

VELG TRAINING eNews



Issue 62 | September 2026



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THE LATEST APPRENTICESHIP DATA SHOWS A MORE MIXED PICTURE

Australia's latest apprenticeship and traineeship data shows an overall decline in training activity, but a closer look reveals a more mixed picture, particularly across the trades.

New data from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) shows there were 289,090 apprentices and trainees in training at 31 March 2026, down 9.0% compared with the same time last year.

Trade contracts in training fell 5.6%, while non-trade contracts recorded a considerably larger decline of 17.6%.

More recent quarterly data provides a brighter spot, with trade commencements increasing 2.0% in the March quarter and stronger growth recorded across several key trades experiencing skills shortages.

Trade completions increased 9.9% to 55,570 over the 12 months to March 2026, with several major trade occupation groups reaching record highs. NCVER notes that these higher completion numbers reflect the stronger commencement levels that occurred in 2021 and 2022.

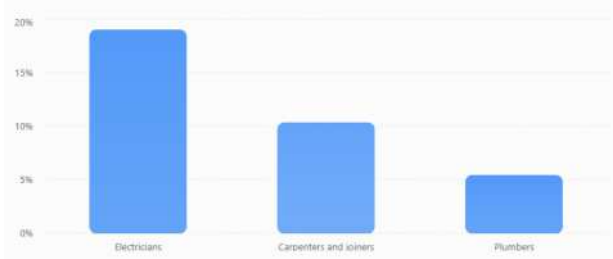
Together, the figures show a more nuanced picture of apprenticeship activity, with considerable differences between trade and non-trade occupations and across different measures of activity.

The latest release provides further breakdowns by occupation, state and territory, equity group, provider and employer characteristics.

To explore NCVER's Apprentices and trainees 2026: March quarter data, [click here](#).

Trade commencements on the rise

Change in commencements, March quarter 2026 compared with March quarter 2025



Source: NCVER, Apprentices and trainees 2026: March quarter



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WHEN AI GIVES US THE ANSWER, DO FOUNDATION SKILLS MATTER MORE THAN EVER?

As artificial intelligence becomes increasingly embedded in how we work and learn, the skills needed to use it effectively are coming into sharper focus.

Australian Industry Group says the latest international student assessment results reinforce the importance of strong literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills as technology, automation and AI continue to reshape Australian workplaces.

The latest Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results show Australia remains above the OECD average across all measures. However, Australian Industry Group points to longer-term declines in areas including mathematics and reading as a concern for Australia's future workforce capability and productivity.

The organisation argues that foundation skills become more important, not less, as technology advances.

Workers need literacy, numeracy and problem-solving capabilities to interpret information, exercise judgement, learn new tasks and work effectively with emerging technologies. Australian Industry Group says businesses are also increasingly identifying communication, critical thinking and problem-solving as essential capabilities for technology adoption and AI implementation.

For training providers, the findings are also relevant to considerations about how AI is incorporated into learning and assessment, and how learners continue to develop the foundation skills needed to use it effectively.

While technology may change how people access information, strong foundation skills remain central to understanding that information, questioning it and applying it effectively.

Australian Industry Group says almost nine in ten employers are affected by low levels of literacy and numeracy within their workforce, with flow-on impacts for workplace productivity.

As AI continues to change the skills required at work, the discussion may be shifting from whether people can access the answer to whether they have the foundation skills to understand what to do with it.

To read the Australian Industry Group article, [click here](#).



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UPCOMING WEBINAR

GRAB A SEAT & JOIN US

ADMINISTRATION 101 | 30 NOVEMBER

Confident administration starts with understanding what's required.

This webinar unpacks the key compliance requirements for RTO administration staff under the Standards for RTOs 2025, following the student journey from enrolment through to certification.

CLICK HERE FOR MORE!

This webinar forms part of our VET Workforce Week.
Want to explore the full series? [Click here.](#)



Questions? Visit our website or call us for more information.

UPCOMING WEBINAR

DON'T MISS OUT!

UNPACKING RPL: CREATING USER-FRIENDLY AND
AUDIT-FRIENDLY PRACTICES | 1 DECEMBER

Make RPL simpler for candidates
and stronger under audit.

This practical webinar explores how
to read units with RPL in mind, identify
and capture relevant evidence, and
create assessment processes that
support current competency.

[CLICK HERE TO FIND OUT MORE](#)

This webinar forms part of our VET Workforce Week.
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EXPLORE WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE LABOUR MARKET WITH JSA'S NEW INTERACTIVE TOOL

Understanding where employers are struggling to recruit has become a little easier, with Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) launching a new interactive way to explore recruitment activity across Australia.

