

# Guide for Trainees and Apprentices



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# Becoming an apprentice or trainee in the Australian apprenticeships system

Welcome to Australia's national system of training for trainees and apprentices – often referred to as the 'Australian Apprenticeships System'. Your traineeship or apprenticeship will develop skills for your chosen career, give you quality training and a qualification that meets national standards.

You'll be keen to get started. Before you do, check that you understand what's involved. You will need to know who looks after your traineeship or apprenticeship and where you can go for advice.

Take the time to ask questions now. A representative from an apprenticeship network provider (see page 15) will guide you through the sign-up process. They are there to give you the answers. Being clear about everything at the start will help your traineeship or apprenticeship to run smoothly.

When you become a trainee or apprentice you will need to sign a training contract in accordance with the *Training and Workforce Development Act 2013*.

A training contract is a legally binding agreement between you and your employer to achieve the qualification stated in the contract. Before you sign the training contract make sure you understand your responsibilities for the duration of the training contract and what training you will be undertaking.

## How to become a trainee or apprentice

**Becoming a trainee or apprentice is easy if you follow these steps.**

- Find an employer willing to employ you. You can approach an employer, answer an advertisement or obtain a position through an organisation contracted by jobactive<sup>1</sup> or a group training organisation (see page 14).
- You and your employer then choose a relevant traineeship or apprenticeship and select a registered training organisation (see page 14) which can provide the training and assessment services.
- You and your employer contact an apprenticeship network provider which will guide you through the sign-up process and assist you to complete the training contract.
- Commence your traineeship or apprenticeship.
- Complete a training plan with your registered training organisation.

## As a trainee or apprentice

**You agree to:**

- stay with your employer for the duration of the training contract
- work towards the agreed qualification
- complete all the training required
- meet your responsibilities as an employee.

Your employer agrees to:

- meet their responsibilities as your employer
- keep you employed for the duration of the contract
- provide you with appropriate supervision and support your training, both at work and with your registered training organisation
- pay you correctly and adhere to formal conditions of employment
- provide a safe working environment.

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<sup>1</sup> jobactive is the Australian Government's way to get more Australians into work. It connects job seekers with employers and is delivered by a network of jobactive providers in over 1 700 locations across Australia. To find out more about jobactive and to find your local provider visit the jobactive website.

## The purpose of the training contract

A traineeship or apprenticeship is confirmed by a legally binding training contract, which is signed by both the employee and employer. The training contract must be forwarded to Skills Tasmania within 28 days of the commencement date on the training contract. This is done on your behalf by the Australian network provider (ANP). The training contract must be approved and registered by the Tasmanian Traineeships and Apprenticeships Committee (TTAC) (see page 13) before it has any legal effect.

### **The training contract contains:**

- obligations of the employer and trainee or apprentice
- contact details of the employer and trainee or apprentice
- the qualification to be obtained
- the duration of the training contract
- details of the registered training organisation which will deliver the training and assessment services
- industrial arrangements under which the trainee or apprentice will be employed
- information for national statistical purposes
- employment arrangements (full-time, part-time or school-based)
- previous qualifications of the trainee or apprentice.

## Probation period

A probation period applies to all training contracts. Make sure that you are aware of the probation period that applies when you sign the training contract. The probation period gives you and your employer time to work together and decide whether to continue with the training contract. The probation period may be extended provided application is made before expiry of the initial probation period.

The training contract may be cancelled by either you or your employer during the probation period. Your employer is required to follow normal industrial relations practices if he or she wishes to terminate your employment.

## Changes to the training contract

If you want to make any changes to your training contract you should apply to the Tasmanian Traineeships and Apprenticeships Committee (TTAC) for approval to do so.

### **Changes may include:**

- cancelling your contract
- suspending the contract due to sickness or work shortage
- choosing a different qualification that may be more appropriate to your workplace
- varying hours of employment
- extending the contract
- changing to a different registered training organisation
- change of business ownership.

Remember, you should not leave your employment without receiving TTAC approval.

If you, or your employer require a change to your training contract you should contact your apprenticeship network provider who will assist you to complete the required application forms.

## Change of business ownership

If you are employed by a business and the owner(s) sell all or any part of the business, any training contract which forms part of the business sold is transferred to the purchaser.

This means that the training contract signed by you and your employer, under Section 33(2) of the *Training and Workforce Development Act 2013*, must be transferred as part of the sale of the business.

