling. During 2016 Tate was able to prepare for a career in the automotive industry, studying an automotive VET course that enabled him to spend two days a week on work placement, while completing two course units at school, along with English, and one course unit at Esperance TAFE.

Much like Tate Bertola, other Esperance Senior High School students have secured apprenticeships directly from school because of the work placement program offered by the school. Students are enrolled in Certificate II or Certificate III VET course in Agriculture, Automotive, Building and Construction, Business, Children's Services, Hairdressing and Beauty, Hospitality, Information Technology, Metals and Engineering or Tourism. They are required to also study English and Mathematics and take part in Workplace Learning. Workplace Learning is a program offered in Years 10, 11 and 12 and involves students undertaking a placement in a local business where they are trained by the business to develop skills to industry levels.

The State Training Board believes the success of the VET program at Esperance Senior High School is because the school has a dedicated VET timetable for students, meaning that they do not miss out on essential classroom time.

## Pre-apprenticeships

Pre-apprenticeships continue to be supported by industry and were supported by all written submissions received by the State Training Board. Pre-apprenticeships allow both the student and employer to “try before they buy”. It is used by many employers to screen potential employees with many students being signed up by the employer directly from work experience. It provides access to more engaged, knowledgeable and skilled apprentices and trainees. Pre-apprenticeships provide transferrable skills and allow students to decide whether they want to pursue the trade or not.

We conducted some research in the early 2000's that looked at completion rates. Approximately 50% of our year 1 apprentices dropped out. Half did so because they didn't like the painting trades, half did so because they didn't have an aptitude for it. Only 2 of 10 starters would complete the apprenticeship and only one of these remained with us 12 months after completing the apprenticeship. At the time it was estimated that the cost over the 4 years to develop a painter through the apprenticeship scheme was about \$90,000, higher than simply employing a qualified tradesman directly.

It is also reasonable to assume that larger employers and GTO's would have better selection and screening processes. If these processes could be incorporated into the education selection processes and more suitable people put into the employment pool, the risk for employers would reduce.

*Programmed, written submission*

There is potential to maximise the benefits of pre-apprenticeship programs by having a more integrated approach with AASNs, TAFE and employers. One AASN's view is that historically such programs are offered on a more reactive or opportunistic basis to meet workforce demands during times of skills shortage or buoyant economic conditions. In this regard they often lack consistency in delivery by providers, have unclear articulation pathways and lose their potential to act as an enabler in the training and employment outcomes.

A well-coordinated industry led pre-apprenticeship framework, funding and management should include engagement with AASNs for promotion; specific targets that measure and manage the program; a three to four year funding outlook to build momentum and achieve long term participation; consistent program design with clarity on expectations; defined articulation points and pathways from the pre-apprenticeship; engagement with industries, bodies and employers to develop the program and clear policy on industrial relations matters for graduates entering a subsequent apprenticeship or traineeship.

*Busy at work, written submission*

The business rules associated with pre-apprenticeships must be enforced. One comment was that pre-apprenticeships are being exploited by private RTOs who use them solely as a revenue stream without ensuring adequate employer support. It is claimed that they advertise the course, sign up as many pre-apprentices to get the dollars in, but only two or three employers are willing to offer a full apprenticeship at the end of the course.



The cost of a pre-apprenticeship must also be considered by the State Government. There is a risk that we are pricing young people, particularly those from low socio-economic backgrounds, from pursuing pre-apprenticeships. Some businesses, particularly in the construction and manufacturing sectors, will only offer apprenticeships to those who have completed a pre-apprenticeship. The fear is that we are putting too much value on pre-apprenticeships and leaving a component of our youth without futures because of their socio-economic background.

## Pre-traineeships

A pre-traineeship has been considered by the Department of Training and Workforce Development as an alternative approach to encourage people, particularly school students, to consider non-trade pathways. Pre-traineeships, much like pre-apprenticeships, provide an institutional-based learning environment for students to gain experience in the industry. There is no training contract involved.

There was mixed support for a pre-traineeship, views expressed included:

- provided a pre-traineeship meets the needs of industry they could offer the same benefits as a pre-apprenticeship;
- the identification of new and emerging industries with specialist requirements could be supported by a pre-traineeship;
- as a taster to the industry may be useful providing there is adequate access to an operating workplace to meet assessment requirements; and
- could address areas where the traditional pre-apprenticeships will not cover such as para professional area.

The textiles industry believes pre-traineeships may be a way to screen potential employees, but the employees needed in this industry would be small and geographically dispersed. The flooring industry is aiming to establish a Certificate II course as a pilot in the eastern states

that could potentially be rolled out nationally.

A company in the glazing industry believes it is not viable for their industry and more likely for office personnel. The meat industry said there had been many attempts over the years and that the rigorous screening of applicants would be essential for the success of a pre-traineeship program.

A Victorian based company that is a leading provider of staffing, maintenance and facility management services, with a long history of engaging and developing apprentices, believes a pre-traineeship is not suitable for their industry. This is because most of their traineeships are in Business Services at Certificate III level which is the entry starting point. The company currently has 225 apprentices and trainees in Western Australia. Twelve of these apprentices are directly engaged in their operations and a further 213 are working with their customers. They believe anecdotal evidence suggests that many employers would not support a pre-traineeship.

The State Training Board is aware that the Department of Training and Workforce Development has undertaken further consultations with industry training advisory bodies and the broader training sector that shows growing support for a pre-traineeship model.

## Career taster programs

Another way to engage young people with the VET sector is to offer career taster programs. Many young people today don't understand the employment opportunities available. Career taster programs, when combined with genuine work experience, provide young people with realistic views of certain industries and occupations. It allows them to learn about the trade, what is expected from them and the VET pathways that lead to them.

An example of a career taster program was the *Aspirational Careers Program* developed by the Office of the Order of Australia (WA Branch),

the State Training Board and industry training advisory bodies with Kings College in Wellard. The program was aimed at Year 9 students and provided a link between the classroom and the world of work through organised activities and visits to various businesses in the local community. Students were able to learn about the various occupations within industries in Western Australia, including Retail, Community Services, Automotive and Resources sector.

The textiles, glazing, butchering and meat processing industries support career taster courses. Stakeholders felt that the programs should include engagement with AASNs; be highly targeted, industry and employer driven that are closely monitored; be developed upon established skill sets; have a commonly understood meaning in the industry; and meet employment requirements set by an external agency such as pre-employment or skills requirements.

Advertising would be necessary and committed employers and industries bodies to engage and promote the program would help ensure a successful outcome. Career taster programs would align with key employability skills that are common across industry sectors to enable applicants to gain useable and portable skills that can be used in other positions.

## Recruiting employers for work experience

Feedback received indicates industry associations, group training organisations and industry training advisory bodies could be used to recruit employers for work experience placements. They have the expertise and leadership for work placement programs.

Increasing the participation from SMEs could be externally coordinated, funded and managed on an industry, regional or occupational basis. Programs should be industry driven and closely managed to ensure complimentary VET programs are not confused.

