

TRADE SKILLS RECOGNITION IN NSW





INTRODUCTION

If you have trade skills and experience but have never completed an apprenticeship or obtained formal qualifications in Australia, you can apply to the NSW Vocational Training Tribunal (VTT) to have your trade skills assessed. You can do this whether you have gained your trade skills through formal training or on-the-job experience either in Australia or overseas.

If your trade skills are recognised by the VTT, you will be issued with a trade certificate accepted throughout Australia and be formally recognised as a tradesperson.

Recognition in this way is supported by the Commonwealth and State governments, employers, unions and training providers.

What is the VTT?

The NSW Vocational Training Tribunal (VTT) consists of representatives from industry, registered training organisations and the NSW Commissioner for Vocational Training.

The VTT assesses applications for recognition of trade skills in accordance with the NSW *Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001*. It is able to issue trade certificates in many trade classifications.

The current trades are listed in the coloured section at the back of this booklet.

The VTT is serviced by staff of the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET), which is the State Training Authority in New South Wales. This department is responsible for the state's apprenticeship and traineeship system.

Note: The VTT is not able to assess the trade skills of people applying to migrate to Australia. For pre-migration information see page 19.

ABOUT THE TRADE CERTIFICATE

Why should I get my trade skills recognised?

To work in some trades, it is not always necessary to have a trade certificate. However you could find a trade certificate very useful in the following circumstances.

- **If you are unemployed**, your chances of finding a job can improve, because a trade certificate shows employers that you have the skills to do the job. Some employers only employ people with a trade certificate.
- **If you want to obtain a promotion or a better job**, a trade certificate can increase your opportunities. Certified tradespeople are generally paid more than people who don't have a trade certificate.
- **If you need a licence to work in your trade**, having a trade certificate may help you obtain one.
- **If you want to undertake further education in your trade**, a trade certificate may help you gain entry to a course. It may also help you obtain advanced standing so that you can complete the course more quickly.

Who can apply for trade skills recognition?

You can apply for trade skills recognition if you are a resident of NSW and you can show that you have the skills to work as a tradesperson. You must be able to provide evidence that:

- you have worked in the particular trade for at least four years (either in Australia or overseas), or
- you have completed an apprenticeship or other trade training (either in Australia or overseas), or
- you have completed a recognised industry assessment program.

What sort of skills and knowledge do I need?

Tradespeople need a range of skills and knowledge to perform their duties. This might include the ability to:

- read and respond to work instructions, specifications and technical drawings
- use measuring instruments to take accurate measurements and readings
- plan, mark out, lay out and set up trade work
- select and use appropriate materials, tools, machines and equipment
- make appropriate settings on tools, machines and equipment
- carry out trade work independently
- check, test and perform trade work to required standards and in accordance with the relevant industry regulations
- supervise other staff, including apprentices.

What certificate will I get?

The Vocational Training Tribunal issues two types of trade certificates. These are the same as the certificates given to people who complete a trade apprenticeship in New South Wales.

Certificate of proficiency

You may be issued a certificate of proficiency if:

- you have gained your trade skills through on-the-job experience – by being employed in the trade for four years or more or by completing an apprenticeship, *and*
- you have completed an appropriate Australian qualification.



Craft certificate

You may be issued a craft certificate if:

- you have gained your trade skills through on-the-job experience by being employed in the trade for four years or more, *but*
- you have not completed an appropriate Australian qualification.

The certificate you receive will be stamped with the seal of the NSW Commissioner for Vocational Training and signed by the Commissioner.

Will I have to get a licence?

To work in some trades in New South Wales or run your own business, by law you must have a license. These trades are:

- aircraft trades
- building and construction trades
- refrigeration/air-conditioning trade
- electrical trades
- motor vehicle trades
- plumbing, gasfitting and draining trade.

To obtain a license from some licensing authorities you may have to complete a relevant qualification. The trade certificate issued to you by the Vocational Training Tribunal may help you to gain entry into the appropriate course of studies that may be required for licensing.

The telephone numbers and addresses of the licensing authorities are listed in the coloured section at the back of this booklet. You should contact the relevant authority for current licensing requirements.



HOW TO APPLY

How do I apply for trade skills recognition?

To apply for a trade certificate you need to:

- obtain an application form from the Vocational Training Tribunal (VTT) or your nearest State Training Centre (STC)
- fill in the application form
- attach certified photocopies of the required documents (as explained in the next section of this booklet)
- attach two passport-size photos of yourself, taken within the past six months and signed on the back with your normal signature
- enclose the application fee
- deliver your application to any STC or deliver or post it to the VTT.

The addresses of the STCs and the VTT are listed in the coloured section at the back of this booklet.

