

# Employer Guide

School-based  
apprenticeships and traineeships



The Cairns Regional Jobs Committee is proudly supported and funded by the Queensland Government



**Queensland  
Government**



# Partner with schools

***to tackle skills shortages, build your future workforce and develop strong and effective school to industry partnerships***



This guide has been compiled by the Cairns Regional Jobs Committee, which is proudly funded and supported by the Queensland Government.

## **Acknowledgements**

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Coastal Hydraulics  
SILK Laser Clinics  
Independent Aviation  
Cairns Adventure Group  
MiHaven  
Accor

for their support, insights and commitment to building a strong future workforce.

For further information about skills, training and employment in Cairns, visit:  
[www.cairnsrjc.com.au](http://www.cairnsrjc.com.au)



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# What's your recruitment strategy ?

A young woman with dark hair, wearing teal scrubs and blue nitrile gloves, is smiling and looking towards the camera. She is holding a white medical device, possibly a nebulizer or a small pump, with both hands. The background is a clean, clinical setting with white cabinets and a light blue wall. The text 'What's your recruitment strategy ?' is overlaid in the top left corner.

Bringing a school-based apprentice or trainee (SBAT) into your business isn't just an investment in a young person's future - it's **an investment in your own.**

These students are enrolled in structured training programs while still completing school - presenting with commitment, motivation and eagerness to learn.

As they develop hands-on skills and industry knowledge alongside your team, they gain real-world experience while contributing to your operations in a meaningful way. This is an opportunity to mentor future professionals and shape talent to suit your business needs, from the ground up.



# A school-based apprentice or trainee is a **smart way** to **future-proof** your workforce.

It allows you to nurture a pipeline of skilled, job-ready individuals who already understand your business culture and expectations. These young people bring fresh perspectives, energy, and a willingness to learn, while your business demonstrates leadership in workforce development and community engagement.

Supporting a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship shows your commitment towards the future prosperity of your industry - and you're actively helping to shape it. Students gain experience and learn practical work skills and train towards the completion of a qualification while completing a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE).





# Thank you

***for your willingness to provide an opportunity for a school-based trainee or apprentice in your business.***

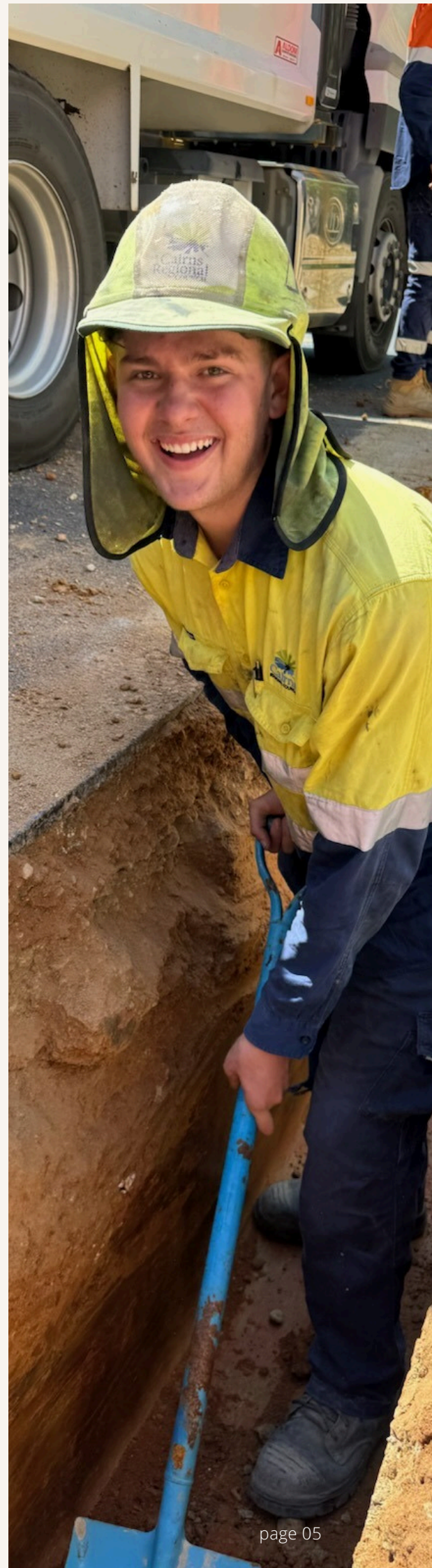
Being a part of placement programs can help you to:

- identify talented future employees in your local area,
- increase the supervisory, training and mentoring skills of your staff,
- provide students with knowledge of the value of work and raise the quality of those coming into your industry.

By partnering with schools, you have the opportunity to influence education and training pathways and increase youth participation into your workforce and/or industry sector.

This guide has been written specifically for employers and workplace supervisors, looking to participate in “School-to-Work” programs in Queensland.

It explains the types of workplace programs available, your role in hosting a student at your workplace and provides resources to further assist you in creating a well-planned and structured experience for students.





# Introduction

## ***School - based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBAT) allow students to:***



start an apprenticeship or traineeship while still at school



learn practical, in-demand skills that employers are looking for



be future-ready and use the qualification as a stepping stone to continue education after school



stay at school, earn credit toward their final years at school and obtain their Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)



gain employability skills and be paid for the work they do



continue post-school under full time or part-time arrangements



conduct on-the-job training in the workplace and off-the-job training and assessment



access travel and accommodation allowances, tuition costs, subsidies and support payments (if eligible)







## Benefits *of becoming a host workplace*



Participate in the education and career development of young people in the region



Promote the attitudes and skills you want in your workforce



Strengthen links with your local community



Support workforce age diversification



Promote and raise your business profile



Be a part of a 'grow your own' workforce strategy



Raise the quality and skills of those coming into your industry



Increase staffing levels





# Workplaces

An ideal workplace is collaborative, inclusive and maintains high levels of communication throughout. Successful School-based Apprenticeships & Traineeships (SBAT's) are those which foster a partnership between the workplace, school, students, parents and Supervising Registered Training Organisation (SRTTO).

When welcoming a student into your workplace, it is important that all staff are aware of the SBAT and their role in supporting the student.

An employer of a school-based apprentice or trainee, may be eligible for Government funding and incentives to reduce the cost of training and supervision. Depending on your circumstances, your business may be eligible for more than one kind of payment including:

- >> one-off incentive payments
- >> discounts (workers' compensation)
- >> subsidies (wages, training)
- >> exemptions (payroll tax)





# Employer Responsibilities

## ***To provide students with the best opportunity to learn in your workplace...***

it is important to understand your roles and responsibilities when you sign up an apprentice or trainee. In order for SBAT's to succeed, they need appropriate supervision, a range of work and a range of facilities

As an employer, you have significant influence on the future pathways of young people who are interested in your industry and future workforce. Being aware of generational shifts in work ethic and expectations can help ensure your approach remains relevant, supportive, and beneficial.



***As an employer, you are responsible for providing both employment and supervised, work-based training. You must:***



Appoint a suitably qualified workplace supervisor, who will work alongside the SAT and is responsible for their training



Ensure the student is enrolled in a school and the school supports the arrangement of the SBAT



Provide enough work hours to meet the minimum paid work requirements



Pay the SAT's wages - unless you are hosting an apprentice or trainee through a Group Training Organisation (GTO).



Release your apprentice or trainee from work duties to attend off-the-job training and assessment.



Help to develop, follow, and update the training plan that outlines training and assessment.