Large employers have the resources to support a program and some large employers take a coordinated approach to aggregating and then offering placements. The places match available placement opportunities to the requirements and occupations of students ensuring a fit for purpose placement.

One stakeholder believed a simulated environment at TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres may be an avenue to use but will lack the 'real world' dimension of work. The Carpet Institute stated they will be happy to work with TAFE or the State Training Board and other associations for a work experience program.

This is the best way to encourage apprenticeships, it works for our business but schools and TAFE's need to work together and have better funding models and not just relying on employers to do all the work. We have Trade Training Centres that are not being used to their full potential, for me it's sad to see our tax payer's money going to waste.

Unpaid work placements work, and they lead to employment outcomes!

We have more than 100 students on work placements at one time, but it comes at a huge cost to our business. You need the correct VET coordinators helping small businesses and if the student does the wrong thing they get kicked off the course, so we don't burn potential employers. Most VET coordinators palm off students to sites without being inducted correctly or explain the process to host trainers and the students. It is so important to get it right to ensure we get good employment outcomes.

*ABN Group, written submission*

One AASN provider claimed that for employers, the administrative responsibilities, a greater awareness of their duty of care and the number of requests they receive only serve to decrease their willingness to participate. A not for profit organisation indicated, if the employer was paid for their lost time and tools and materials it may be easier to recruit them. Also, a successful attitude by the school and student is required for the employer to become involved.

### Structured pathways

Structuring training around the specific needs of industry and business can help reduce waste of time and money. Structured pathways that are recognised by industry may enable greater flexibility across different occupational groups within one industry as entry-level steps can be used to provide core units of competency that are common across multiple qualifications.

A structured pathway uses entry-level traineeships as a first step on a pathway into higher traineeships and apprenticeships. Each 'step' represents both an entry and exit point providing greater flexibility for both the employer and the trainee. The trainee would receive a certificate or statement of attainment at the end of each 'step' as a formal recognition of the training that has been completed. Each step progresses towards a higher-level traineeship or apprenticeship.

It would be expected that a structured pathway would help with non-completions. It may also be beneficial during periods of economic uncertainty where a four-year apprenticeship might be too much of a risk for the business. Each 'step' would be six to 12 months in duration.

For some cohorts of students, a structured pathway may be beneficial as it provides employment and training combined whilst progressing towards a higher-level traineeship or apprenticeship. This may provide a flexible way for under-represented groups to engage with employment-based training.

Further exploration of this concept is needed. Only a small amount of feedback was received

in relation to lower-level traineeships that articulate into an apprenticeship.

A glazing industry company believes it would be beneficial. The floor finishing industry, which is a thin market, would support a Certificate II in Flooring Technology believing it would prepare a trainee for an apprenticeship and will introduce them to a host company. This is a model that the industry is seeking to develop. Another stakeholder supports lower level traineeships that articulate to an apprenticeship provided it would be in a real work site with a minimum of 6 months on the job work.

Stakeholders felt that the VET system is crowded with qualifications and that there are already many existing traineeships that provide a pathway to a higher AQF level, particularly in trade-based sectors where graduates are provided advanced standing for Certificate III apprenticeships. Additionally, through recognition of prior learning, candidates can articulate into an apprenticeship.

Consideration should be given to the changing nature of work, in particular 'soft skills'. One stakeholder believed further discussion would be beneficial around establishing similar pathways to the general degrees in university where the first year of training is generalist and then participants move into major areas in the following years of the qualification. They stated that many traineeships already share common core units.

The textiles industry does not support lower level traineeships because they don't offer any advantage over the current model stating that it would be detrimental to employee participation if the end qualification is reduced. The industry is currently seeking the Certificate II in Manufactured Textile Products be recognised as a full qualification nationally and they believe any lower level qualification would have little or no appeal to employers.

A major construction company felt it would devalue the trade and believes we should stick to VET in Schools programs and pre-apprenticeships that work.

## Mature-aged apprenticeships and traineeships

Many stakeholders are all very supportive of mature-aged apprenticeships. Recognition of prior learning is often considered appropriate and some industries already employ mature-aged apprentices. Comments were very positive and encouraging from those stakeholders that responded and include:

- business owners would have a larger pool of people to select from and it increases the likelihood of getting the 'right person';
- mature-aged apprentices offer maturity and life experiences and that they are generally committed;
- some of the most successful apprentices have been older workers; and
- mature-aged people learn quicker and are more driven to complete their apprenticeship as well as providing a faster future workforce.

However, employing mature-aged apprentices must be financially viable for the employer and incentives could assist in this. Respondents advised that if mature-aged apprentices receive the same incentives available to new workers they would be encouraged to employ them and/or, if there were additional and targeted financial incentives for occupations in demand. It is claimed that if training was cost neutral to business it would also be more attractive as existing worker training funding is now almost non-existent.

Policy is needed to support mature-aged apprentices/trainees to progress more rapidly through the apprenticeship recognising and supporting the potential capacity. Further, it is necessary to provide policy and programs to support the re-skilling and up-skilling of existing workers. For noting, the VET legislation currently does support competency-based work progression for apprentices and recognition of prior learning.

Additional stakeholder comments relating to engaging mature-age apprentices include: need more simplified methods of recognising and certifying previous skills; training needs be readily available; change the age limit from 21 to 25 years of age; capping course fees for over 25 mature-aged apprentices/trainees at a maximum ceiling of \$1000; and re-instate the initiative Support for Adult Apprentices (SAAA).

The SAAA was an incentive that changed behaviour and supported employers in employing mature aged apprentices. The subsidy essentially covered the difference in wages between an adult and junior apprentice. Some of our member GTO's saw commencements of adult apprenticeship increase by up to 40% during this time. The only downfall of this program was that apprentices between the ages of 21-24 did not attract a subsidy and it was challenging to employ in this age group due to higher wages.

Provide more incentives for employers, as a matured aged apprentice is priced out of the market, as they are generally producing a small return for their host trainer when they hit their second year of their apprenticeship. Why would a host trainer take on a matured aged apprentice at a higher cost and the potential of the leaving as soon as they complete their time and be in direct competition with them (what is the benefit for them at this current stage?).

*Apprentice Employment Network WA,  
written submission*

## Higher level apprenticeships and traineeships

Generally, respondents recognised the value of employees undertaking higher level apprenticeships saying it provided opportunities for them to access more specialist skills and knowledge to meet the changing needs of the economy and workforce. They support innovative industries and the national requirement to build a better workplace leadership and management capability.

Higher level apprenticeships/traineeships also provide opportunity for business to support existing employees to re-engage with VET, increase their workforce participation, competitiveness and career earnings. Policy that supports employers to access funding and programs to develop their workforces for future occupations would increase competitiveness.

High-level apprenticeships and traineeships are not supported in all industries. The primary industries, including meat processing, textiles and flooring industries have limited opportunities above Certificate IV level and therefore limited demand.

The cost for high-level qualifications is viewed by many as being unaffordable. If financial assistance was available, it may be beneficial.