Your apprenticeship network provider will assist your employer to complete the required application forms. If you have any questions contact Skills Tasmania on 6165 6055.

# Training arrangements

## Choosing a registered training organisation

By the time you sign a training contract, you and your employer should have decided which registered training organisation will work with you throughout your traineeship or apprenticeship. There is usually more than one registered training organisation able to deliver the training you will need to complete the qualification nominated on your training contract.

Registered training organisations are required to meet the Australian Skills Quality Authority Standards for National VET Regulator (NVR) before they are able to provide training and assessment services for Trainees and Apprentices.

Your apprenticeship network provider can help you and your employer by providing a list of training organisations registered to deliver the qualification you need. If you would like to do your own research, the [training.gov.au](http://training.gov.au) web site has a list of registered training organisations and the qualifications they are registered to deliver.

The registered training organisation you choose will work with you and your employer to develop a training plan, assess your skills and issue a qualification when the qualification requirements are successfully achieved. Registered training organisations will try to be flexible to meet any special needs for your situation.

## The training you will undertake

You will be enrolled in a training program leading to a nationally recognised qualification.

You should be aware of the duration of the training contract which is the time frame in which the qualification can normally be achieved.

There may be a choice of qualifications that would suit both you and the business you work in. You may have longer-term career goals that you can progressively work towards. You may be able to achieve these goals at higher levels under traineeships or apprenticeships.



### **Discuss with your registered training organisation:**

- the skills you need to achieve the qualification and meet your job requirements
- training methods that suit your workplace and your employer
- what training needs to be delivered in your workplace as part of your work
- what training needs to be delivered off-the-job
- what learning assistance is available to you (for example, help with maths, reading or writing)
- who will assess you, and when assessments will take place
- arrangements for feedback or progress reports to you and your employer about your training.

## **Training plan**

Your training must be documented in a training plan. Your registered training organisation, together with you and your employer, will develop the plan which outlines the units of competence that you are required to undertake to complete the qualification.

The plan should include:

- what qualification you are working to achieve
- what training you need to undertake
- who will deliver the training
- what training will be undertaken in the workplace
- what training will take place off-the-job
- when and how the training will be assessed and monitored.

Your registered training organisation should contact you to develop your training plan within three months of the contract being registered by Skills Tasmania.

A school-based traineeship or apprenticeship allows year 10, 11 and 12 students to undertake a vocational education and training (VET) qualification as a trainee or apprentice while still attending senior secondary education. The school-based trainee or apprentice will attend school, study towards the Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE) at the same time as undertaking a nationally recognised qualification, while in paid employment.

# School-based traineeships and apprenticeships

## Responsibilities

### Employer

The employer ensures the school-based trainee or apprentice undertakes:

- between 7.5 and 15 hours of paid employment per week in term time
- between 390 and 900 hours of paid employment per year (depending on the nominal duration of the qualification being undertaken) with extra hours worked in the school holidays
- hours of work are negotiated between the employer and trainee or apprentice
- employers are expected to employ the school-based trainee or apprentice to complete the whole of the qualification, not just the school-based part if the training contract continues after the trainee or apprentice leaves school.

### School

The school ensures the student does the required level of study, timetabled to fit the employment obligations.

- 600 to 800 hours of TCE and vocational study at school or college each year in year 11 or 12.
- Normally three or four TCE subjects per year are undertaken in year 11 or 12.
- For year 10 students, the school will organise their timetable on an individual basis. Students should be enrolled in core subjects and only some electives, not all.

### Registered training organisation

The registered training organisation (RTO) ensures the school-based trainee/ apprentice undertakes training in a nationally recognised qualification under a training plan negotiated with the trainee/apprentice and the employer.

- The training plan specifies training to be undertaken in the workplace and off-the-job and clarifies the training expectations of each party.
- The RTO provides reports in July for the school on the progress of the school-based traineeship or apprenticeship and reports training outcomes to the Tasmanian Qualification Authority.

## School-based trainee or apprentice

A school-based trainee or apprentice must:

- attend all school or college classes
- inform the employer, school and registered training organisation as relevant if unable to attend
- attend off-the-job training as organised
- discuss any difficulties (work, training or school) with the school-based traineeship/apprenticeship contact person in the school or college
- year 10 students undertaking a school-based traineeship or apprenticeship will sign a training contract that commits them to at least year 11.

