

Supervising your apprentice or trainee



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Introduction

Well trained and effective employees are more important than ever for business success. Having a team with the right skills allows businesses to meet the challenges of competition, growth and innovation. Whether the organisation decides to extend the skills of existing staff or to recruit new employees, the business will benefit from apprenticeship and traineeship programs.

Effective recruitment and ongoing support of apprentices and trainees through to the successful completion of their training ensures the availability of a pool of skilled workers to meet the business challenges of the future.

Workplace supervisors play a central role in the success of apprenticeship and traineeship programs. Recent studies show that the main reasons given by learners in their decision to leave or stay with training arrangements are to do with:

- the extent to which their choice of apprenticeship or traineeship meets their expectations;
- the extent to which the quality of the training received compensates for lower training wages;
- general workplace conditions and relationships, and
- the extent to which they feel supported as learners in the workplace.

By helping apprentices and trainees with these issues in their workplace, employers and workplace supervisors are in a key position to maximise the success of training and provide skilled employees to mentor the next generation of learners.

As well, effective supervision of apprentices and trainees will lead to:

- more productive workplaces;
- higher quality output and services;
- more employees who can work unsupervised;
- employees who can undertake a wider range of tasks.

This guide is designed to help employers and workplace supervisors of apprentices and trainees better understand their role and the role of others. It contains information that will help the workplace supervisor to work more effectively and productively with apprentices and trainees and provides information on sources of further assistance should it be required.

Apprenticeships and Traineeships

This guide has been written specifically for you, the workplace supervisor of apprentices and trainees. Apprenticeships and Traineeships are jobs that combine work, structured training and formal assessment and which lead to the issue of an Australian Qualification Framework certificate by a training organisation and the issue of a Certificate of Proficiency by the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET).

In NSW the employer and the apprentice or trainee enter into a formal training contract that sets out the rights, responsibilities and obligations of both parties for the period of the contract. The contract is registered with State Training Services (see Appendix: Roles and Responsibilities).

Formal training contracts are available to establish:

Apprenticeships - for new and existing employees of any age or length of service

New Entrant Traineeships - for employees of any age with less than three months full time service with the current employer or equivalent part time service; and

Existing Worker Traineeships - for employees of any age with more than three months full time service with the current employer or equivalent part time service.

There is also the option for students to undertake apprenticeships and traineeships while at school.

Registered Training Organisations, known as RTOs, have the crucial role of providing the course of training to your apprentice or trainee. There are over 900 RTOs in NSW including TAFE and many private sector organisations. In all traineeships and in some apprenticeships the employer can choose whether training is undertaken in the workplace, in the more traditional classroom setting, or a combination of these.

Whichever training delivery pathway is chosen the employer must release the learner during paid work time or provide time off the job to undertake both training and assessment.

Training wages for new entrant trainees and apprentices have been designed to account for the time the apprentice or trainee spends undertaking training and assessment. However, you may pay your apprentice or trainee above the training wage or award wage as you would with any other employee. Existing worker trainees retain the wages and employment conditions they had prior to commencing the traineeship.

While apprenticeship and traineeship training contracts have a nominal duration assigned at their commencement, the date of completion is flexible within the training period and occurs when the employer certifies that the learner is competent and the RTO has issued the National Qualification.

For more detailed information on apprenticeships and traineeships see the appendix at the end of this booklet or go to the State Training Services website apprenticeship.det.nsw.edu.au

The Workplace Supervisor

This part of the Guide looks at how you can optimise the learning opportunities of your apprentice or trainee through using good supervisory and coaching skills, while information on the more detailed aspects of apprenticeships and traineeships can be found in the Appendix.

The workplace induction and ongoing support of the apprentice or trainee is normally the job of the workplace supervisor. The supervisor may also be the employer of the apprentice or trainee, especially in a smaller organisation, but the crucial aspect is that the supervisor is the person who is responsible for training the learner at the worksite in the day to day working environment. They answer any questions the apprentice or trainee may have regarding their training or other aspects of their work. It is their responsibility to inform the apprentice/trainee of what it means to work for the employer, safety rules, codes of conduct, lunch breaks, OH&S information etc. Supervisors also ensure the apprentice/trainee is not harassed or bullied in the workplace.

We all have our own way of doing things – you should make allowance for someone to carry out their allotted task in their own way provided that the job is done to the required standard.

The supervisor's role

As a supervisor you will act as a role model and coach to the learner. The learner will look to you for guidance and help in learning to do their job. You will need to organise and record training

activities undertaken in the workplace, as well as help to provide assessment evidence to the RTO assessor if required.

You will also assist the learner in gaining access to equipment and training as needed or shown in the Training Plan. Individual learning styles vary between individuals and between workplaces. For instance some individuals learn best from written instructions while others prefer practical demonstration, some organisations provide opportunities for learning in a simulated work environment while others train on the shop floor. Training, whether delivered by the RTO or by you will be easier and more effective if the learner's preference for a particular learning style can be recognised and accommodated.