One respondent's view was that the Certificate IV should be a minimum level for a tradesperson claiming a Certificate III can be done in four weeks or less in some industries which devalues what a person has completed under a three-year tradesperson occupation.





## Jobs and Skills Centres

The McGowan Government's *Plan for Jobs* aims to transform TAFE colleges into one-stop-shops called Jobs and Skills Centres. Under the plan, TAFE will continue to deliver high quality training through its campuses across Western Australia as well as offering additional services to meet the needs of local employers and industry.

Industry stakeholders provided comments on the services they felt could be offered by TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres to support employers, students, parents, unions and industry partners.

### Greater collaboration

By far, the most popular feedback received was that greater collaboration is required between TAFE and industry. It was suggested that TAFE could host events, seminars, business forums and trade talks to encourage industry to engage with the sector.

Stakeholders suggested that the TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres could collaborate with industry bodies and associations, including the State Training Board and Industry training advisory bodies to develop industry-specific solutions to skill needs. Industry wanted greater input into course structure and design and believed that the TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres presented an opportunity for this to occur.

Stakeholders want a 'can do' attitude from TAFE. Industry stakeholders stated that TAFE is quick to identify the barriers instead of finding solutions. Employers wanted more collaboration with TAFE to find tailored solutions to their skilling needs. Some employers felt that TAFE were inflexible with their training schedules, particularly block training. Some employers felt they were pressured to release their apprentice at times when it didn't suit the business.

There are many notable examples of TAFE developing good collaborative partnerships with industry. Examples include the Australian Centre for Energy and Process Training (ACEPT) at South Metropolitan TAFE which was born

from a collaborative partnership between industry partners Shell, Chevron, Woodside, Quadrant Energy, BHP and ConocoPhillips, TAFE and the State Government. More recent examples include the Hyundai Advanced Apprenticeship Academy in partnership with South Metropolitan TAFE and South Regional TAFE partnership with Fortescue Metals Group for indigenous students.

TAFE lecturers need to be part of and involved with industry with allocated hours for professional development. Industry is willing to offer TAFE lecturers with sabbaticals or short-term placements to help build their expertise and industry currency. Woodside suggested that placements of up to six months could be arranged for TAFE lecturing staff that would enable a full immersion in the business' operations. Other employers suggested that TAFE lecturers would benefit from experience mornings or afternoons where TAFE lecturers could visit a business to learn about the latest industry developments.

### Training needs to be linked to industry needs

TAFE training needs to be better linked to industry requirements. It needs to be up-to-date and using the latest technology and equipment used by industry. This will require greater collaboration between TAFE and industry, including partnerships to gain access to the latest equipment that TAFE cannot afford to purchase.

Industry stakeholders felt that the TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres need to receive funding for technology and capital expenditure. It is vital that the new centres represent a state-of-the-art facility, with up to date industry

specific software and training in basic and advanced courses.

It was commented on that Senior Management of TAFE needs to have a better knowledge of industry (occupations, changes, economy and trends). This would help in decision making because decisions have been made in the past, which were contrary to what industry needs. Training delivery staff who often have more knowledge and who have better relationships with industry don't appear to be involved in decision making.

Stakeholders suggested that TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres will need to engage with businesses to gather specific information about their training and skill development needs, particularly in regional areas. Businesses require a more tailored training system with flexible training options. The TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres will need to work with local businesses, no matter how big or small, to help define and identify their immediate and long-term workforce development needs and provide customised advice on publicly-funded training and support services that are available. This may include the delivery of short courses such as, small business courses (night sessions); white card sessions; first aid sessions; train the trainer; and skill sets to full qualifications in a classroom or through a training contract. Training may be delivered by TAFE, in partnership with other providers, digitally or directly in the workplace.

Many stakeholders also requested the Jobs and Skills Centres be an avenue for employers to post jobs, seek candidates and receive information and whether there is scope to make it easier for graduates to find a suitable work placement.

The TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres will need to keep up-to-date with the latest industry trends and developments. Stakeholders noted that some TAFE campuses have outdated equipment that is not keeping up with current industry needs. TAFEs are not being used by key industries and large employers, for example in mining and resources, because of

outdated training products, equipment and poor training facilities. Developing training products that take too long are not fit for purpose. Training needs to be more flexible that allows movement across multiple career options and allows portability. Training should also include skills to ensure candidates are job ready. Providing pre-apprenticeships, developing taster programs and ensuring training is inclusive and accessible for all was also identified.

Stakeholders would like training to be delivered in Western Australia as mentioned previously in the report. The skills taught within the course need to be adaptive and relevant to the changing environment of the industry.

The agriculture industry in Western Australia was quoted as being fortunate to have the Muresk Institute which currently acts as a one-stop-shop for that industry. WA Farmers are involved with the Muresk Institute Industry Advisory Committee and have had input and involvement in the development of the Innovation Hub. WA Farmers remain supportive of Muresk Institute evolving into a Centre of Excellence for the agricultural sector, interacting with industry to deliver both vocational and tertiary education.

## **Career advice, guidance and support**

Stakeholders identified that career advice and guidance is critical. Stakeholders suggested that TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres should play a coordinating role in providing career advice and guidance to prospective students, apprentices, trainees, parents and career-changers.

It was suggested that TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres could host career fairs and expos for secondary students, teachers and career guidance counsellors from schools. It was also suggested that TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres should work with VET Coordinators to promote apprenticeships and traineeships to secondary students.

Employers need to play a role in promoting apprenticeships and traineeships in Year 10. Students tend to be encouraged to stay at schools by the school system. As teachers and principals are all academics, educators can be too involved. Several stakeholders argued that information given to clients depends on who advises, and perhaps it should not be TAFE, and instead an independent central and competent party.

Other services mentioned that could be included is having affordable and accessible support services, including those that assist students with their physical and mental health and financial welfare; assisting with the resolution of difficulties and disputes between employers and apprentices and trainees through mediation; general job readiness and job search skills training and maintaining a register of work experience opportunities.

## Customer focussed

Stakeholders want good frontline staff who know exactly what's going on in TAFE and who can answer a wide range of questions, not only about training but also about apprenticeships, support services, incentives and human resources. They want TAFE to be more customer focused to include providing services such as:

- feedback to employers;
- generating awareness of student talent;
- being more dynamic; and
- aiding industry trainers; and
- making more direct contact with employers.

Alternative communication platforms popular with youth, such as Facebook and Instagram, could be adopted by TAFE as a way of communicating with students and customers in the format they prefer. Again, TAFEs need to adopt a 'can do' attitude when interacting with industries and learners, as they are TAFEs real customers and there needs to be a greater focus on strengthening TAFEs customer service skills with collaborative approaches.

The right leadership and management teams to drive change that industries need and want is required.

Some stakeholders felt that having information centres in multiple locations could cause confusion because, unless there is a good structure behind it, there will still be the possibility that you will get different experiences in each location (5 different answers instead of the same message at each location). Stakeholders want to talk to someone who understood their industry and who could point them in the right direction as to the required qualification or training solution.