If the duration of the training contract continues past the student's completion of school, the training contract will be converted to either a full-time or part-time contract. Employers should contact an apprenticeship network provider to sign-up a school-based trainee or apprentice.

More information on school-based traineeships and apprenticeships is available on our website at [www.skills.tas.gov.au/apprenticeshipstraineeships/schoolbased](http://www.skills.tas.gov.au/apprenticeshipstraineeships/schoolbased)

## Competency-based completion of traineeships and apprenticeships

When you and your employer enter into a traineeship or apprenticeship, the contract will require a duration which is referred to as the 'nominal duration' and it is only an indication of the time you may take to complete the qualification. You may finish earlier than this time or it may take longer.

The term of the contract will depend on previous experience, previous training and how quickly you learn the skills needed for your traineeship or apprenticeship. These requirements are outlined by TTAC Guideline 10 – Competency-Based Completion of Traineeships and Apprenticeships.

Your registered training organisation will work closely with you at the beginning of the traineeship or apprenticeship to develop a comprehensive training plan. The training plan will clearly map out the training and assessment that you will need to undertake to achieve the qualification.

It is very important that this training plan is reviewed and updated regularly during the contract period and that you and your employer are aware of when and how you will be trained and assessed and if this will take place on-the-job or off-the-job or a combination of both.

If you are assessed as competent by your registered training organisation and either you or your employer do not believe you are competent to do this work, it is very important that you talk to your assessor and discuss why you feel you don't yet have the skills. Your assessor can then go through the assessment decision with you and your employer and see if there are any skills gaps against the unit of competency and, if so, organise more training.

Near the end of your traineeship or apprenticeship your registered training organisation will advise you and your employer that your final assessment is due. Once the final assessment has been completed and you are deemed competent you will be eligible to receive your full qualification from the registered training organisation.

Your registered training organisation will notify Skills Tasmania of your completion date which will automatically complete your traineeship or apprenticeship. Exceptions to this guideline apply to apprentices in both the plumbing and electrical trades.

For further details regarding this guideline please visit the Skills Tasmania website [www.skills.tas.gov.au/skillstas/systemtas/ttac](http://www.skills.tas.gov.au/skillstas/systemtas/ttac) and look for the guideline titled 'Guideline 10 – Competency-based Completion of Traineeships and Apprenticeships'.

# Financial arrangements

## Funding your training

In some traineeships and apprenticeships the cost of training is paid by the Tasmanian Government through Skills Tasmania, however, there may be additional student fees payable. Your registered training organisation will advise you of this.

## Wages

It is your employer's responsibility to ensure you are paid according to an appropriate industrial arrangement.

Wages payable to trainees and apprentices are often lower than a full wage rate in recognition of the time the trainee or apprentice spends in structured training, both on and off-the-job.

The employment conditions of existing full-time or part-time workers who undertake training under a training contract should be unchanged.

You can obtain information on employment conditions and rates of pay for industrial awards by contacting the Fair Work Ombudsman on 13 13 94 or by visiting their website at [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au). You will need to provide them with details of your traineeship or apprenticeship, such as the qualification and nominal duration of your training contract.

## Travel and accommodation allowances

You may be entitled to a contribution toward your travel and/or accommodation costs. This contribution is paid by Skills Tasmania to you when you attend training away from your workplace.

If you are eligible to claim this allowance, all claims must be made within four weeks of each training block/session.

For more information contact Skills Tasmania on 03 6165 6055 or visit [www.skills.tas.gov.au/apprenticeshipstraineeships/incentives/allowances](http://www.skills.tas.gov.au/apprenticeshipstraineeships/incentives/allowances)

## Support for employer, trainees and apprentices during the training contract

Your first point of contact for most queries or issues is your apprenticeship network provider. They may either help you or refer you to the appropriate authority.

You can also contact Skills Tasmania on 6165 6055, for information and advice or to arrange assistance from a workforce training consultant. Workforce training consultants are located statewide.

### Who to contact about

#### Training

If you have questions regarding training you should first contact your registered training organisation. If you still have concerns contact Skills Tasmania on 6165 6055.

#### A dispute with your employer

If you need any assistance to resolve a dispute with your employer contact Skills Tasmania on 6165 6055. You will be referred to a workforce training consultant in your area.