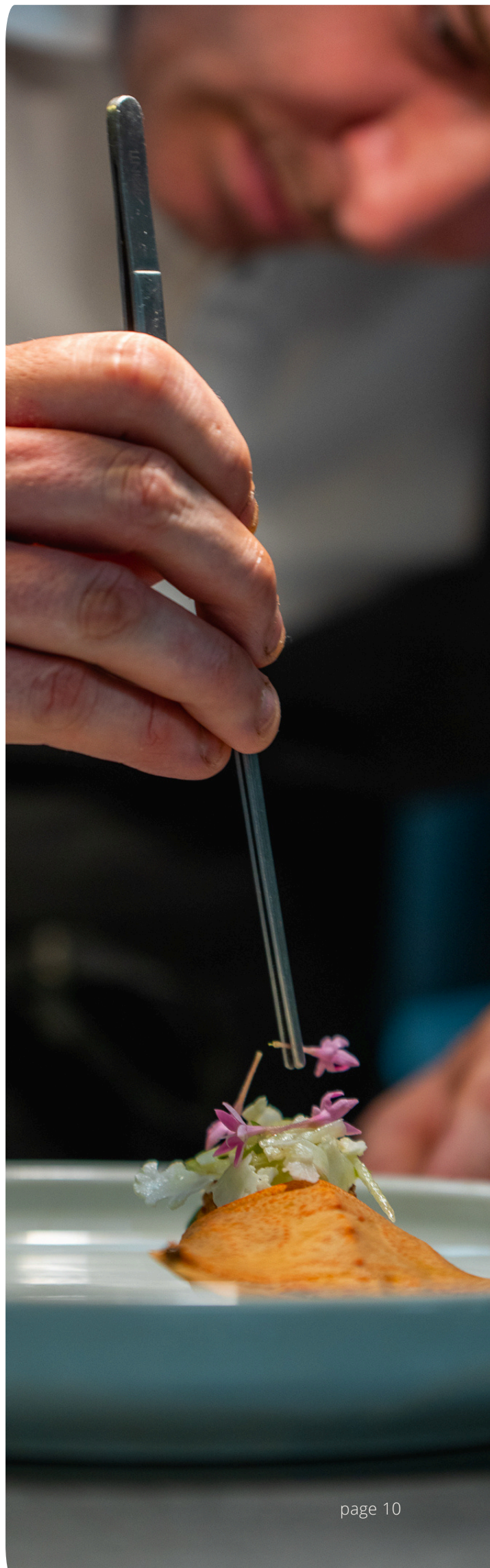
Ensure your apprentice or trainee's health and safety like any other employee, including induction, supervision, and risk management. They must also follow safety instructions and use protective equipment.



Notify the ACAP of certain events such as a change in the training contract or the apprentice or trainee leaving during probation.



Raise any concerns and provide feedback to the student, the school and parent in a timely manner





# Types of Programs

## School-based apprenticeships & traineeships...

***allow young people to study at school while training, to gain a nationally recognised qualification in a trade or occupation***

- >> Students can start an apprenticeship or traineeship while they are still at school, generally in Years 10, 11 or 12, while studying for their Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)
- >> Students are required to work at least 7.5 hours a week, averaged over every 3 months, for every 12 months of their training contract
- >> Students are paid for the hours worked
- >> Employers may contact schools directly, with apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities available
- >> Employers work directly with the student, school and SRTTO to develop the training plan and co-create the student's school, work and training timetable
- >> When you employ an apprentice or trainee, you may be eligible for government financial support to reduce the cost of training and supervision throughout the apprenticeship or traineeship
- >> Apprenticeships and traineeships are offered in many industries including aviation, beauty, health, tourism and travel, telecommunications, library and museum services, printing and graphic arts, conservation and land management, business, maritime and marine



# Types of programs

## ***School-based apprenticeships***



- >> Are started while a student is in school but cannot be completed during high school, typically available for students in years 10, 11 or 12
- >> Workplaces with school-based apprenticeship programs can transition the student to a full-time apprentice after they finish school



## ***School-based traineeships***

- >> Usually started and completed while at school, depending on the type and level of the qualification
- >> Traineeships that are not finished before graduating school, can be converted to part-time or full-time with the employer until it is completed