## Skills recognition and short courses

Stakeholders suggested that TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres should offer dedicated services for skills recognition. This would allow prospective students or existing workers to attend the centre and have their knowledge, skills and experience formally assessed by a qualified expert. The centre could then offer advice on future studies including gap training, apprenticeships and traineeships and higher-level qualifications.

Stakeholders suggested that TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres could offer short courses and accredited industry-specific training needed to gain employment including programs to help people apply for jobs, such as resume writing, addressing selection criteria and interview skills.

## Promotion

Many stakeholders felt that people may not be aware of non-trade areas. It seemed that trades courses are promoted to the wider community but not non-trade courses.

Social media and face-to-face career advice targeted to attracting the widest range of potential apprentices (including females, mature aged, CALD and Disabled apprentices) is needed.

One of the State's major industry bodies believe a state-wide VET education campaign be developed that is supported by the creation of an independent industry lead information portal. This portal would be a collaborative venture between industry, the Department of Training and Workforce Development (DTWD), Australian Council of Private Education and Training (ACPET), and the Department of Education and Training (DET).

## Industry concerns

TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres will need to have the appropriate structure, organisational culture and resourcing to meet the needs of industry, students and jobseekers. Some stakeholders questioned whether the TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres will be resourced appropriately to offer the range of services proposed in *Plan for Jobs*.

There was some feedback from industry stakeholders that they were concerned that TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres will simply duplicate existing services already available. Private organisations, particularly not-for-profit organisations were concerned that the services they currently offer will be duplicated by the TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres thus pushing them out of the market. These stakeholders felt that the TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres would be better offering services that don't currently exist rather than offering something that is already in place.

One major industry body stated that they are not clear on the service or market gap the new TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres aim to fill. They believe the VET system in Western Australia is confusing and complicated, and the establishment of another organisation may not achieve the intended outcome of simplifying the system, but simply lead to further confusion. Clarity around how the centres will promote all available training options will be necessary, including the role of private training providers and how suitable training courses delivered by them would be promoted under the model. Will the TAFE Jobs

and Skills Centres provide interested parties a list of all suitable training providers in Western Australia as is currently the case under the AASN service model?

Of concern for many stakeholders are the perceived duplication of services between current service providers and the extent to which the proposed TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres will provide independent advice and guidance to job seekers and employers. What services would be provided by the centres that is not currently being delivered or could potentially be delivered through the established AASN network or extending the remit of industry training advisory bodies. Many stakeholders believe the proposed model would create additional confusion and potentially lead to conflicting advice and information. They question how a perceived or otherwise conflict be managed and recommends TAFE consider establishing their own contact hub or customer service centre for those that require information specific to TAFE only.

The carpet industry believes that the AASN network and the relatively new Victorian Job Centres have only been marginally successful in assisting potential flooring technology trainees and employers. They feel there is a lack of knowledge of the floor finisher skilled trade and, disappointingly, that no accredited Apprentice Support Network Provider had ever asked the Carpet Institute for advice or assistance.

The food and fibre industry group welcomed a renewed emphasis of TAFE by the WA Government and looked at it as an opportunity for TAFE to be re-energised and an opportunity to 'win-back' industry. There was general agreement that it was an opportunity for TAFE to demonstrate its expertise as a leading training organisation. However, there was a consensus that if TAFE continues to deliver the same products in the same manner that it does today that it will not keep up to date with industry needs. It was thought that some radical innovative approaches were required to maintain relevance to industry.

One union believes State services must be delivered consistently, transparently and have accountability. They believe the most effective way of ensuring this is for the services provided by TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres to be delivered by directly and permanently engaging public sector employees. Their members in

TAFEs advise that much of the change they have endured has been ill-considered, has reduced support for students and lecturing staff, and has detrimentally impacted the smooth functioning of their colleges. They are concerned that current staff and resourcing levels leave little room to 're-organise' without further impacting basic administrative and support functions.

### Strategy 5:

#### **Be customer focused and provide reliable information, advice and support through the TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres**

- Take a holistic approach and provide a true one-stop-shop service to support students, employers, mature aged workers, parents and schools.
- Provide an information hub with trained and experienced frontline personnel, as well as having a website portal that contains all the information in one place.
- Provide positive messages and information on training available and the various agencies involved in the system. Information and support could include:
  - good career advice for both academic and vocational pathways (including VET in Schools, apprenticeships and traineeships, general VET courses and pre-apprenticeships);
  - a joined-up integrated approach to service delivery by directing people to the right agencies involved in the system;
  - reliable and up to date information on funding, incentives, wages, industry information and dispute resolution.
- Provide impartial training information to clients including information on TAFE, private training organisations and not for profit organisations to ensure the best outcome for employers, apprentices and trainees.
- TAFE staff to upskill and increase their industry knowledge, to be more familiar with latest technology and equipment and industry trends.



## Appendix 1: Consultation methodology

The *Growing apprenticeships and traineeships* consultation paper was released in August 2017. Stakeholders were invited to respond to 16 questions on how to grow apprenticeships and traineeships in Western Australia, what barriers exist for apprenticeships and traineeships, how to attract young people in apprenticeships and traineeships, feedback on the different pathways, mature-aged apprenticeships and traineeships and higher-level apprenticeships and traineeships.

The *TAFE Industry Skills Centres* (now referred to as Jobs and Skills Centres) consultation paper was also released at the same time. The McGowan Government's *Plan for Jobs* aims to transform TAFE colleges into one-stop-shop Industry Skills Centres and stakeholders were invited to comment on what services they would like to see offered by their local TAFE Jobs and Skills Centres.

Written submissions closed on 15 September 2017 however, some submissions were received after this date. A total of 33 written submissions were received.

The list of stakeholders who made a submission and attended the metropolitan and regional consultation forums are provided on the next page.

### Forum questions

1. What are the barriers to apprenticeships and traineeships in Western Australia? Are there specific barriers in your area?
2. Do you have trouble attracting the 'right' candidate for your business? How can we make apprenticeships and traineeships more attractive?
3. What single initiative, if implemented, would encourage employers to take on apprentices and trainees?
4. What are the challenges, issues and barriers for employers participating in apprenticeships and traineeships in schools? How can this be improved?

5. What services should be offered by TAFE to support employers, students, apprentices or trainees?

### Written submission questions

1. What initiatives would encourage employers to employ an apprentice or trainee?
2. How could we encourage industries that traditionally have not used an apprenticeship training model to consider employing apprentices or trainees?
3. What barriers or impediments prevent employers from taking on an apprentice or trainee under a contract of training in Western Australia?
4. What barriers are specific to rural and regional areas, and what can be done to address these barriers?
5. What support structures are needed to support apprentices and trainees in Western Australia?
6. How can we make apprenticeships and traineeships more attractive to young people, their parents or career guidance counsellors?
7. Is there a need for school-based apprenticeships and traineeships in your industry?
8. What might prevent employers from considering a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship? How can this be improved?
9. Would career taster courses be suitable for your industry? What would ensure a successful outcome?
10. How could employers be recruited for work experience placements?
11. Are pre-apprenticeships still a valued pathway to an apprenticeship?