An effective workplace supervisor

- Provides a safe and supportive workplace
- Integrates learning tasks into work activities based on the Training Plan
- Manages risks in safety and production while training
- Acts as a role model
- Meets with the RTO on a regular basis to ensure effective training delivery and assessment practices and to review progress through the Training Plan
- Manages the apprentice or trainee's training needs and motivation
- Helps the apprentice or trainee develop problem solving and general employability skills
- Provides feedback and encouragement
- Promotes independence and self direction in learning
- Maintains records of progress

People learn best when they are not tense - so don't mix instructions with criticism

What are the benefits of being a workplace supervisor?

While supervising a learner you will:

- Have the satisfaction of passing on your skills and knowledge
- Enjoy seeing the apprentice or trainee develop their skills
- Apply and develop skills as a mentor and coach
- Improve skills in communication as you explain work and answer questions
- Develop staff who are able to complete delegated tasks which enables you to complete other work
- Gain the opportunity to assist the apprentice or trainee in building work relationships, and to understand how the business operates.

Foster a positive attitude – mistakes should be looked on as a positive occurrence because they present an opportunity for learning.

What does a workplace supervisor do?

Different supervisors will do different things, depending on the workplace and the kind of training being undertaken. For example, with all-on-the-job type traineeships the workplace supervisor will participate in delivering structured

training to the learner with the help of the RTO, while in more traditional apprenticeships the structured training is delivered in the RTO's classroom and the supervisor is more involved with coaching the learner in understanding how the classroom instruction translates to the workplace.



Some of the things you will do are shown below

The workplace supervisor

Monitor progress towards completion

Explain your role to learner

Familiarise learner with the workplace

Discuss Training Plan with learner

Liaise with RTO about training

Give clear instructions on work tasks

Coach the learner to complete tasks

Provide encouragement and feedback

Keep records

Once the apprenticeship or traineeship is underway you can also focus on checking progress through setting regular meeting times with the learner and ensuring that the Training Plan is being followed and that the training

record book, if issued, is signed off. Remember that feedback is important as it allows the learner to measure their progress, be encouraged and gain confidence.

“You can’t listen with your mouth open” – always encourage your apprentice or trainee to hear the full message before responding, and take care that you set a good example by doing the same.

Is it my concern what the learner does outside working hours?

An aspect of supervision to think about is that you can assist the learner with constructive advice and guidance on some non-work issues which, if left unchecked, could potentially impact negatively on their employment and training. For example the need to have adequate sleep and to avoid alcohol and drugs, so that the learner can arrive at work clear headed and energetic, may need to be discussed. Another significant issue, especially for young male learners, is responsible road behaviour. It's a sad fact that the serious road accident rate for drivers aged 17 to 24 is more than double that of other drivers, with alcohol and speed being major contributing factors. Encouraging good driving habits in your apprentices and trainees will not only help them to avoid serious financial penalties and possible serious or fatal injury but also help them to retain their licence and vehicle which may be essential to their continuing employment.

Introduction to the workplace

A good introduction to the workplace is crucial in providing a basis from which an apprentice or trainee can build effective workplace relationships. A structured induction will leave the new learner with a clear understanding of what is expected of them and what they can expect of others. Most importantly, an effective induction will affirm the new learner's decision to join your organisation, convey a sense of your organisation's culture, reduce the time for the new learner to reach full proficiency, reduce staff turnover and lead to your better understanding the new learner's strengths and career aspirations.

If in your organisation the induction is carried out by the workplace supervisor, you should ensure that you cover these points.

- ✓ A description of the business, its goals and strategies and how the apprentice or trainee fits into the overall picture
- ✓ Terms of employment including the Training Contract, the probationary period and award coverage or employment contract
- ✓ A review of the Training Plan issued by the RTO to clarify the competencies to be achieved
- ✓ Basic work rules and work conditions
- ✓ Method and time of wage payment
- ✓ A tour of the workplace and facilities
- ✓ An introduction to key personnel and immediate work colleagues
- ✓ Grievance procedures including who to contact and what to do
- ✓ Leave provisions including annual, sick and other leave
- ✓ Information on the organisations apprentices policies and procedures
- ✓ Occupational health and safety procedures

If in your organisation a generic induction is provided by someone outside of your own work unit you should ensure that the items in the above list that relate to training are covered, particularly discussion of the Training Plan and the Training Contract.

First impressions count – the new apprentice or trainee’s views of the organisation are strongly influenced by first impressions. Maintaining a positive view is easier than altering a negative one, so make sure your induction is well planned and seamless.

What does being a workplace coach mean?

In your role as a supervisor you will undoubtedly be coaching others often, even if you have not thought of it in these terms. Coaching includes all the efforts you make to motivate others, teach them about the work, develop their skills, provide them with feedback and recognise their achievements.

When any significant problem arises, it is a good idea to give advance notice to the apprentice or trainee that you want to discuss it with them - that way both parties have a chance to think over the problem and to manage any strong emotions that may be present.