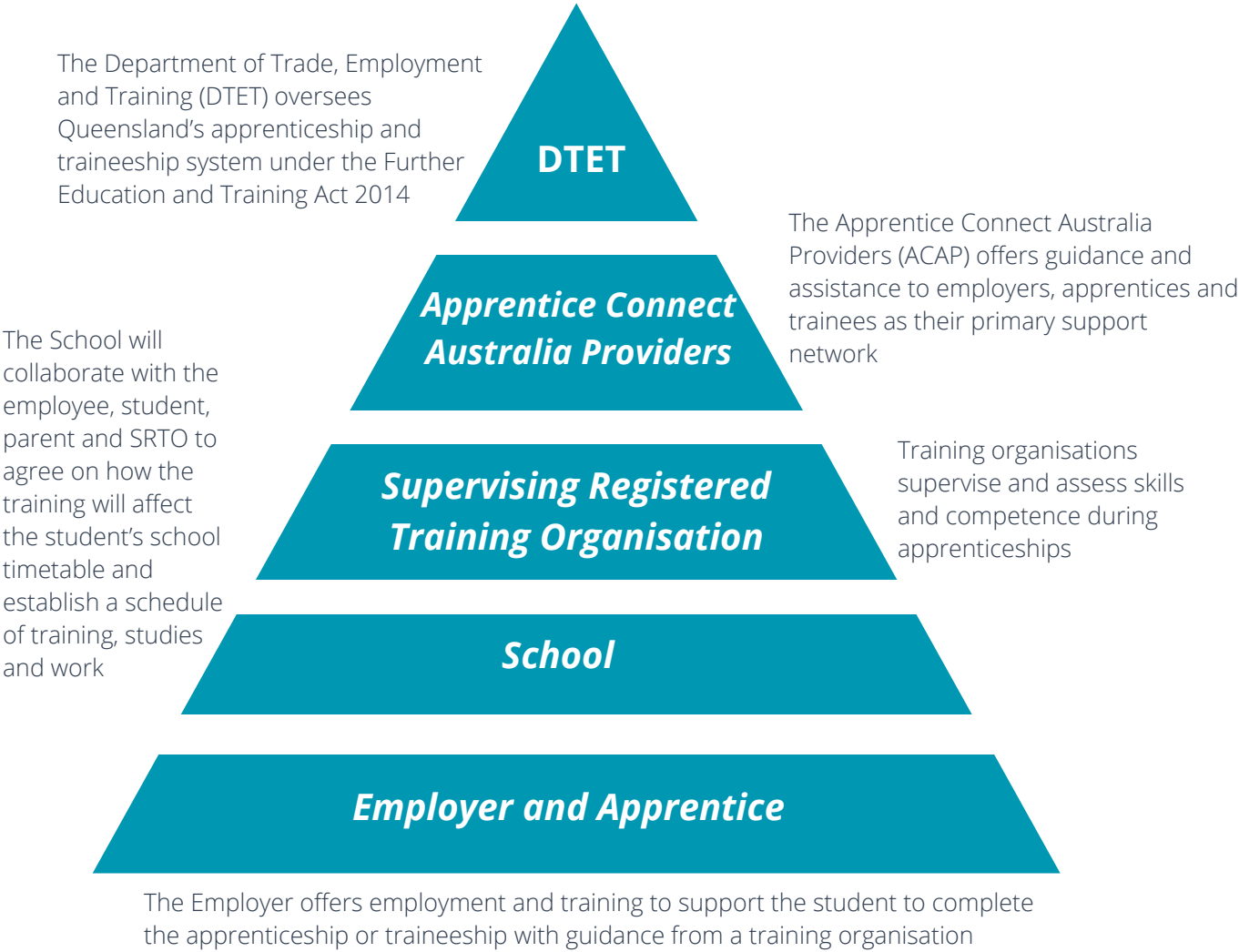


“We have a responsibility to teach the next generation and give back to the industry. If we want to see the industry grow, we need to invest in training young people, for the future”