Do I have to pay an application fee?

Yes. When you submit your application for trade recognition, you must pay an application fee. If you have to do a trade test, you will also have to pay a test fee.

The schedule of fees is on page 15.

Where can I get more advice?

Read this booklet carefully first as it explains how to apply to the Vocational Training Tribunal (VTT) for trade skills recognition.

If you still have questions, contact the staff at the VTT or at your nearest State Training Centre (STC). They can provide you with more information and advice about:

- trade skills recognition procedures
- the trades that can be recognised by the VTT
- bridging, retraining and post-trade courses.

The telephone numbers and addresses of the VTT and the STCs are listed in the coloured section at the back of this booklet.

Information about trade skills recognition by the VTT is also available on the internet at: <http://apprenticeship.det.nsw.edu.au>

You can obtain information about the competencies relevant to the trade you are applying for from the website.

You can download this booklet free of charge from this website.

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Make sure you read this section carefully.
It explains:

- the types of documents you should submit with your application
- how to get photocopies of your original documents certified
- how to obtain official translations of any documents that are not in English.

What documents should I provide?

The Vocational Training Tribunal (VTT) can only assess your application on the basis of the information you provide. Therefore, it is important that you complete the application form carefully and attach to it certified photocopies of all relevant documents.


Examples of relevant documents include:

- any qualification (eg diploma, certificate) you have obtained by completing a trade course in Australia or overseas
- an official transcript of any courses you have completed including:
 - the length of the course
 - the date you started and completed the course
 - the subjects you completed
 - the marks you received.
- any trade license or registration you have obtained and evidence of the requirements you had to satisfy to obtain that license or registration
- proof of your employment in the trade in Australia or overseas (eg taxation and superannuation records)
- Work related references from employers provided by appropriately qualified tradespeople detailing period of



employment and the description of work performed, procedures applied and tools and equipment used. References must be on employers letterhead signed and dated.

- proof of any periods when you worked in the trade for yourself
- certificates you have obtained by undertaking a recognised industry assessment program
- official translations into English of any documents that are not in English.



What evidence of self-employment do I need to provide?

If you want the VTT to take account of any periods during which you worked for yourself, you must provide adequate evidence of self-employment. This might be:

- a statement from your accountant or solicitor certifying the name of your business, the type of business, its location, the exact dates when you were self-employed, and your role in the business
- a certificate of business registration covering the period of self-employment
- any trade license or registration you obtained while self-employed and evidence of the requirements you had to satisfy to obtain the license or registration
- proof of your membership of a business or industry association (including the association's membership requirements)
- statements from suppliers
- statements from clients
- a statutory declaration (affidavit or similar legal declaration), witnessed by a justice of the peace, in which you provide full details of:
 - the period of self-employment
 - the occupation in which you were self-employed
 - the nature of the work you did
 - the tools, machines and equipment you used
 - the number of staff you employed and their occupations.



How do I get documents translated into English?

If any document is not in English, you need to provide the Vocational Training Tribunal (VTT) with a certified copy of the original and (attached to it) an English translation made by an official translating service. The translator must certify that the translation is complete and accurate.

In Australia, you can have your documents translated by the NSW Community Relations Commission. Its address and phone number are listed in the coloured section at the back of this booklet.

The VTT may accept an official English translation from the country where you obtained your original documents.

How do I get photocopies of my documents certified?

Photocopies of any documents attached to your application must be certified as complete and accurate copies.

If you deliver your application in person to the Vocational Training Tribunal (VTT) or to a State Training Centre, take your original documents and a photocopy of each of them with you. That way, one of our staff can certify the copies and give you back your originals.

If you are posting your application to the VTT, you will need to include photocopies certified by a justice of the peace (JP). You will usually find a JP at a bank, post office or trade union office.

You will need to show each original document and a photocopy of it to the JP.



What if I can't provide the required documents?

It is important that you provide the Vocational Training Tribunal (VTT) with certified photocopies of as many documents as possible.

If you are not able to obtain a document you need, you should attach a statutory declaration form to your application explaining:

- what the document is
- why you are not able to provide a copy of it
- the information the original document contained.

Statutory declaration forms are usually sold at newsagencies and post offices.

You must sign the statutory declaration in front of a justice of the peace (JP) and then attach it to your application.

Privacy Notice

The information you provide in your Application for a trade skills recognition will be treated confidentially and will be used by the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) and the Vocational Training Tribunal (VTT) only for the purpose of assessing your application.

When dealing with your application, the VTT may validate the information you provide by contacting your current or former employers, any training organisations or colleges you have attended, and relevant State or Commonwealth departments or agencies. (See "How will my Application be Processed?" on page 13.)