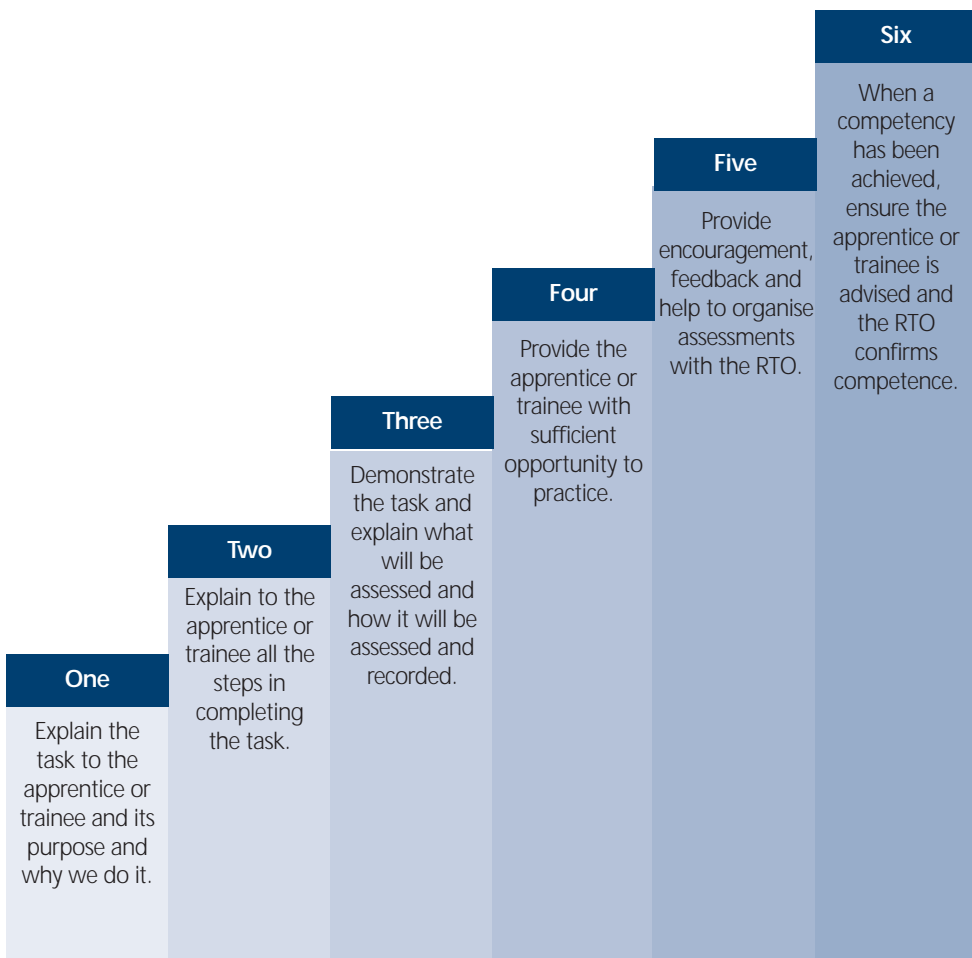
Effective coaching

The following are a few tips to assist you in coaching effectively:

- Acknowledge what the apprentice or trainee already knows – they may have knowledge and experience that they have gained in a variety of ways, e.g. school, hobbies, previous employment
- Explain the ‘big picture’ – give the reasons why a particular task may need to be done in a certain way. In your explanation draw on real examples
- Provide incentives to learn – explain what the apprentice or trainee will achieve
- Provide choice – everyone learns differently, find out from the apprentice or trainee how they like to learn, e.g. do they prefer written instructions or to be shown how to do something a number of times
- Remember though, that where skills are being learned, you will need to give the learner the opportunity to practice
- Encourage initiative and innovative thought by listening to the apprentice’s or trainee’s ideas and providing feedback
- Communicate with the apprentice or trainee, think about:
 - how and how often you are going to communicate with them
 - whether your instructions are clear and simple and are not more complex than necessary for the job
 - how you are going to ensure a two-way communication flow
- Check whether you have realistic expectations
- Remember that people work and learn best in a supportive environment so make sure that you act immediately against any bullying or harassment you see happening.

This chart provides a six step process for effective coaching

Six steps to effective supervisor coaching



“Kids these days just don’t want to learn” – not so, but younger apprentices and trainees are both smart and impressionable. They will pick up whatever good or bad attitudes and work practices that are shown them by other workers. Given the right role models they will come out on top.

Supervision practical tips

People learn best when actively involved in their learning, so when teaching your apprentice or trainee a new task make sure they know why they are doing things, why these things are important, and how and when they will be assessed on it.

Clear communications

Take time to think about the instructions you give. Write down your instructions or break the job into steps if necessary. To give clear instructions you should

- Assume no prior knowledge
- Explain why the job is done this way
- Use clear and simple language
- Include safe work practices in your instructions
- Ask the apprentice or trainee to restate the instructions back to you to check their understanding
- Make sure there are no distractions

Demonstration

Take time to show your apprentice or trainee how to do things the correct way. You may find it helps to break the task down into manageable pieces. Observation is a quick and very effective way to learn, it allows you to

- Show the learner correct procedures and sequences

- Explain why the task is done that way
- Use correct work practices

Practice makes perfect

Allow time for the apprentice or trainee to practice new skills. Everyone makes mistakes, so expect mistakes. Point the apprentice or trainee in the right direction. Watch and coach and

- Be patient
- Ask questions to encourage the apprentice or trainee to think about the task e.g. *“That’s right Sarah, now what should you do next?”*, or *“If the nut is seized on the bolt, how could you loosen it?”*
- Give praise when it is due
- Suggest ways to improve, e.g. *“You’ve mastered the register Jason, now I want you to concentrate on customer service”*.

