

BLUEPRINT FOR THE VET WORKFORCE

*Submitted to the Department of
Employment and Workforce Relations*

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QUEENSLAND
TOURISM INDUSTRY
COUNCIL

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Acknowledgement of Country

QTIC acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Queensland. We recognise those who shared stories, welcomed guests on Country, and were stewards of the earth for millennia before us, and their continued connection to land, waterways, and culture.

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QUEENSLAND TOURISM INDUSTRY COUNCIL

The Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) is the peak industry body and leading advocate for the tourism, hospitality, and events sectors in Queensland, committed to the growth and sustainability of the state visitor economy. Our efforts focus on powerful lobbying, policy development, and collaboration with key industry stakeholders to create a favourable business environment for operators.

As a not-for-profit, membership-based organisation, we take pride in ensuring that the concerns and needs of our members and the broader tourism industry inform all relevant policy debates and that businesses have strong representation in decision-making processes. By promoting the value and importance of tourism in government forums and to the wider community, we help to create a vibrant, diverse industry that benefits all.

Through delivery of workforce and skilling programs, advocating for attraction and infrastructure investment, and working with the private sector to develop innovative solutions to tourism priorities, QTIC continues to serve members and industry. We also provide expert advice and support, including workforce and business development opportunities and access to vital industry insights.

TOURISM INDUSTRY WORKFORCE NEEDS

Tourism is a dynamic and multifaceted industry, comprised of passionate people showcasing Queensland's rich history, unique destinations, and diverse First Nations cultures. A deep connection to communities is evident through the array of services and commercial opportunities tourism provides. In addition, a commitment to research and innovation means that tourism plays a crucial role in creating new opportunities for Queensland. Tourism is a vital contributor to national, state, and local economies, generating \$34.3 billion in Overnight Visitor Expenditure (OVE) by September 2023.¹ The visitor economy accounts for 4.6% of total GSP, ranking as Queensland's sixth largest export.² Beyond its economic impact, tourism acts as a catalyst for growth in various industries like agriculture, construction, manufacturing, transport, retail, education, and training. For every dollar spent on tourism, an additional 85 cents is circulated elsewhere in the economy (YE June 2022).³

The Queensland tourism industry constitutes 6.7% of total state employment with 206,200 direct and indirect jobs.⁴ Looking ahead, projections indicate employment in accommodation and food services will have the third fastest growth of all industries in Queensland by 2025-26.⁵ Nevertheless, the Queensland tourism industry is confronted by sizable workforce shortages, totalling 4,126 job vacancies across the state.⁶ Removal of barriers hindering progress and the attraction, retention, and development of a skilled workforce is essential to leveraging future opportunities.

¹ Tourism and Events Queensland 2023, [Queensland tourism economic key facts](#), viewed 26 March 2024.

² Tourism Research Australia 2023, [State tourism satellite account – Queensland summary](#), Australian Trade and Investment Commission, viewed 26 March 2024.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Jobs Queensland 2023, [Anticipating Future Skills Series](#), Queensland Government, viewed 26 March 2024.

⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2024, [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - January 2024](#), viewed 26 March 2024.



CONSULTATION PAPER RESPONSE

SUPPORTING AND RETAINING A SKILLED TRAINER, TEACHER, AND ASSESSOR WORKFORCE

Currency and professional development challenges

Professional support and career advancement are crucial for growing and retaining the Vocational Education and Training (VET) workforce. A majority of VET educators, trainers, and assessors often serve as 'dual professionals', requiring expertise in their respective industries and teaching skills. However, balancing industry updates with ongoing professional development can be challenging due to time and financial constraints.

Maintaining currency in both industry standards and teaching methods is essential for VET professionals. This ensures their competence and effectiveness as trainers and assessors, benefiting students by equipping them with the skills needed for employment. This alignment with industry benchmarks and teaching proficiency is underscored in Clauses 1.13 to 1.16 – specifically emphasising the employment of skilled trainers and assessors. The standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) emphasise continuous professional development for VET staff to effectively teach adult learners. However, accessing relevant development is challenging for non-permanent staff and those in regional or remote areas. Increased support from ASQA is essential for these providers.

Furthermore, a state-level industry accreditation system based on industry standards should be established to boost professionalism among trainers and assessors. This framework would reduce the burden on RTOs to validate competence and promotes collaboration between industry stakeholders and trainers/assessors to improve training quality and relevance.

Challenges related to digital capability

Recent years have seen an increased emphasis placed on digital competencies, including the growing adoption of online training methods and the emergence of AI technologies. Digital literacy is crucial in all industries as an essential tool for communication and operations. Adequate support is required to ensure trainers and assessors maintain industry relevance by keeping digital skills up to date.