12. Is the concept of a pre-traineeship suitable for your industry? What would ensure the best outcomes?
13. Would lower-level traineeships that articulate into an apprenticeship be useful for your industry?
14. Would your industry benefit from using more mature-aged apprentices?
15. What would help employers take on mature-aged apprentices?
16. Is there a need for higher level apprenticeships and traineeships in your industry? What might prevent people undertaking these? How can this be improved?

## Perth consultations

The State Training Board hosted three forums in Perth on Friday 18 August 2017 and Monday 21 August 2017 at the Mercure Hotel.

## Regional consultations

The State Training Board visited the following regional areas as part of the consultation process

- Geraldton 13 October 2017
- Port Hedland 31 October 2017
- Merredin 3 November 2017
- Albany 8 November 2017
- Broome 13 November 2017
- Kalgoorlie 24 November 2017
- Bunbury 27 November 2017
- Pingelly 4 December 2017
- Esperance 8-9 March 2018



Broome consultations, 13 November 2017

## Appendix 2: Attendance List

The State Training Board would like to thank the following people and organisations for giving up their time to meet with us through our consultation process.

### Perth attendees

- Damien Ardagh, Fortescue Metals Group Ltd
- Lesley Adam, Quadrant Energy
- Stewart Allan, Quadrant Energy
- Jennifer Allaway, Aspire To Succeed
- Duncan Anderson, South Regional TAFE
- Fiona Andreas, Community Services Health & Education Training Council
- Charlotte Annakin, Skill Hire WA
- Mark Ansbro, MPA Skills
- Margaret Antonucci, Juniper/Uniting Church Homes
- Jillian Banks, Meerilinga Young Children's Foundation Inc.
- Kerry Banyard, South Metropolitan TAFE
- Steve Barrett, Qantas
- Sumi-May Behsman, Hyatt Regency Perth
- Jamie Bennett, Outdoors WA
- Nathan Bentley, Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WA)
- Susan Berkin, Department of Fire and Emergency Services
- Jo Blanley-Murphy, Aspire To Succeed
- John Bouffler, Community Employers WA
- Carly Bradley, Skill Hire WA
- Mark Braeckmans, TriSector Education and Training
- Lisa Breen, Austal
- Andrew Brien, City of Bayswater
- Frances Buchanan, National Disability Services WA
- Georgina Buckley, GBF Underground Mining
- Todd Busby, Shell Australia
- Stephen Cain, City of Cockburn
- Jeremy Chetty, Student Edge
- David Clare, ATC-Midwest
- Martin Clery, Department of Education (WA)
- Peter Coleman, Woodside Energy Ltd
- Kerry Collins, Public Sector Commission
- Lena Constantine, Apprenticeship Support Australia
- Jacky Connolly, Woodside Energy Ltd
- Carl Copeland, Utilities Engineering Electrical Automotive Training Council
- Bronte Cox, Financial, Administrative & Professional Services Training Council
- Susan Cull, Chamber of Minerals and Energy WA
- John Da Silva, AMIEU South & WA Branch
- Captain Stuart Davey, Fremantle Ports
- Rachael Davidson, Logistics Training Council
- Alan Davis, Construction Training Council
- Ben de Klerk, CBH Group
- Therese De Luce, Brightwater
- Jillian Dielesen, Logistics Training Council
- Stuart Diepeveen, NECA Electrical Group Training
- Jacqueline Dodd, Western Australian Local Government Association
- Arti Dogra, Community Services Health & Education Training Council
- Lenae Dohmen, Neptune Marine Services
- David Dorsett-Lynee, Dorsett Retail
- Anne Driscoll, Department of Training and Workforce Development
- Terry Durant, South Metropolitan TAFE
- Jeff Dzodz, Department of Employment
- Josh Eagen, Aegis
- Ian Eardley, Directions Workforce Development Apprenticeships Training Careers
- David Eaton, Small Business Development Corporation
- Caitlin Farmer, Automotive Holdings Group
- Tracey Farrow, FutureNow: Creative and Leisure Industries
- Frank Fernandez, MPA Skills
- Melanie Finestone, Department of Education and Training
- Nicky Firth, Rio Tinto Iron Ore
- David Fleay, Utilities Engineering Electrical Automotive Training Council
- Nathanael Foo, Anglicare WA
- John Forrest, Hartfield Country Club, Sports Turf Association, Turf Producers Association & WA Golf Course Superintendents Association
- Norman Francis, National Energy Resources Australia
- Gillian Gallacher, MercyCare
- Hugh Gallagher, Kalgoorlie-Boulder Chamber of Commerce
- Julia Gath, Anglicare WA
- Simon Gazia, LTT Group
- Janette Gee, Western Australian Secondary School Executives Association

- John Gelavis, Housing Industry Association
- Kay Gerard, Food, Fibre & Timber Industries Training Council
- Vanessa Gilbert, MercyCare
- Helen Golisano, Hair and Beauty Australia
- Murray Goosen, Transdev WA Pty Ltd
- Carlo Gosatti, Inglewood Products Group
- Sylvia Gosney, Sealanes
- Julie Grant, Department of Fire and Emergency Services
- Amanda Green, Resources Industry training advisory body
- Gemma Grosse, Mosaic Community Care Inc.
- Mary Gurgone, Fortis Consulting
- Tony Guy, Sports Turf Association WA
- Kathryn Hall, Arc Infrastructure Transport Infrastructure Management Perth and WA
- Carol Hanlon, Belmont Business Enterprise Centre
- Maureen Harding, Hair and Beauty Australia
- Ben Harris, Retail and Personal Services Training Council
- Nikita Hawke, AFL SportsReady
- Nigel Haywood, National Energy Resources Australia
- John Henchy, Farm Machinery & Industry Association of WA Inc
- Rikki Hendon, Community Services Health & Education Training Council
- Trevor Hislop, Food, Fibre & Timber Industries Training Council
- Michelle Hoad, North Metropolitan TAFE
- Julie Hobbs, FutureNow: Creative and Leisure Industries
- David Ingram, Retail and Personal Services Training Council
- Garry Itzstein, National Electrical and Communications Association
- Dr Anthony Jackson, Department of Anaesthesia and Perioperative Medicine Armadale Kalamunda Group
- Allan Jones, Financial Administrative and Professional Services Training Council
- Odwyn Jones, Order of Australian Association (WA Branch)
- Steve Jones, SMYL Community College
- Mariana Joseph, Career Development Association of Australia
- Phillip Kemp, Alliance Builders P/L
- Victoria Kent, Rio Tinto
- Libby Kinna, Apprenticeship Support Australia
- Olivia Knowles, Anglicare WA
- Samantha Korzec, AMA Training Services
- Chris Kueh, Anglicare WA
- Amanda Kyras, MPA Skills
- Rob La Grange, Western Dairy
- Naomi Lee, GBF Underground Mining
- Leilani Leyland, Bee Industry Council (WA)
- Stan Liaros, The Apprentice and Traineeship Company
- Julianne Lopez, Migas Apprentices & Trainees
- Felicia Lopez, Hall & Prior, Health & Aged Care Group
- Emalyn Loudon, Pork Industry Training (WA) Inc
- Josique Lynch, Community Services Health & Education Training Council
- Lyn MacDonald, Construction Training Council
- Jamie Mackaway, Community Services Health & Education Training Council
- Evan MacRae, Minprovis
- Steve McCartney, Australian Manufacturing Workers Union
- Liz Maher, Baseline Hairdressing
- Tina Manning, Department of Education and Training
- Cath Marshall, The Pharmacy Guild of Australia
- Dr Marie Martin, EYE Training
- Mark Mates, SIG Group International
- Elaine McGrath, Construction Training Fund
- Sandra McInnes, Woodside Energy Ltd
- Diane McLaren, University of Western Australia
- Ian McTear, Autism Association of WA
- Wendy Mechitti, Hair and Beauty Australia
- Nathan Merrett, Banking Association of Australia
- Shelley Mettam, City of Nedlands
- Britta Meyer, Identity WA
- Belinda Mignot, Anglicare WA
- Mike Millard-Hurst, Western Power
- Gavin Miller, Ertech Holdings
- Katie Miller, Beaver Tree Services Aust. Pty Ltd & Beaver Traffic Management Pty Ltd
- Jennie Milne, RAC of WA
- Robert Mitchell, Museums Galleries Australia Western Australia
- Katharina Moeller, Lima Hyatt Regency Perth
- Stephen Moir, Motor Trade Association WA
- Eamon Moore, Construction Training Fund
- Aldo Muia, Retail and Personal Services Training Council
- Ric Newman, Food, Fibre & Timber Industries Training Council
- Craig Nicholas, Department of Communities (Housing)
- Tony Noonan, Maanshan Iron & Steel (Australia)