Ask questions

- Check for understanding, e.g. *“What are the four steps in checking the order form?”*
- Involve the apprentice or trainee in decision making, e.g. *“Should we set the guide rails now?”*
- Obtain information and feedback, e.g. *“How is your training in power tools going, is there anything you don’t understand?”*

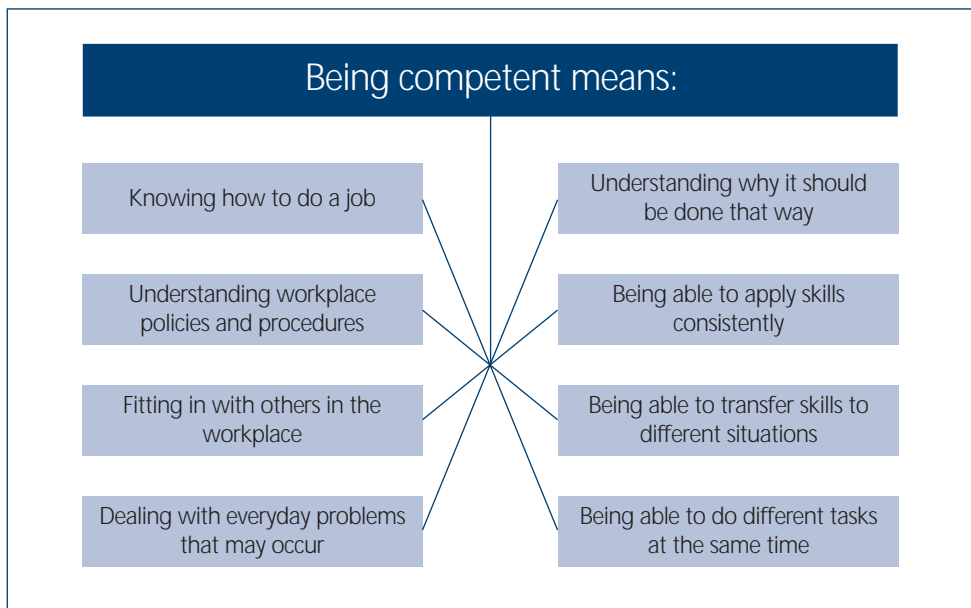
What it means for the Apprentice or Trainee to be competent

Both apprenticeships and traineeships are based on learning and developing skills through a combination of hands on experience and structured training.

An apprentice or trainee is competent in our training system when they are able to apply their knowledge and skills to successfully complete work activities in a range of situations and environments, against the standard of

performance expected in the workplace and across industry.

Competency includes what are known as employability skills – the ability to support the workplace through communication, team work, problem solving, self-management, planning and organising, technology, learning, and taking initiative.



Lecturing or learning? Constant lecturing will make your apprentice or trainee tune out. Often people learn more when given a chance to try something themselves, even if it means potentially having to learn from a mistake.

What are workplace competencies?

An apprenticeship or traineeship is made up of training and assessments to develop a number of competencies - sets of skills and knowledge relevant to the workplace, and the level of performance required to do them satisfactorily at work. For all apprenticeships or traineeships the training and assessment outcomes are achieved through assessments and assignments and the completion of actual work in the workplace.

Examples of competencies for someone waiting on tables in the hospitality industry might include:

- provide a link between kitchen and service areas
- promote products and services to customers
- provide food and beverage service

Examples of competencies for someone working as a customer service assistant in the retail industry might include:

- work effectively in a retail environment
- communicate in the workplace
- apply point of sale handling procedures

To complete an apprenticeship or traineeship and receive a qualification, the learner must successfully complete all of the units of competency that make up the National Qualification.

Once the RTO has issued the National

Qualification there is the opportunity to make an application for an early completion of the traineeship or apprenticeship.

What is assessment?

Assessment means collecting evidence about the apprentice or trainee's skills and knowledge, comparing the evidence to a set of industry-based standards and judging whether, on the basis of the evidence gathered, the learner meets those standards.

The RTO assessor will carry out the assessment. This will mean determining whether the apprentice or trainee is 'competent' or 'not yet competent' (although some RTOs may use slightly different terms).



As a workplace supervisor you will not be required to make decisions on the apprentice or trainee's competence but you will be requested to provide evidence of how they have applied their skills in the workplace and your opinion about their ability to do the job.

This evidence can take many forms. Please see the example below:

Brett has been offered a traineeship with a large department store in the city. He is very keen on the traineeship as he has been working part-time at the store since before leaving school. He is however concerned about what's actually involved in a traineeship, particularly about the assessment part - as he has been advised he will be 'assessed' as to whether he is a competent sales assistant. As Brett has never been keen on formal assessment he is worried about what may happen if he is not considered to be a competent sales assistant.