The information you provide will be stored securely by DET, and you may correct any personal details at any time by contacting the VTT (phone 02 9266 8450).

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

How will my application be processed?

When you submit an application to have your trade skills recognised, the Department will check to see that:

- you have completed your application form correctly
- you have supplied all relevant documents.

The Vocational Training Tribunal (VTT) will assess your application on the basis of the information you provide. This process involves comparing your training and work experience with the requirements for the equivalent trade in Australia. Therefore it is important that you provide detailed information about your training and work experience, supported by documentary evidence.

The VTT may check the accuracy of the information you provide by making some or all of it available to:

- your current or former employers
- any training organisations, colleges or institutions you have attended
- other State or Commonwealth departments or agencies.

Staff of the Department of Education and Training may contact you to get more information. If you are currently employed in a job where you are using your trade skills, one of the staff may visit you at work.

Will I have to take a test?

Some applicants are required to do a trade skills test.

Generally, you will have to do a trade test if you cannot supply enough documentary evidence to support your application for trade recognition. These tests are usually carried out at a TAFE college.

If you have to do a test, a TAFE representative will contact you and tell you when and where it will be held. Trade tests usually take between four and eight hours.

Fees are charged for trade tests. If you have to do a test, you will be advised of the fee you have to pay and how to pay it.

If you need an interpreter at the trade test, you should indicate this on your application form.

In most cases, the TAFE college where you do your test will arrange an interpreter for you. So, when you are told the date of your test by the TAFE representative, ask about an interpreter.

How long does the whole process take?

It will take some time for the VTT to assess your trade skills and experience. Generally, the time depends on the quality of the documents you provide. If the VTT wants you to provide more information or wants you to do a trade test, it will take longer to process your application.

You will receive a letter acknowledging receipt of your application.

Once the VTT has finished assessing your application, you will receive a letter advising you of its decision.



What can I do if the VTT rejects my application?

If the Vocational Training Tribunal (VTT) rejects your application, you can appeal the decision to an independent appeals panel.

After the VTT has made its decision, you will be advised of your right of appeal and how to submit it.

Schedule of fees

When you submit your application for trade recognition, you have to pay a fee to the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET). If you are required to do a trade test or undergo a work-based assessment, or any other service is required, you will also have to pay the specified fee for that service.

Schedule of fees

Application for trade recognition	\$150.00
Trade test	\$275.00
Further trade test on appeal*	\$275.00
Work-based assessment	\$275.00
Replacement of trade certificate	\$30.00

Fees may be paid in person by EFTPOS, bank cheque, money order or cash. If you are posting your application, you may only pay by bank cheque or money order (not cash). Bank cheques or money orders should be payable to the NSW Department of Education and Training.

CONTACT DETAILS

Vocational Training Tribunal

NSW Vocational Training Tribunal
Level 12

1 Oxford Street
DARLINGHURST NSW 2010

Locked Bag 53
DARLINGHURST NSW 1300

Phone: (02) 9266 8450
(02) 9266 8459
(02) 9266 8236
(02) 9266 8448

Fax: (02) 9266 8059

State Training Centres

To contact your local State Training Centre (STC) phone 13 28 11.

Northern Sydney

Level 13
12 Help Street
CHATSWOOD NSW 2067

Phone: (02) 9242 1700

Southern Sydney

Level 2
41–45 Rickard Road
BANKSTOWN NSW 2200

Phone: (02) 8707 9600

Western Sydney

Ground Floor
16–18 Wentworth Street
PARRAMATTA NSW 2150

Phone: (02) 9204 7400

Hunter

Level 1
State Office Block
117 Bull Street
NEWCASTLE WEST NSW 2302

Phone: (02) 4974 8570

Illawarra

State Office Block
Level 1, Block E
84 Crown Street
WOLLONGONG NSW 2500

Phone: (02) 4224 9300

New England

Level 2, Noel Park House
155–157 Marius Street
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

Phone: (02) 6755 5099

North Coast

Suite 3, Level 4
29 Molesworth Street
LISMORE NSW 2480

Phone: (02) 6627 8400

Riverina

87 Forsyth Street
WAGGA WAGGA NSW 2650

Phone: (02) 6937 7600

Western NSW

Level 1, State Office Block
Cnr Anson and Kite Streets
ORANGE NSW 2800

Phone: (02) 6392 8500

Licensing Authorities

Aircraft Trades

Aircraft Maintenance Engineering
Licensing Section
Civil Aviation Safety Authority
PO BOX 2005
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601
Phone: 13 17 57

Building and Construction Trades

Electrical Trades

Plumbing, Gasfitting and Draining Trade

Refrigeration/Air-Conditioning Trade

Department of Fair Trading
Ground Floor
1 Fitzwilliam Street
PARRAMATTA NSW 2150
Phone: 13 32 20