- Jan Norberger, Community Services Health & Education Training Council
- Carroll O'Shannon, Hahn Electrical
- Cathi Payne, Payne Haulage
- Colin Penter, WA Association for Mental Health
- Simon Pfitzner, WesTrac
- Jane Piercey, Retail and Personal Services Training Council
- Chris Platt, RCR Tomlinson Ltd
- Brett Plowman, Tilers Independent Association
- Ann Poole, Clinipath Pathology
- Branko Pravica, Autism Association of WA
- Kitty Prodonovich, Regional Chamber Commerce Industry WA
- Kim Prout, Prout Ceilings
- Jenny Revell, Revell Landscaping
- Andrea Reville, King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women
- Judy Reynolds, ARCINFRA
- Jo Richards, Busselton CCI
- Dr Shaun Ridley, Australian Institute of Management
- Brendan Robb, Community Services Health & Education Training Council
- Norma Roberts, Retail and Personal Services Training Council
- Sandra Robinson, Skills Strategies International P/L
- Kristabel Rosario, Public Sector Commission
- John Rowe, Resources Industry training advisory body
- Alex Rupe, Cabinet Makers Association WA
- Ann-Marie Ryan, FutureNow: Creative and Leisure Industries
- Chris Salisbury, Rio Tinto Iron Ore
- Marcelle Saratsis, Early Childhood Australia
- Andre Sequeira, Water Corporation
- Jess Sethi, Master Builders Western Australia
- Michael Sharp, Wood House Consulting Coaching Services
- Chris Shearn, WesTrac
- Eddie Sheppard, Gold Fields
- Graham Short, Association of Mining and Exploration Companies Inc.
- Rebecca Smith, Neptune Marine Services
- Ariana Smith, Communicare Creating Futures
- Tony Smith, Baking Association of Australia
- Rebecca Smith, Neptune Marine Services
- John Smoker, Muresk Institute
- Antonio Sorgiovanni, Sorges House for Hair
- Alan Sparks, East Coast Apprenticeships Queensland
- Vanessa Sprunt, Department of Training & Workforce Development
- Christine Stewart, Australian Institute of Office Professionals
- Gabrielle Sullivan, Ausdance WA
- Chris Sutherland, Programmed
- Charlotte Sutton, Skill Hire WA
- Paul Sweeney, DU-EL Rail Services
- Alison Sweet, Financial Administrative and Professional Services Training Council
- Janet Takarangi, City of Wanneroo
- Joanne Tanner, AMA Apprenticeships and Traineeships
- Michael Taremba, Logistics Training Council
- Marian Taylor, Food, Fibre & Timber Industries Training Council
- Grant Taylor, Careers in Grain
- Anna Thomas, FutureNow: Creative and Leisure Industries
- Brett Thomson, Australian Childcare Alliance Western Australia
- Pamela Thorley, Life Without Barriers
- Manjusha Thorpe, Careers in Grain
- Patrick Tierney, Programmed
- Gavin Trim, Nationwide Training
- Rachelle Tucker, Australian Childcare Alliance Western Australia
- Andrew Vitolins, Retail and Personal Services Training Council
- David von Kelaita, Electrical Trades Union
- Amanda Walker, Wheatbelt Business Network
- Sean Watt, Peppers Kings Square Hotel Mangra Group
- Julie Waylen, National Disability Services WA
- John Willett, Ertech Holdings P/L
- Kirsten Wilson, RSM Australia P/L
- Mark Woffenden, Mineral's Research Institute of WA
- Phillip Woodcock, Rail Tram & Bus Union WA Branch
- Brenda Woollard, VETIS Consulting Services
- Roy Wyatt, Department of Anaesthesia and Perioperative Medicine Armadale Kalamunda Group
- Ryan Zaknich, Two Feet & A Heart Beat