Brett, his supervisor and the RTO assessor hold a meeting to discuss the assessment requirements and to provide an opportunity for all to seek clarification about Brett's traineeship. This meeting allows both Brett and his supervisor to negotiate the assessment details with the assessor and results in the development of an assessment plan. The assessor guides both parties through the process, explaining:

- *the roles and responsibilities of all involved*
- *the assessment evidence the assessor will require*
- *the methods used to gather the evidence for assessment*
- *the options regarding the outcomes of the assessment*

The RTO assessor negotiates an assessment schedule so Brett and his supervisor know when to expect monitoring and assessment visits. These visits are used to monitor Brett's progress and to provide feedback.

The assessor explains that the assessment will involve a combination of Brett being observed doing work, demonstrating tasks to the assessor, participating in role play situations where unusual situations like dealing with difficult customers can be assessed, answering questions about his work tasks and having his work performance checked with his supervisor.

After seeking agreement with Brett and his supervisor as to the way the evidence will be collected and documented, the assessment plan is agreed to and signed by the three parties. Both Brett and his supervisor are provided with copies of the tasks and the assessment tools that will be used. This ensures clarity and helps to avoid any possible misunderstandings.

Brett has the opportunity to ask questions about observations that will take place as a component of the evidence gathering by both his supervisor and the RTO assessor. A copy of the assessment tools for the observations is given to Brett to enable him to determine when he is ready to be assessed.

The RTO assessor, Brett and his supervisor are fully informed at the meeting and agreement is reached to ensure workplace needs and the assessment requirements of the units of competencies are met. This is also an opportunity for the supervisor to check that the proposed assessment tools reflect current industry standards and workplace practice.

What records does the supervisor keep?

As the workplace supervisor involved in supervising an apprentice or trainee you are required to maintain certain records to confirm that effective training is occurring. Below is a table setting out the basic record keeping requirements, however they may vary depending on workplace requirements.

Records which must be kept	Workplace supervisor's role
Approval letter from State Training Services stating that the Apprenticeship/Traineeship Training Contract has been approved.	None – the employer should keep this.
Copy of the Apprenticeship/ Traineeship Training Contract.	None – the employer should keep this.
Copy of the full Training Plan.	You need this to monitor the apprentice's or trainee's skilled development.
Record of the time the Registered Training Organisation spends with you and the learner at the workplace and what activities were undertaken.	This will demonstrate to you the type and level of training the Registered Training Organisation is providing to the apprentice or trainee.
Records of time worked and wages paid.	These records must be kept by the employer. You may possibly keep a record of time worked for learning purposes.
Results of any on-the-job training undertaken by the apprentice or trainee with the Registered Training Organisation.	You may need to provide information for this, and it would help to keep a copy for your information
Trainee/apprentice's workbook / record of training supplied by RTO.	Discuss progress regularly with apprentice/ trainee & RTO. Sign off on-the-job experience and competence as agreed with RTO.
Copy of the industrial award or workplace agreement under which the learner is employed.	The employer keeps these records and a copy should be available to the apprentice or trainee. You also need to know this information.

What if I have a problem?

General workplace issues

As the workplace supervisor of an apprentice or trainee, you will have access to support from your employer and possibly other supervisors at your workplace who have either been apprentices or trainees themselves or have supervised learners.

Training Plan

The Training Plan, which has been negotiated between the employer, the learner and the training provider is the essential guide to the what, where and when of training and assessment and will guide you through the training process. The relevant representative of your RTO should be your first point of contact for questions about the Training Plan.

Training Contract

If you have general questions about apprenticeships or traineeships or are:

- experiencing difficulties with your RTO which you cannot resolve
- experiencing difficulties in the workplace, or
- concerned about the progress of the training contract

contact a Training Advisor at your State Training Services local centre by phoning **132 811** or see **www.skilling.nsw.gov.au** and click on Contact Us.

Financial Incentives

If you have questions about the payment of government incentives to your organisation or to your apprentice or trainee, contact your Australian Apprenticeships Centre. See www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au for a list of Australian Apprenticeships Centres.

Resources for Supervisors

General information on apprenticeships and traineeships is available on the internet, and the web sites listed below are a useful starting point. Some of these sites contain a wide range of information, and will require you to navigate through the content to find answers to specific questions:

- www.skilling.nsw.gov.au
- www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au
- apprenticeship.det.nsw.edu.au
- www.det.nsw.edu.au
- www.training.com.au
- www.education.gov.au

Some useful publications include

- the State Training Services booklet *A Guide to Apprenticeships and Traineeships in NSW*, NSW DET 2008, a copy of which can be found on the web site apprenticeship.det.nsw.edu.au/docs/fullguide.pdf
- the NSW Office of Industrial Relations has information on workplace laws and for employers of young workers on the web site www.industrialrelations.nsw.gov.au

Numerous books are available on the topic of supervision and can be found in major book shops.