Danielle Scomazzon, Owner, DS Salon



# Who's involved?



## Roles and responsibilities

Apprentice	Employer	Supervising Registered Training Organisation	Apprentice Connect Australia Provider (ACAP)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Follow work instructions, achieve qualifications, comply with health &amp; safety rules, undergo necessary training, and maintain training records for submission when requested</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provide facilities, supervision, and on-the-job training</li><li>Pay wages and entitlements inline with the industry award</li><li>Follow legal obligations, including health and safety</li><li>Review and update training records every 3 months</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Negotiate and develop training plan, deliver training, provide materials, verify on-the-job training, address training costs, arrange learning support, and issue qualification upon completion.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Offering assistance with apprenticeships and traineeships, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Workplace suitability information</li><li>Employer induction</li><li>Training contract support</li><li>Commonwealth and State incentives guidance</li><li>Mentoring support</li></ul></li></ul>



# All roles have certain obligations to fulfil under the training contract

## Apprentice / Trainee

is responsible for:

- getting school support for the apprenticeship or traineeship
- co-creating their school, work and training timetable
- working at least 7.5 hours a week
- learning vocational skills listed in their training plan
- attending training
- attending school

## Parents / Guardians

are responsible for:

- giving permission for their child to do the SAT
- helping their child find an employer
- getting school support for the apprenticeship or traineeship
- signing the training contract and other forms as required
- helping to create their child's school, work and training timetable
- helping their child to resolve any problems

## School and Staff

are responsible for:

- acting in the student's best interests by helping them develop a senior education and training (SET) plan to help choose the most appropriate apprenticeship or traineeship
- advising the student and parent of how undertaking vocational education and training (VET) options may affect future funded training opportunities for the student
- supporting a school-based arrangement
- co-creating a school, work and training timetable
- releasing the student from classes to attend work or training
- supporting the student during the apprenticeship or traineeship

## Supervising Registered Training Organisation

is responsible for:

- negotiating the training plan which documents how, when and who will deliver the training and assessment
- co-creating the student's school, work and training timetable
- training and assessing the student
- checking progress, and notifying the department of any delays in training progression
- offering learning support if needed
- complete and Employer Resource Assessment and develop the training plan in consultation with the employer and SAT to ensure compliance.

## Apprentice Connect Australia Providers (ACAP)

are responsible for:

- signing up the school-based apprentice or trainee
- alerting them to any subsidies
- doing most of the paperwork in relation to the training contract

## Employer / Business

are responsible for:

- providing adequate facilities and a range of work
- supervision and
- on-the-job training required by the Act and training plan.

**The Department of Employment, Trade and Training (DTET)** are responsible for the administration and management of training contracts, giving support and advice, answering queries and resolving disputes and issuing completion certificates





# The Process

## Start

1. School/student contacts workplace

2. Employer prepares & negotiates arrangements

3. Documents completed (School, SRTO, ACAP & Employer)

4. Employment Commences (with regular checkpoints)

5. Assessment/follow up

## Completion



# How to find an Apprentice or Trainee

## **Use an Apprentice Connect Australian Provider**

Experts on apprenticeships and traineeships, ACAP's are available to help you from the very beginning.

- Apprenticeship Support Australia (ASA) (Generalist)
- Busy At Work (Clean Energy, Women in male-dominated trades and first nations)
- ITEC Employment (First Nations)
- MAS National Ltd (Generalist)
- MEGT Australia Ltd (Generalist)

## **Find an Apprentice yourself**

Advertise on Workforce Australia or other job search websites, on social media websites through your business profile, or through your local paper with services such as Google ads. Connect with out-of-trade apprentices or contact your local high schools or a Gateway school directly.





## Go through a Group Training Organisation

Group Training Organisations (GTOs) help match you with an apprentice who has the right skills and potential to succeed with your business. GTOs can be a good way for you to engage an apprentice instead of hiring them directly. The GTO will manage payroll, super, leave and entitlements for the apprentice while you supervise and train them.

GTOs can be helpful for small and medium businesses with less HR resources to manage and employ an apprentice or are unable to provide all the on-the-job training required for the apprenticeship.