JSA's quarterly Occupation Shortage Report has been replaced by the Employer Activity Insights interactive table, giving users greater flexibility to explore data from the Survey of Employers who have Recently Advertised.

Users can investigate recruitment conditions across different skill levels, broad occupation groups and regions, including the number of applicants employers are receiving and their success in filling vacancies.

The new format also introduces **Duration of vacancies**, providing insight into how long positions remain open and the recruitment conditions employers are experiencing.

The latest data shows Australia's national fill rate reached 69.1% in the June quarter 2026, up slightly from the previous quarter but remaining below the same period last year.

The number of total, qualified and suitable applicants per vacancy also increased, while the average time taken to fill vacancies fell slightly.

For VET providers, the interactive format provides another way to explore labour market conditions and recruitment patterns relevant to the industries, occupations and regions they support.

To explore JSA's new **Employer Activity Insights** interactive table, [click here](#).



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JOBS AND SKILLS COUNCILS & TRAINING PACKAGE NEWS



Australian Government



Jobs and Skills Australia

News Updates:

- [A skills-first system can't work without a human-centred definition of skill](#)
- [Australian Jobs](#)
- [Employer Advertisement Insights](#)
- [Introducing Jos and Skills Month](#)
- [National Skills Agreement Outcomes Framework Balanced Scorecard Baseline Report](#)
- [OSCA Occupations](#)
- [Roadshow 2026](#)
- [Total New Vacancies \(TNV\)](#)
- [Read more](#) on the JSA's LinkedIn



**FUTURE SKILLS
ORGANISATION**
Finance Technology Business

News Updates:

- [BSB Update: Uplift Digital Capability](#)
- [FSO Accelerate Newsletter](#) – September
- [FSO News](#) – 28 August 2026
- [National AI Skills Forum Play list](#)
- [The AI challenge isn't technology. It's capability](#)
- [Why Australia's AI skills challenge is bigger than AI](#)
- [Read more](#) on the FSO's LinkedIn



**Industry Skills
Australia**

News Updates:

- [Current Projects Underway:](#)
- [Pre-Vocational Supply Chain Operations Skill Set \(Warehousing\)](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
- [T&L Digital Skills Project – Expression of Interest](#)
- [Transport Supply Chain Dashboard](#)
- [Workforce Capability and AI Top Agenda](#)
- [Read more](#) on Industry Skills' LinkedIn



**BuildSkills
Australia**

News Updates:

- [Crane, Hoist or Lift Operator training product review](#)
- [Entry-Level Pathways into Plumbing](#)
- [Home energy efficiency and sustainability](#)
- [Fencing and Gate Industry](#)
- [Project Interest Registration Form](#)
- [Read more](#) on BuildSkills' LinkedIn



HumanAbility

News Updates:

- [Aged Care, Disability, Leisure and Health Qualification Review](#)
- [Earn While You Learn](#)
- [HLT Health Services Assistance Qualification Review](#)
- [HumanAbility Newsletter](#) – 8 July 2026
- [Read more](#) on HumanAbility's LinkedIn



News Updates:

- [Inclusion Habits for Operations Leaders](#)
- [Shared Ground: Improving first national occupational outcomes in manufacturing](#)
- [Shared Ground Industry Interviews - Expression of Interest](#)
- [Women Trading Up Program](#)
- [Read more](#) on MISA's LinkedIn



News Updates:

- [Auslan, Interpreting and Translating Qualification Review \(Phase 2\)](#)
- [Correctional Services Training Implementation \(Phase 2\)](#)
- [Local Government Skills Audit](#)
- [Public Skills Australia – Workforce Insights Reports](#)
- [VET Workforce Study – Public Safety and Government industry-sectors](#)
- [Read more](#) on Public Skills' LinkedIn



News Updates:

- [AI and Australia's foundational industries](#)
- [Current Projects Underway](#)
- [Participate in Landscaping Skills Review](#)
- [Regional, Rural and Remote VET Policy Decision Making](#)
- [Retail Butchery and Smallgoods Project Update](#)
- [Textile Mechanic Skills Pathway Review](#)
- [Workforce Plan – 2026-2027](#)
- [Read more](#) on Skills Insight's LinkedIn



News Updates:

- [AQF 7 Vocational Degree development stakeholders briefing webinars](#)
- [Automotive Career Pathway Survey](#)
- [Emergency Response Qualifications](#)
- [EV Skills Mapping Project](#)
- [Strategic Plan 2026-28](#)
- [The Journey](#) – September 2026
- [Read more](#) on AUSMASA's LinkedIn



News Updates:

- [7News Features Powering Skills Organisation's Data Centre Workforce Forecast](#)
- [Foundation for Energy: Literacy and Numeracy for Energy Jobs](#)
- [High Load, Short Supply – 2026 Targeted Workforce Update](#)
- [Project Update](#)
- [Remote and very Remote Community Training Packages Updates](#)
- [Workforce and Training Data Dashboard](#)
- [Read more](#) on Powering Skills' LinkedIn



News Updates:

- [Culinary Qualifications](#)
- [Culinary Skills for Aged Care](#)
- [Hairdressing and Barbering](#)
- [Retail Qualifications](#)
- [The Latest](#) – August 2026
- [Read more](#) on SACSA's LinkedIn



UPDATES FROM THE REGULATORS



Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)

News Updates:

- [ASQA's Corporate Plan 2026-27 published](#)
- [ASQA IQ](#) – 25 August 2026
- [ASQA Update](#) – 23 February 2026
- [Cancelling of qualifications – ACG Global Australasia Pty Ltd RTO 40393](#)
- [Education agent commission reporting](#)
- [Research Activity Survey](#)
- [Read more](#) on the ASQA LinkedIn



WA.gov.au

Training Accreditation Council (TAC)

News Updates:

- [RTO Reporting Requirements](#) – 14 September 2026
- [TAC Education Program – Focus on Quality Article: Assessment in the Workplace](#)
- [TAC Update – Issue 121](#) – August 2026
- [Read more](#) on TAC LinkedIn



TEQSA

Tertiary Education Quality and
Standards Agency (TEQSA)

News Updates:

- [Compliance Assessment concluded on 2 September 2026](#)
- [Reporting a suspected academic cheating service form](#)
- [TEQSA 2026 Annual Conference](#)
- [TEQSA Talks webinar](#) - 8 October 2026
- [Video recordings and presentation slides TEQSA Talks #2](#)
- [Read more](#) on the TEQSA LinkedIn



Victorian Registration & Qualifications
Authority (VRQA)

News Updates:

- [New standards for RTOs are here](#)
- [VRQA e-News](#) – 19 August 2026
- [Reforms in place for Australia's international education sector](#)
- [Read more](#) on the VRQA LinkedIn

YOUR VET NEWSLETTERS AND PUBLICATIONS

NEWSLETTERS

- [AI Pulse](#) - September 2026
- [AITSL Mail](#) - 24 August 2026
- [ASQA IQ](#) - 25 August 2026
- [ASQA Update](#) - 23 February 2026
- [Australian Industry Group – Newsletter – Edition 51](#) - 27 August 2026
- [Community Education Australia](#) - September 2026
- [FSO Future Skills News](#) - 28 August 2026
- [FSO Future Skills News](#) - 24 August 2026
- [ILP – L&D Insights](#) - 9 September 2026
- [National AI Centre – Issue 29](#) - 18 September 2026
- [NCVER Data Bulletin](#) - September 2026
- [NCVER News – Edition #636](#) - 9 September 2026
- [Powering Skills Australia = Engergise Newsletter](#) - June 2026
- [Service and Creative Sils Australia – The Latest](#) - August 2026
- [SkillsAware Newsletter](#) - 3 September 2026
- [TAC Update – Issue 121](#) - August 2026
- [TAFE Directors Australia](#) - 21 September 2026
- [TAFE Directors Australia](#) - 14 September 2026
- [TEQSA eNews](#) - August 2026
- [VDC News – Edition 15](#) - 9 September 2026

PUBLICATIONS

- [Apprentices and trainees 2026: March quarter](#)
- [Australia's Labor Market Outlook: An employer's guide 2026-27](#)
- [DEWR - Principles to Guide Foundation Skills Assessment](#)
- [Equity Insights 2026: Understanding student realities and redesigning systems for success](#)
- [Getting it right: Building AI infrastructure that works for Australia: Consultation paper](#) - September 2026
- [National Skills Agreement Outcomes Framework Balanced Scorecard](#)
- [PISA 2025: a first look at student and school characteristics for Australia](#)
- [PISA in brief Australia 2025: student performance](#)
- [Small business, self-employment and the economic cycle](#)
- [Submission to the Joint Select Committee on Artificial Intelligence](#)

5 WEEKS TO GO!

NATIONAL VET CONFERENCE | 29–30 OCTOBER

The countdown is on! In just 5 weeks, the VET community will come together at the 2026NVC

With two days of meaningful professional development, all 45 sessions professionally recorded for delegates to access after the event, sector insights and networking with peers and providers, there's plenty to look forward to.

Ready to forge the future together?

COUNT ME IN!



Questions? Visit our website or call us for more information.