In addition there are also industry bodies, including National Industry Skills Councils and State Industry Training Advisory Bodies, which

provide advice about training and develop competency standards for each main industry. See www.education.gov.au for a listing of industry bodies. Useful information on supervision techniques is published by these bodies

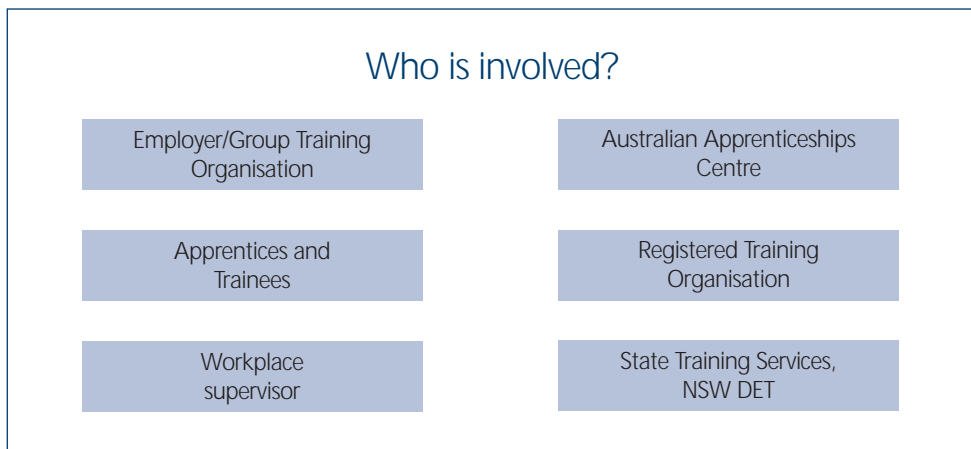
- National Meat Industry Training Council www.mintrac.com.au
- Motor Traders Association of NSW www.training.mtansw.com.au
- Community Services and Health Skills Council www.cshisc.com.au
- Service Skills Australia www.serviceskills.com.au
- Innovation and Business Skills Australia www.ibsa.com.au
- Australian Industry Group www.aigroup.asn.au and click on Education and Training

APPENDIX:

Detailed information on Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Who is involved in Apprenticeships and Traineeships?

The key people/agencies directly involved are identified in the diagram below. Other agencies involved can include WorkCover, unions and employer organisations.



What are the roles and responsibilities of those involved?

The Employer

Apprenticeships and traineeships start with the employer, who selects and recruits a suitable person and then contacts an Australian Apprenticeships Centre to arrange the training contract and other necessary paperwork.

Employers have a range of responsibilities including provision of a workplace where learning can occur and an obligation to ensure that the apprentice or trainee has every opportunity to complete their training.

Employers have both a business incentive and a legal requirement to provide a safe and harmonious workplace supportive of learning. Having entered into a Training Contract you have accepted an obligation to ensure the learner has access to appropriate instruction and practical experience, to provide appropriate wages and conditions of employment and to keep the Department of Education and Training informed of any changes to the Training Arrangement.

Where the apprentice or trainee is a young person under 18 years of age employers have additional responsibilities under the NSW Child Protection legislation and the Industrial Relations (Child Employment) Act.

Under current legislation employers have a responsibility to:

- Ensure the learner receives the instruction, practice and support they need to develop the skills in all aspects of their vocation
- Release the apprentice or trainee as required during work hours to undertake training provided by the RTO
- Ensure that the learner is instructed and supervised by a supervisor competent in the relevant vocation
- Provide a workplace that is safe, conducive to learning and free from bullying, harassment or discrimination
- Ensure workplace arrangements, wages and conditions comply with relevant state and federal industrial laws
- Where they have learners under the age of 18 comply with the Working with Children Check and Child Employment legislation
- Advise State Training Services of any proposed changes to the Training Contract

It is worth keeping in mind that employment conditions tend to be the crucial factor in decisions made by apprentices and trainees in changing employers.

Fair pay and conditions, supportive working relationships and quality training enhance the successful completion of apprenticeships and traineeships, reduce staff turnover and ensure a supply of skilled committed staff. Your business also benefits from increased staff motivation, greater productivity and reduced absenteeism.

Factors which contribute to a productive, harmonious workplace and positive training and performance outcomes include:

- A consultative and co-operative approach to workplace arrangements
- Wage progression based on acquiring additional skills and competencies
- Employment conditions that support training such as paid time to attend off-the job training or self-paced learning, reimbursement of course fees and textbooks, tool allowances, and sufficient tradespeople to provide supervision on-the-job
- Other provisions such as overtime, penalty and shift rates and flexible work practices which balance business needs with employees' family responsibilities
- A safe workplace free from bullying, harassment and discrimination; and
- Compliance with relevant state and federal industrial laws including child employment legislation.

In all traineeships and some apprenticeships the employer is able to choose which RTO will provide the training for their learner, as well as choosing the delivery pattern.

The Group Training Organisation

As an alternative to employing an apprentice or trainee directly a business may use a Group Training Organisation (GTO) to provide the apprentice or trainee. In this case the GTO is the legal employer and the business where the apprentice or learner works is a 'host' employer.