Supporting a diverse cohort of students

The VET sector boasts inclusivity as a significant asset, with its workforce dedicated to assisting students from diverse backgrounds and varying educational levels. These students may face non-vocational hurdles such as:

- Complex language, literacy, numeracy, and digital literacy (LLND) skills requirements
- Complex employability skills need, encompassing communication, planning, problem-solving, teamwork, and collaboration
- Histories of educational disadvantage
- Personal challenges including difficulty accessing support, such as mental health and wellbeing

Trainers and assessors undergo industry-specific adult education training but often lack specialised training to support learners with disabilities. While VET aims to be inclusive and accommodate all individuals, it frequently does not meet this expectation in practice.

Ensuring easy access to available support services is paramount. For instance, students should not be required to pay upfront for interpreters prior to meetings, especially those receiving Centrelink



benefits. Enhancements in support, such as increased assistance to RTOs in identifying potential barriers and accessing relevant support services, could prove beneficial.

Workload burden associated with administrative and compliance activities

Administrative and compliance tasks like assessment, reporting, and managing course logistics pose significant challenges to retaining staff in the VET sector. These demands strain organisations, especially educators, trainers, and assessors, affecting their ability to deliver quality training and reducing job satisfaction, which in turn impacts retention rates. RTOs are responsible for supervising these workloads, which include evaluating and documenting student progress. Systems efficiency to manage this information is crucial, as inadequate or complex processes can further diminish staff satisfaction and retention.

LACK OF ROLE CLARITY AND CLEAR CAREER PROGRESSION PATHWAYS

The absence of transparent career advancement routes and motivating factors for individuals to transition into more senior positions is a hindrance to the growth and retention of skilled personnel, particularly for leadership roles. Ambiguity in job roles and discrepancies in the emphasis placed on staff development opportunities among different RTOs may also exacerbate these issues. A range of strategies could assist with addressing these challenges across RTOs:

- Establishing well-defined career pathways and incentive schemes such as performance-linked bonuses
- Implementing leadership development programs
- Improving role clarity through regular communication
- Standardising staff development initiatives
- Fostering a culture of continuous learning to support staff growth and retention

Which barriers are most significant in your context?

Currency and professional development challenges, difficulties concerning digital capability, and supporting a diverse student cohort emerge as particularly crucial for the Queensland tourism and hospitality industry. It is imperative that the future tourism and hospitality workforce is guided by seasoned, skilled, and enthusiastic trainers and assessors.

What do you see as the biggest challenges facing the VET workforce now and into the future?

Significant current and future challenges faced by the VET workforce primarily centre on include tackling skills shortages and ensuring workforce development to meet the evolving industry needs.

- Integrating emerging technologies into training and assessment methods is crucial, necessitating the upskilling of trainers and assessors in digital tools and online platforms.
- Collaborating with industry to maintain alignment between VET programs and industry demands to equip learners with relevant skills.
- Promoting equity and access to quality VET opportunities for all individuals, regardless of background to facilitate social inclusion and diversity in the workforce.
- Quality assurance measures must be upheld to ensure the credibility of qualifications, while flexible delivery models should accommodate diverse learning needs.
- Elevating the status of the VET profession and recognising the skills and expertise of trainers and assessors through professional development and career progression opportunities.



ENSURING INFORMED WORKFORCE PLANNING

What mechanisms could be suitable for the regular collection of VET workforce data?

- Conducting annual surveys of VET trainers, assessors, and other staff to gather information on demographics, qualifications, employment status, professional development activities, and job satisfaction.
- Establishing online portals or platforms where VET providers can securely submit workforce data, including staff profiles, qualifications, training delivery hours, and professional development records.
- Creating a centralised state-based register of VET trainers and assessors, managed by relevant industry associations, to track workforce demographics, qualifications, and employment history. This can help support state-based industry recognition by associations. Industry associations would set up an external review panel to qualify trainers and assessors experience and qualifications leading to industry endorsed trainers and assessors, as a potential avenue to assist in professionalising the VET Workforce.

Actions could include:

- Partnering with industry associations and professional bodies to collect workforce data through membership surveys, industry forums, or collaborative research projects.
- Conducting periodic audits or reviews of VET providers to verify compliance with workforce qualification requirements, including qualifications, industry experience, and ongoing professional development.
- Requiring VET providers to regularly report on their workforce composition and activities as part of their contractual obligations with government funding bodies or regulatory agencies.
- Establishing data-sharing agreements between government agencies, VET providers, and other stakeholders to facilitate the collection and sharing of workforce data while ensuring privacy and confidentiality.