#### Changes to your training contract

If you want to change your training contract in any way you and your employer should apply to the Tasmanian Traineeships and Apprenticeships Committee (TTAC) for approval to do so. Your apprenticeship network provider will assist you to complete the required application forms to submit to TTAC and will submit in on your behalf. You should not terminate your employment without receiving TTAC approval to cancel your training contract.

If you have any questions regarding your training contract contact a workforce training consultant at Skills Tasmania on 6165 6055.

## Wages

You can obtain information on employment conditions and rates of pay for industrial awards by contacting the Fair Work Ombudsman on 13 13 94 or by visiting their website at [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au)

You will need to provide them with details of your traineeship or apprenticeship such as qualification and nominal duration.

## Australian Government incentives and payments

Contact your apprenticeship network provider for information about eligibility for incentives including the living away from home allowance. This is payable to trainees and apprentices who need to move a significant distance from home to take up employment and helps to cover rental expenses.

# Who does what in the Australian apprenticeships system

## Tasmanian Traineeships and Apprenticeships Committee

The Tasmanian Traineeships and Apprenticeships Committee (TTAC) is a committee set up under the *Training and Workforce Development Act 2013* to manage training contracts between employers and trainees/apprentices.

TTAC has the power to:

- approve, amend, transfer, suspend or cancel training contracts in accordance with the *Training and Workforce Development Act 2013*
- resolve disputes that may arise between employers and trainees/apprentices. Serious disputes may need to be resolved by a formal hearing.

No changes can be made to a training contract without the approval of TTAC.

## Skills Tasmania

Skills Tasmania is the government agency responsible for the administration of your training contract. Skills Tasmania supports the TTAC.

Skills Tasmania:

- administers training contracts in accordance with the *Training and Workforce Development Act 2013* and TTAC policies and guidelines
- provides notification of approval (or non-approval) of your training contract to you, your employer and your registered training organisation
- provides funding that may be available to meet the cost of training
- pays travel and accommodation allowances to eligible trainees and apprentices as a contribution to the cost of attending off-the-job training
- provides workforce training consultants to assist with the resolution of difficulties which may arise between employers, trainees and apprentices during the term of the training contract.



## Apprenticeship network providers

Apprenticeship network providers are contracted by the Australian Government to:

- provide general information on traineeships and apprenticeships
- market Australian traineeships and apprenticeships
- assist in completing and lodging training contracts
- process applications and claims for Australian Government incentives and allowances
- provide support and assistance during the traineeship or apprenticeship to employers, and trainees and apprentices.

Your apprenticeship network provider will forward the completed training contract to Skills Tasmania on your behalf for approval and registration.

## Registered training organisations

Registered training organisations are responsible for training delivery and assessment of the qualification named in the training contract and for issuing the qualification.

## Group training organisations

Group training is an employment and training arrangement whereby an organisation employs trainees and apprentices under a training contract and places them with host employers.

The group training organisation undertakes the employer responsibilities for the quality and continuity of the trainees' and apprentices' employment and training. The organisation also manages the additional care and support necessary to achieve the successful completion of the training contract.

## Key features of group training

To achieve these goals, providers of group training services:

- employ trainees and apprentices and place them with host employers
- are responsible for meeting the obligations of the employer as outlined in the training contract and managing and monitoring arrangements with host employers
- provide care and support throughout the traineeship or apprenticeship.

## Definition of group training organisation

Group training organisation means an organisation which employs trainees and apprentices under a training contract and places them with host employers.

## Definition of host employer

Host employer means an organisation that hosts, under a written agreement, a trainee or apprentice employed by a group training organisation.

More detailed information on group training organisations operating in Tasmania can be found at [www.skills.tas.gov.au/providers/gtos](http://www.skills.tas.gov.au/providers/gtos)

## Important contacts

You should be aware of who to contact if you have any questions regarding your training contract. Ask your apprenticeship network provider for contact details for each of the following.

### Apprenticeship network provider

Apprenticeship network providers provide support and assistance during your traineeship or apprenticeships.

Name of apprenticeship network provider:.....

Contact name:.....

Contact phone number:.....

### Registered training organisation

This is the organisation that you and your employer have selected to be responsible for the training delivery and assessment of your qualification under the training contract.

Name of registered training organisation:.....

Contact name:.....

Contact phone number:.....

### Skills Tasmania

If you need assistance to resolve a dispute with your employer or have any problems with your traineeship or apprenticeship contact Skills Tasmania on 6165 6055. You will be referred to a workforce training consultant in your area.



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