The GTO selects and employs the apprentice or trainee and places them with the host employer for as long as is required. The GTO is the legal employer and is responsible for wages, payroll tax and workers compensation for the learner. The host employer will provide the opportunity for the apprentice or trainee to gain practical skills through working and training under supervision.

There are over 180 Group Training Organisations around Australia employing 40,000 apprentices and trainees hosted through over 35,000 businesses.

For more information go to:
www.grouptraining.ntis.gov.au

The Apprentice or Trainee

The role of the apprentice or trainee is to undertake the course of training prescribed in the Training Contract and carry out all lawful instructions of the employer. By entering into the Training Contract the apprentice or trainee makes a formal commitment to:

- ▶ acquire the skills of the vocation
- ▶ obtain the appropriate qualification as shown on the Training Plan
- ▶ discharge obligations as an employee
- ▶ accept instruction and training in the workplace
- ▶ attend scheduled training delivered by the RTO
- ▶ complete assignments and other assessment tasks set by the RTO
- ▶ maintain record books and work evidence guide if required
- ▶ contribute to maintaining a safe and supportive workplace.

The Australian Apprenticeships Centre

The role of the Australian Apprenticeships Centre, or AAC, is to assist you in identifying appropriate training opportunities within your organisation and subsequently to establish the training contract with the apprentices and trainees whom you employ. The AAC will explain the rights and responsibilities of the apprentice or trainee and the employer, the role of the RTO and State Training Services and will advise you of any NSW and Australian Government incentives and subsidies that may apply.

AACs are contracted by the Australian Government to provide a free service to both you and your apprentices and trainees. In addition to preparing the traineeship and apprenticeship training contracts they are required to contact you and your apprentice or trainee at designated times to ensure that training is progressing satisfactorily.



The AAC assists through:

- Providing information on traineeship and apprenticeship options to employers and other interested people
- Providing information about training packages and suitable training pathways for the trainee/apprentice
- Establishing effective relationships with Job Network members, RTOs, schools and other organisations
- Working with State Training Services to provide an integrated service
- Providing information on training delivery options to suit the employer's work environment
- Providing information about RTOs that can deliver the training in the qualifications and geographical area to suit the employer and trainee/apprentice
- Marketing and promoting traineeships/apprenticeships in the local area
- Providing resource information to the employer and trainee/apprentice, e.g. contact details for awards information
- Providing ongoing support and advice to the employer and trainee/apprentice throughout the training
- Administering Australian Government incentive payments to employers

AACs operate from over 500 sites Australia-wide. To find an AAC, ring 133873 (free call) or go to www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au

The Registered Training Organisation

The Registered Training Organisation, usually referred to as the RTO, delivers training to the apprentice or trainee leading to a nationally accredited qualification. In NSW RTOs are registered by the NSW Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board.

The RTO initially negotiates a Training Plan Summary with the employer and the apprentice or trainee at the time of sign-up. The Summary confirms the qualification to be delivered, the delivery pathway and the date that training will commence. The RTO is then responsible for developing the full Training Plan in consultation with you and your apprentice or trainee. The Training Plan should be customised to ensure that the competencies that make up the qualification are most relevant to your business.

- The RTO should develop a full Training Plan with the employer (or supervisor) and the learner within 6-12 weeks of the commencement of training, and provide a copy to the employer and the apprentice or trainee. Credit for any competencies already held by the learner must be incorporated into the Training Plan through the process of recognition of prior learning, generally referred to as RPL. At this stage any additional needs the apprentice or trainee may have in terms of literacy, numeracy or other support should be identified and provided for. Additional payments to provide this support are available to the RTO in many cases.
 - The RTO should negotiate with the employer/workplace supervisor the part that each will have in both training delivery and assessment.
 - The RTO will provide resources to the apprentice/trainee and the supervisor that effectively support the training delivery pathway selected and the agreed role the supervisor and RTO will play in training delivery and assessment.
 - The RTO will provide regular reports to the employer/supervisor on the progress of the training and on competencies achieved. The employer/supervisor may need to initiate the request for this regular feedback on the apprentice or trainee's progress.
 - In the case of a New Entrant Traineeship delivered through the Employment Based Pathway the RTO is obliged to provide
 - For traineeships of 12 months or less -
 - 20 hours of direct training support for each trainee including a minimum of four workplace assessment visits and a minimum of four monitoring visits
 - For traineeships of greater than 12 months-
 - 15 hours of direct training support for each trainee including a minimum of three workplace assessment visits and a minimum of three monitoring visits each year.
- In summary the RTO has to:
- ▶ Develop and sign off a Training Plan with the learner and employer
 - ▶ Deliver structured training customised to the workplace and according to the Training Plan
 - ▶ Identify and meet any additional support needs that the learner may require
 - ▶ Keep a record of training outcomes and qualifications issued according to national Requirements
 - ▶ Ensure competencies can be achieved by the learner in the workplace
 - ▶ Issue a qualification to the learner when all competencies are achieved
 - ▶ Support the workplace supervisor and the apprentice/trainee
 - ▶ Maintain records of the learner's progress and any problems

- ▶ Provide information to the supervisor on their roles and responsibilities
- ▶ Liaise with the employer during the training period
- ▶ Assist the supervisor in providing workplace training
- ▶ Assess the learner's competence
- ▶ Provide training resources to the learner
- ▶ Monitor the learner's progress against the Training Plan, this may be through workplace visits

To find an RTO visit www.ntis.gov.au and click on Registered Training Organisations.