NSW Office of Fair Trading

Phone: 1300 554 668 or 13 32 20

Motor Vehicle Trades

Motor Vehicle Repair Industry Authority
239 Great North Road
FIVE DOCK NSW 2046
PO Box 213
FIVE DOCK NSW 2046
Phone: (02) 9712 2200

Translation Services

Community Relations Commission

Level 8
175-183 Castlereagh Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Phone: 1300 651 500

Pre-Migration Information

For information about trade skills assessment for immigration purposes, contact:

Trades Recognition Australia

Department of Employment and
Workplace Relations

GPO Box 9879
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601
Australia

Phone: (02) 6121 7456

LIST OF TRADES

The Vocational Training Tribunal (VTT) is able to issue trade certificates only in approved trades in New South Wales.

Some classifications cover a variety of traditional trade occupations.

Before submitting your application check your trade classification and its availability with the VTT or your local State Training Centre.

You may also visit the VTT's website at <http://apprenticeship.det.nsw.edu.au/html/tradeskills.htm> to check the list of competencies your application should address.

Aircraft Maintenance Engineering (Avionics)

Aircraft Maintenance Engineering
(Mechanical)

Aircraft Maintenance Engineering
(Structures)

Automotive (Automotive Parts Interpreter
Specialist)

Automotive (Brake Mechanic)

Automotive (Electrical)

Automotive (Engine Reconditioning)

Automotive (Heavy Vehicle Mechanical)
(Agricultural)

Automotive (Heavy Vehicle Mechanical)
(Industrial)

Automotive (Heavy Vehicle Mechanical)
(Road Transport)

Automotive (Light Vehicle - Mechanical)

Automotive (Marine Mechanical)

Automotive (Motor Cycle - Mechanical)

Automotive (Panel Beating)

Automotive (Transport Trimming)

Automotive (Vehicle Body Building)

Automotive (Vehicle Painting)

Automotive Mechanical (Forklift
Maintenance)

Automotive Vehicle Body (Vehicle Glazing)

Baking (Baking)
Baking (Breadmaking)
Baking (Pastrycooking)
Beauty Therapy
Binding and Finishing
Boat Building
Bowling Greenkeeping
Bricklaying
Cabinet Making
Carpentry and Joinery
Composition
Construction Carpentry
Cookery (Eastern)
Cookery (Western)
Drafting (Civil Engineering Design)
Drafting (Electrical)
Drafting (Mechanical)
Drafting (Structural)
Electrical (Building Services)
Electrical (Domestic Appliance Servicing)
Electrical (Fitter)
Electrical (Instruments)
Electrical (Mechanic)
Electricity Supply Industry - Rail Traction
(Powerline)
Electricity Supply Industry Cable Jointing
(Powerline)
Electricity Supply Industry Distribution
(Power Line)
Electricity Supply Industry Generation
(Electrical/Electronic)
Electricity Supply Industry Generation
(Fabrication)
Electricity Supply Industry Generation
(Mechanical)
Electricity Supply Industry Transmission
(Power Line)
Electronic (Communications)
Electronic (Computer Systems)
Electronic (Data Communications)
Electronic (Entertainment & Servicing)
Electronic (Scanning & Detection)

Electronics (Servicing)
Engineering (Electrical/Electronic)
Engineering (Fabrication)
Engineering (Mechanical)
Farriery
Fire Sprinkler Fitting
Floor Covering
Furniture Polishing
Glass Cutting and Glazing
Golf Greenkeeping
Graphic Pre-Press
Greenkeeping
Hairdressing
Higher Engineering
Jewellery (Manufacturing & Repairing)
Joinery
Landscaping
Lift Systems (Electrical)
Meat Processing (Meat Retailing)
Metal Roofing and Roof Plumbing
Nursery - Retail
Nursery - Wholesale
Painting & Decorating
Parks and Gardening
Plastering (Solid)
Plastering, Fibrous & Plasterboard
Plumbing, Gasfitting and Draining
Polymer Technology Blow Moulding
Technician
Polymer Technology Composites Technician
Polymer Technology Extrusion Technician
Polymer Technology Injection Moulding
Technician
Printing Machining
Refrigeration/Air Conditioning (Mechanic)
Roof Tiling
Saddlery
Saw Doctoring
Screen Printing Stencil Preparation
Shipwright
Shopfitting
Signcraft

Stonemasonry
Telecommunications Engineering
Textile, Clothing & Footwear Mechanical
Upholstery
Wall & Floor Tiling
Wood Machining (Furniture Making)
Wood Machining (Timber Manufactured
Products)



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8.30 am to 4.30 pm
Monday to Friday