- Community Solutions Group
- Australian Training Works Group
- Skill360 Australia Limited
- Ozmac Group Training Pty Ltd
- Maxima Group Training
- Programmed Staffing Services
- Smart Apprenticeship Solutions Ltd

Schools, parents or training organisations may also reach out to employers in industries that align with a student's interests - to explore available opportunities.





# REAL Outcomes

*School-based to fully qualified*



Driven by a passion for hands-on work and a love of building, Rhianna McDonald has carved out a promising career in carpentry—starting her journey in **Grade 10 with a school-based apprenticeship CPC30220 Certificate III in Carpentry at MiHaven.**

Supported by her school, St Andrews Catholic College, Rhi chose MiHaven Training RTO #40928, as her Registered Training Organisation and MiHaven as her employer - a decision that was both strategic and inspiring. “They were so welcoming, even though I was 15 and their first female construction apprentice,” she recalls.

Since completing her apprenticeship in March, she’s been kept on as a tradesperson and is eyeing future roles within the company in site supervision. Rhianna thrives on the variety, teamwork, and sense of achievement carpentry brings. “It’s satisfying turning raw materials into something useful and lasting,” she says.

The job hasn’t come without challenges—adjusting to physical demands and mastering technical skills—but perseverance and mentorship have made the difference. Her long-term goal? To become a supervisor and one day mentor the next generation of apprentices, just as she was supported on her path.

*MiHaven - shaping the future.*





# Insurance

For a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship (SBAT) in Queensland, the responsibility for organising insurance is typically as follows:

Public liability insurance, personal accident insurance and worker's compensation for students undertaking a SBAT is the responsibility of the employer. Under the training act, the student is considered an employee..

*For more information call the Department of Education, Department of Trade, Employment and Training or the school's VET coordinator or career adviser.*



*"All the evidence suggests that if young people have those [workplace] experiences while they are at school, it helps them make a great transition into employment and it's more likely they'll be in employment over a longer period of time."*

Doug Taylor, CEO, The Smith Family.



# Getting Started

## **Meet and interview the apprentice or trainee**

Your Apprentice Connect Australia Provider will organise a time that suits you to meet the potential apprentice. During this time, you should get to know the apprentice and decide whether they are the right fit for your business.

## **Gaining Approval for a School-Based Apprenticeship or Traineeship (SAT)**

- Obtain the school's agreement before commencing the SAT arrangement.
- Secure any pre-registration approvals before lodging the training contract.
- Your ACAP will then find a suitable training provider for the apprentice and will organise for each party to sign the training contract. Once signed your apprentice is ready to work.

## **Minimum Work Requirements for School-Based Apprentices and Trainees**

- Provide at least 375 hours (50 days) of paid work annually (600 hours/80 days for electrotechnology).
- Ensure regular and meaningful work aligned with the SBAT.





### **Scheduling and Coordination with Stakeholders**

- Negotiate and agree on a schedule for school studies, training, and employment with the school, student, parent (if applicable), and SRTTO.
- Ensure the schedule meets minimum paid work requirements and training delivery

### **Understand the Probation Period**

- The probation period is a time for both you and your apprentice to assess the fit and adjust to the training relationship. It's important to assign suitable tasks and offer support during this phase.
- Probation typically lasts around 3 months but can vary by state and the terms of the training or employment contract.

### **Transitioning After School Completion**

- Continue the apprenticeship or traineeship under:
  - Full-time arrangements for electrotechnology apprenticeships.
  - Full-time or part-time arrangements for other apprenticeships or traineeships.

### **Employer Responsibilities for Changes and Challenges**

- Notify the school, parent (if applicable), and SRTTO of any changes to working hours that affect the school timetable.
- Contact the Apprenticeships Info line (1800 210 210) if minimum paid work hours cannot be met.
- Trainees must meet the minimum work requirement before completing the SBAT.
- Inform the Department if the school withdraws support for the SBAT arrangement.