## Regional attendees

- Clare Anderson, Shire of Capel
- Peter Baesjou, The Apprenticeship and Traineeship Company
- Leaya Bailey, South Regional TAFE
- Phil Barton, North Regional TAFE
- Stephen Beamish, Central Regional TAFE
- Marion Behiels, St Mary McKillop College
- Tash Benfield, North Regional TAFE
- Courtney Bergersen, Goldfields-Esperance Development Commission
- Markus Beuke, North Regional TAFE
- Adrian Brahim, BHP Billiton Iron Ore
- Sharon Bray, Wheatbelt Education Regional Office
- Mitch Brennan, Central Regional TAFE
- Donna Blight, South Regional TAFE
- Andrew Bowen, Aboriginal Workforce Development Centre Broome
- Kaylla Broad, AMA Apprenticeships and Traineeships Services
- Alan Byers, Southern Ports Authority
- Clint Carlson, Southern Ports Authority
- Rob Carter, WA Shearing Industry Association
- Kristy Clinch, The Apprenticeship Community
- Warren Cluff, The Apprenticeship and Traineeship Company
- Cher Cole, Esperance Chamber of Commerce and Industries
- Jamie Coltman, Department of Education
- Tarin Colwill, Apprenticeship Support Australia
- Sarah Cordiner, University of Notre Dame Broome
- Colin Crook, Karni Engineering
- Lauris Davis, AMA Apprenticeship and Traineeship Services
- Simone de Been, Kalgoorlie-Boulder Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Danny Deutscher, Rio Tinto Dampier Salt Ltd
- Jillian Dielesen, Logistics Training Council
- Peter Dowding, Industry Training and Workplace Services Pty Ltd
- Dianne Duffall, RAG Auto Electrical
- Gordon Duffy, Department of Training and Workforce Development
- Ken Duffy, Esperance Senior High School
- Rebecca Eades, South Regional TAFE
- Gavin Ellis, Great Southern Development Commission
- Paul Etheridge, Food, Fibre and Timber Industry training advisory body
- Sarah Fletcher, Goldfields-Esperance Development Commission
- Judi Forsyth, Central Regional TAFE
- Georgia Foulkes-Taylor, Mining and Pastoral Regional Electorate Officer
- Alison Fox, Department of Education
- Kay Gerard, Food, Fibre and Timber Industries Training Council
- Linda Gibbs, Master Builders
- Sandra Green, Great Southern Personnel
- Lloyd Goddard, Esperance Chamber of Commerce and Industry & Got'Em Group P/L
- David Hall, North Regional TAFE
- Bill Hansen, ATC Work Smart
- Cynnamon Harper, Esperance Senior High School
- Wayne Harrington, Chamber of Commerce and Industry Albany
- Sally Haslam, Narrogin Electorate Office
- Nigel Haywood, Resource Industry training advisory body
- John Henchy, Farm Machinery and Industry Association of WA
- Trevor Hislop, Food, Fibre and Timber Industry training advisory body
- Anita Host, South Regional TAFE
- Greg Humphries, Farm Machinery and Industry Association
- Rob Jefferies, MidWest Workforce Development Alliance
- Suresh Job, Central Regional TAFE
- Elaine Joliffe, Broome Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Brooke Jones, South 32 Worsley Alumina
- Kathy Keay, South Regional TAFE
- Pat Keay, Department of Education (Pilbara)
- Dr Ross Kelly, Department of Training and Workforce Development
- David King, Forrest Personnel
- Pip Kirby, Wheatbelt Development Commission
- Pablo Lane, Nyamba Bura Yawuru
- Shane Liddelow, Goldfields-Esperance Development Commission
- Simon Longmire, WA College of Agriculture, Cunderdin
- Denise Lyon, University of Notre Dame Broome
- Tammy Maloney, Esperance Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Amanda Marshall, Directions Workforce Solutions
- Lisa Marquis, Esperance Anglican Community School
- Vince Matteo, Apprenticeship Support Australia

- Steve McCartney, Australian Manufacturing Workers Union
- Dan McCormack, Eastern Goldfields College
- Peter McGlew, Central Regional TAFE
- Carol McManus, ATC MidWest
- Lanie Mitchell, North Regional TAFE
- Karen Munro, Goodline
- Jason Murphy, KCGM
- Greg Nairn, Department of Education (MidWest)
- Jael Napper, Broome Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Kim Narkle, Aboriginal Workforce Development Centre South West
- Emma Nesbitt, Assured Admin Solutions
- Ric Newman, EE & JM Newman/Doorways Committee
- Andrew Nicholson, South Regional TAFE
- John Nuttall, Shire of Mt Marshall
- Kyran O'Donnell MLA Member for Kalgoorlie
- Sue Olcorn, Merredin CRC
- Richard Owen, KGT Employment
- Jo Payne, Central Regional TAFE
- Delia Pascua-McGlew, Central Regional TAFE
- Andrew Penson, Skill Hire
- Renae Poot, WA Country Health Service
- Jodie Richardson, O'Connor Electorate Office
- Shane Reilly, Esperance Business Local
- Odetta Robertson, City of Bunbury
- Linda Rogers, Sheffield Resources Ltd
- Stuart Sadler, ATC Work Smart
- Michelle Scally, North Regional TAFE
- Melissa Seeley, Seely Auto Electrical
- Steven Shakespeare, AFGRI Equipment
- Nikki Shaw, City of Busselton
- Cherie Sibosado, Wunan/Career Centre
- Uli Sinnott, Southern Ports Authority
- John Smoker, Muresk Institute
- Rebecca Snowden, North Regional TAFE
- Lee Steel, Pingelly CRC
- Julie Stewart, MEGT
- Lindy Swain, Kimberley University Rural Health Alliance
- Majorie Talbot, Bob's Workshop
- Robert Talbot, Bob's Workshop
- Ty Theodore, Central Regional TAFE
- Patricia Thomson, Aboriginal Workforce Development Centre Kalgoorlie
- Beth Thompson, Juniper Illcrest
- Sarah Thompson, Apprenticeship Support Australia
- Dani Trunfio, Hutton and Northey Sales
- John Trunfio, Hutton and Northey Sales
- Warwick Tullock, Aboriginal Workforce Development Centre Kalgoorlie
- Chris Turner, AMA Apprenticeship and Traineeship Services
- Shaun Vandermerewe, Central Regional TAFE
- Wayne Wallace, Merredin College
- John Ward, Geraldton Building Services and Cabinets
- Megan Warren, South Regional TAFE
- Chris Weber, BHP Billiton Iron Ore
- Tina Westrup, City of Bunbury
- Garry Wilson, Southern Ports Authority
- Anna Wildy, Department of Training and Workforce Development
- Alex Wise, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
- Clem Wright, Pathways Education and Training Solutions
- Tracie Yardley, ATC Work Smart



## Written submissions

The following written submissions were received by the State Training Board in response to the consultation papers released in August 2017.

1. Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA) (21 August 2017)
2. Ertech Construction Academy (22 August 2017)
3. Tilers Independent Association (23 August 2017)
4. Ann Vivers (24 August 2017)
5. Training Institute Australasia (28 August 2017)
6. Baking Association (30 August 2017)
7. Anonymous (31 August 2017)
8. ABN Group (31 August 2017)
9. Early Childhood Australia (WA Branch) (5 September 2017)
10. FutureNow: Creative and Leisure Industries (12 September 2017)
11. Floor Covering Institute of Australia (FCIA) (12 September 2017)
12. AENWA and Directions (2 submissions) (12 September 2017)
13. Market West, Chamber of Fruit & Vegetable Industries in WA (13 September 2017)
14. Wheatbelt Business Network (13 September 2017)
15. WesTrac Pty Ltd (13 September 2017)
16. National Disability Services (WA Branch) (14 September 2017)
17. Busy at Work (15 September 2017)
18. Food, Fibre and Timber Industries Training Council (15 September 2017)
19. National Meat Industry Training Advisory Council (15 September 2017)
20. Programmed (15 September 2017)
21. Carpet Institute (15 September 2017 and 20 September 2017)
22. WAFarmers (15 September 2017)
23. Mintrac (15 September 2017)
24. CPSU/CSA, (17 September 2017)
25. City of Busselton (18 September 2017)
26. Restaurant & Catering Australia (RCA) (20 September 2017)
27. Glass Co (20 September 2017)
28. Specialised Textiles (22 September 2017)
29. Chamber of Minerals and Energy (29 September 2017)
30. Farm Machinery & Industry Association (7 November 2017)
31. Broome Chamber of Commerce and Industry (28 November 2017)
32. The Apprentice and Traineeship Company Bunbury (30 November 2017)
33. Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA (13 December 2017)