Which mechanisms would work best for your organisation's context?

- Conduct annual surveys of VET trainers, assessors, and staff to gather information on demographics, qualifications, employment status, professional development, and job satisfaction.
- Establish an online portal for VET providers to securely submit workforce data, such as staff profiles, qualifications, training hours, and professional development records.
- Create a centralised state-based industry register managed by industry associations, which tracks workforce demographics, qualifications, and employment history to support state-based industry recognition.
- Partner with industry associations and professional bodies to facilitate collection of workforce data through membership surveys, industry forums, or collaborative research projects.

HOW SHOULD THE BLUEPRINT RESPOND TO BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES?

What could be done to attract and retain more VET teachers, trainers, and assessors?

Competitive remuneration, professional development opportunities, clear career pathways, and a supportive work environment are essential to attracting and retaining more VET teachers, trainers, and assessors. These actions should also extend to:



- Flexible work arrangements, structured industry engagement, and promotion efforts.
- Continuous proactive feedback measures to address concerns and enhance overall quality.
- Provide clarity on industry engagement requirements and ensure they are not onerous.

What could be done to attract and retain other key workforce roles such as complementary education professionals (e.g. educational designers, librarians, or counsellors) or support VET professionals to enter leadership positions?

- Offer competitive compensation, tailored professional development, clear career pathways, and mentorship programs.
- Recognise achievements, foster a supportive work environment, and promote collaboration.
- Provide leadership training, promote awareness of leadership opportunities, and implement feedback mechanisms for continuous improvement.

In your view, what strategies or actions would have the best impact for building capability and supporting career development and progression?

- Implement tailored training programs, mentorship, and coaching initiatives.
- Establish clear career pathways and offer diverse professional development opportunities.
- Provide cross-functional exposure, regular performance feedback, and recognition for achievements.
- Encourage participation in networking events and foster a culture of continuous learning.
- Offer leadership development programs for aspiring leaders.

Are there actions that should be specifically taken at the national level, and at the local level?

Establish a state-level accreditation and registration system that acknowledges the qualifications and certifications of trainers, assessors, and workplace supervisors based on industry standards. This initiative could elevate the professionalism of trainers and assessors while alleviating the burden on RTOs to validate employee competence. By ensuring that trainers and assessors meet industry standards, this framework would promote competence and credibility, foster industry collaboration, and establish direct links that enhance training effectiveness and relevance.

Are there examples of attraction and retention strategies, actions or initiatives that have worked well? What were the critical factors that made them successful?

In 2007 QTIC delivered the [Australian Hospitality Review Panel](#) (p.20), accreditation program, comprised of industry representatives, who considered the extent of recent, relevant industry experience and training qualifications the applicants possessed. AHRP granted industry recognition to trainers and assessors who were suitably qualified to conduct formal training in specific skill areas through a formal trainer registration process.

The registration process not only provided individuals with recognition of their training and industry skills but also assisted RTOs in easily recognising the trainers and assessors as meeting industry requirements. This assisted these organisations in implementing the Tourism, Hospitality & Events National Training Package (SIT07) and satisfying the registration requirements of their local State Government registration authority. It also provided industry with quality assurance that trainers' skills and knowledge of the tourism and hospitality industry were current.

How can industry assist with building the teacher, trainer, and assessor workforce?

Provide state-based trainer and assessor accreditation programs led by industry to support the sector. These programs validate trainers' skills and knowledge, making them highly sought after by RTOs.



What collaborative mechanisms could be implemented to assist transition between industry and the VET workforce? Where the employer is the RTO, what would assist in transitioning staff into teacher, trainer, and assessor roles?

Industry led career development programs delivered by relevant state-based industry associations.

If there was one immediate goal that could be worked towards to relieve the current pressures on the VET workforce, what would that be?

Alleviate the pressure of trainer and assessor industry currency on RTOs by supporting industry led trainer and assessor accreditation programs, allowing RTOs to focus on the training and assessment capabilities. This would also provide closer engagement for training providers and their trainers and assessors with their state-based industry associations leading to stronger industry-based training program and learning outcomes.

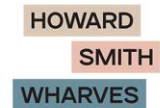
What does success look like in practice for the actions you have proposed?

A dedicated VET workforce should collaborate with industry to meet its specific needs. This partnership boosts the number of qualified graduates, improving employment prospects. Industries benefit from the high-quality skills and knowledge of these graduates, fostering a skilled workforce ready to meet evolving industry demands.

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