State Training Services, NSW Department of Education and Training

State Training Services is the government agency responsible for managing apprenticeships and traineeships in NSW. Through the network of State Training Services regional centres you can

obtain assistance and information on all aspects of apprenticeship and traineeship training.

Under the NSW Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001, State Training Services staff are able to:

- Approve or dismiss applications to establish an apprenticeship or traineeship
- Ensure that apprentices, trainees and their employers carry out their responsibilities under the Training Contract
- Visit workplaces and view employment and training records to check that apprentices and trainees are making satisfactory progress
- Help to resolve any disputes that may arise between employers and their apprentices or trainees
- Refer any disputes that can't be resolved locally to the Vocational Training Tribunal
- Approve early completion of an apprenticeship or traineeship provided all requirements have been met
- Issue a Certificate of Proficiency on successful completion of the apprenticeship or traineeship
- Give advice about cancellation, suspension, or transfer of an apprenticeship or traineeship, or other changes to a Training Contract

You can contact your nearest State Training Services regional centre by ringing 132811.

The Workplace Supervisor

The role of the workplace supervisor (who may also be the employer) will vary from organisation to organisation. Generally the workplace supervisor acts as a role model and coach for the apprentice or trainee as described in the first part of this guide.

Getting started

How is an apprenticeship or traineeship arranged?

Step 1

Identify the opportunities

Depending on the size of your organisation the decision to establish an apprenticeship or traineeship may be as simple as replacing a graduating apprentice or trainee, or a more comprehensive exercise identifying a range of opportunities to establish apprenticeships, new entrant traineeships and existing worker traineeships across your organisation.

Your AAC will be happy to visit and provide advice about suitable apprenticeships and traineeships for your organisation, choices of RTO and delivery of training, and eligibility to receive State and Australian Government financial incentives.

Step 2

Finding the right person

Recruiting and selecting an apprentice or trainee is a strategic way of growing and sustaining your business for the future. Using good selection and recruitment techniques to identify the most appropriate applicants can save you money by minimising staff turnover. For each applicant the selection process should try to evaluate:

- Their knowledge of the trade or traineeship
- How realistic their expectations are of the day to day work they will be undertaking
- Their motivation to succeed in the training
- Their educational and physical suitability
- Their previous experience in similar activities
- Their long term aspirations; and
- How likely they are to experience difficulty in adjusting to the workplace

Apprentices

An apprentice can be a new employee of your organisation or someone you have employed for some time. There is no age limit to someone starting an apprenticeship and recent figures show a shift to employers engaging older apprentices. Also, you can now employ a current school student as a school based apprentice on a part-time basis while they undertake the HSC.

Trainees

A trainee can be a new entrant to your organisation or an existing worker. A new entrant trainee can be found by advertising, through approaching a Job Network Agency to put you in touch with potential trainees, by contacting a careers advisor at your local secondary school for referral of current or former students who may be interested, or through your AAC. An existing worker trainee can be found within your current workforce. Trainees can be shared between two or more businesses by hosting the trainee through a Group Training Organisation, allowing each business to meet a part-time work load. There is also the opportunity to employ a current school student as a school based trainee. There are also benefits in considering non traditional applicants for the position. Remember that traineeships are being increasingly used by people re entering the workforce after an absence or looking to get additional skills.

Step 3

Arranging the paperwork

Arrange for an AAC representative to visit your organisation to complete an Apprenticeship/ Traineeship Training Contract with you and your proposed apprentice or trainee.

Step 4

Sign-up

At this stage the AAC representative will explain the roles and responsibilities of the employer and the apprentice or trainee, the choice of RTO, how the training will be delivered and any financial incentives which may be available. Any possible reduction of the training duration due to prior experience of the apprentice or trainee, can be discussed at this point. A Training Contract will be signed by the employer and the apprentice or trainee (and their parent/guardian if they are under 18 years of age).

A Summary Training Plan is also completed at sign-up and is endorsed by the RTO. The summary indicates the qualification to be delivered, the mode of training delivery and the location of the training. Endorsement by the RTO secures a training place at the start date indicated.

Step 5

Get approval

The AAC checks the Training Contract and Summary Training Plan and lodges these with State Training Services for approval. On-the-job training should start from the commencement date of the Training Contract and formal training delivery from the RTO should start as soon as practicable. State Training Services will send a letter to the employer and trainee advising approval of the traineeship and indicating any probationary period.

Special arrangements exist for school based apprenticeships and traineeships, for more information contact a Training Advisor at your nearest State Training Services centre by ringing 13 28 11.

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Disclaimer

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Supervising your apprentice or trainee

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