## End notes

- 1 Ms Jeanette Roberts and Dr Felicity Jefferies were members of the State Training Board until 31 December 2017. Captain Angela Bond and Ms Fran Kirby were appointed from 1 January 2018.
- 2 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Australian Industry Group and the Business Council of Australia joint Apprenticeship Reform Paper, 2017
- 3 Low-skilled jobs are defined as those requiring workers to have no more than a high school education and no more than one year of work experience.
- 4 Business Council of Australia, *Future-Proof, Protecting Australians Through Education and Skills*, October 2017
- 5 Data sourced from NCVET National Apprentice and Trainee collection shows the proportion of adult apprentices increased in the years between 1996 and 2016. In 2016 adult apprentices represented 28% of trade apprentices and 45% of non-trade apprentices in training compared with 8% and 22% respectively in 1996.
- 6 NCVET, Commencements in the 12 months ending 30 June by sex, age and occupation (trade/non-trade), 1995 to 2017, 7 December 2017.
- 7 Jo Hargreaves, John Stanwick & Peta Skujins, *The changing nature of apprenticeships: 1996-2016*, National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), 2017.
- 8 2017 Graduates outcome survey, National report, January 2018, Executive summary.
- 9 Construction Training Fund, *Construction Industry Snapshot*, December 2017, Retrieved from <https://bcitf.org/whats-new/research>.
- 10 *ibid*
- 11 Construction Training Fund, *Construction Industry Snapshot*, November 2016, Retrieved from <https://bcitf.org/whats-new/research>
- 12 Reserve Bank of Australia, *Labour Movements during the Resource Boom*, Bulletin – December quarter 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.rba.gov.au/publications/bulletin/2014/dec/2.html>
- 13 Knight, B 2012, *Evolution of apprenticeships and traineeships in Australia: an unfinished history*, NCVET, Adelaide
- 14 Department of Training and Workforce Development, *Successfully training Western Australians for the future*, Training WA Indicators of success 2009-10, 2010.
- 15 Noonan, P. and Pilcher, S. (2017). *Finding the truth in the apprenticeships debate*, Mitchell Institute report No. 03/2017, Mitchell Institute, Melbourne. Available from: [www.mitchellinstitute.org.au](http://www.mitchellinstitute.org.au)
- 16 *ibid*.
- 17 Substantial changes over the last few years, has seen a 2.9% decline in VET student commencements from 2015 to 2016 (trade and non-trade), and a decrease of 16.1% in completions between 2015 and 2016. Source NCVET Australian vocational education and training statistics: apprentices and trainees 2016 —December quarter, 2017. Available at: <https://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/publications/all-publications/apprentices-and-trainees-2016-december-quarter>
- 18 Bisson, R & Stublely, W, *After the ATAR: Understanding How Gen Z Transition into Further Education and Employment*, Year13, Australia, 2017
- 19 Sharon Bird, *White paper misses complexity of VET*, The Australia, 29 January 2015
- 20 Damian Oliver, *Complexity in Vocational Education and Training Governance*, National Centre for Vocational Research, Adelaide Australia, Research in Comparative and International Education Volume 5 Number 3 2010
- 21 Business Council of Australia, *Future-Proof, Protecting Australians Through Education and Skills*, October 2017
- 22 Minister for Education, Training and Employment The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek, Media Statement, 4 July 2014
- 23 In November 2017, the State Government tightened payroll tax training exemptions limiting it to new employees only earning no more than \$100,000 per annum. Existing worker trainees are no longer eligible for payroll tax exemption and savings will be redirected to fund 43,350 training places.

- 24 To highlight the complexity of this question and process, take the qualification Certificate III in Engineering - Fabrication Trade which has the occupation outcome of "Sheet Metal Trades Worker". In Western Australia there are nine separate apprenticeships attached to this qualification with several occupation outcomes: Surface Finishing Technician, Pressure Welder, Welder, Tool and Die Setter, Blacksmith, Engineering Patternmaker, Moulder, Boilermaker, and Electroplater. On first glance "Sheet Metal Trades Worker" does not appear to be the same and it would require an administration officer who understands the industry and the qualification to process it correctly. Employers believe that delays in registration could be avoided if the Apprenticeship Office contacted the employer at the time of processing but often this does not happen. Employers and industry stakeholders who have engaged with the VET system for a long time reported that the processing time for training contracts had increased in recent years.
- 25 National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), *The cost of training apprentices*, 2009
- 26 Australian Apprenticeships, *Who will pay my TAFE/Training Fees?* Cited <https://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/who-will-pay-my-tafetraining-fees>
- 27 UTS Business School, *Why Apprenticeships and Traineeships Work*, Report prepared for Unions NSW as part of the review of the Apprenticeship and Traineeships Act, 2016
- 28 Chamber of Mineral and Energy written submission, September 2017
- 29 The Benefits and Costs of Apprenticeships, A Business Perspective, November 2016 can be accessed <http://www.esa.doc.gov/sites/default/files/the-benefits-and-costs-of-apprenticeships-a-business-perspective.pdf>
- 30 Merredin consultations, 3 November 2017
- 31 Esperance consultations, 8-9 March 2018
- 32 *Laying the Foundations for Apprenticeship Reform*, NSW Business Chamber, November 2016
- 33 Ahwan, L and Burgess, M, *Trade versus university: a breakdown of employability, costs and earning potential*, Article published on [www.news.com.au/finance/work/trade-versus-university-a-breakdown-of-employability-costs-and-earning-potential/news-story/364d23ae946a94d9808775675a5498dd](http://www.news.com.au/finance/work/trade-versus-university-a-breakdown-of-employability-costs-and-earning-potential/news-story/364d23ae946a94d9808775675a5498dd), 21 January 2017
- 34 *ibid*
- 35 *Right Skills, Right Time?*, SkillsIQ, November 2017
- 36 Year 13 (2017), *After the ATAR: Understanding How Gen Z Transition into Further Education and Employment* (cited in Restaurant and Catering written submission, September 2017).
- 37 Trade Support Loans are loans paid in instalments totalling up to \$20,420 over the life of the apprenticeship. These loans are intended to assist apprentices with everyday costs while they complete their apprenticeship
- 38 WA Farmers, written submission to the State Training Board, September 2017
- 39 Programmed, written submission, September 2017
- 40 Wheatbelt Business Network, written submission, September 2017
- 41 Rio Tinto meeting, October 2017
- 42 *Ibid*
- 43 Submission by GlassCo WA
- 44 Submission by Apprentice Employment Network WA
- 45 Submission by Directions Workforce Solutions
- 46 Submission by ABN Group
- 47 Esperance Senior High School visit 8 March 2018.







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