# EMPOWER YOUR BUSINESS

Since 1909, the Cairns Chamber of Commerce has been the **leading voice** for business in the Cairns region. We are **committed to supporting local businesses** through:

- **Advocacy:** Championing your interests through proactive engagement with all levels of **government and stakeholders**.
- **Connectivity:** Providing a platform for businesses to connect, collaborate, and thrive within the community.
- **Support:** Offering tools, events, and initiatives designed to drive business growth and success.



## CAIRNS ECONOMIC MONITOR



Published each month by the Cairns Chamber of Commerce with data and commentary from Pete Faulkner, Partner of Conus Business Consultancy Services, this free resource is a dashboard of key economic indicators for the region.

View online or download

[www.cairnschamber.com.au/cairns-economic-monitor](http://www.cairnschamber.com.au/cairns-economic-monitor)

## BECOME A MEMBER, JOIN TODAY!

*and be part of a collective effort to shape a prosperous future for our region.*

Scan the QR Code or Visit  
[www.cairnschamber.com.au/members](http://www.cairnschamber.com.au/members)





# Interviewing tips

Make sure the apprentice is the right fit for your business by getting to know them. Most apprentices won't have a lot of experience in the workforce so it's up to you to decide how formal to make the interview.

To get more out of an interview you could ask questions such as:

1. What do you like doing? (working indoors or outdoors, doing manual labour or working on a computer, talking with people or working by yourself)
2. What did you like most at school or in your last job or Pre-apprenticeship?
3. Do you have reliable transport to get to and from work?

# Managing new staff

Most apprentices and trainees start with limited work experience and may have different perspectives to you. The more support you provide them, the more value they can add to your business.

- Communicate your expectations upfront, including around company rules and Work Health and Safety.
- Welcome them to the team by introducing them and make sure they know who to go to if they need help.
- Don't forget to give them positive feedback. There's a good chance they're feeling overwhelmed so it's important to point out what they're doing right.
- Understand that apprentices may make mistakes as they develop their skills at work and training.

# Before the first day

Apprentices and trainees may not know anything about the industry when they first start. Before their first day:

- Let the apprentice know what they should wear and if they need any work, health and safety gear
- Tell them where to meet you and when, as well as who to report to when they arrive
- Ask in advance if they need to provide you with any of their information for payroll
- Ask them to bring any forms such as proof of citizenship or their driver's license if required.



# School based trainee

*Dreams come true with QTA win*



Mira, a dedicated Year 12 student from Mossman State High School, has achieved a remarkable milestone, winning a Queensland Training Award for her school-based apprenticeship in Hairdressing. Her journey is a testament to the power of hard work, passion, and the unwavering support of her employer, school and family.

Mira's love for hairdressing blossomed in Year 10 when she began work experience at a local salon. Starting out as a "tea and tidy" assistant, she quickly fell in love with the vibrant energy of the salon and the joy of connecting with clients. Recognising her potential, her employer offered her a school-based apprenticeship (SAT) at the start of 2024, just six months into her part-time job.

"I love the atmosphere of the salon, the amazing team, and my clients, who are always so encouraging," Mira shared. "There's so much about my job that I love, but I'm especially passionate about colouring. In the future, I'd love to explore more styling for weddings and event makeup."

Balancing school, work, and TAFE has been a challenge; however Mira's determination and the support of her school have made it possible. Mossman State High School has been incredibly flexible, helping her manage her



timetable and stay on top of her studies. One of Mira's biggest challenges has been travelling from Port Douglas to Cairns for TAFE blocks. Before obtaining her licence, her mum would drive her the 135km round trip, highlighting the family support that has been instrumental in her success.

Mira is quick to credit her teachers, TAFE trainers, and employer for helping her thrive. "TAFE has been amazing in teaching me technical skills, and my employer has been so supportive throughout my journey," she said.

Looking ahead, Mira plans to transition to a full-time apprenticeship at the end of the year and is excited about her future in the hairdressing industry. Winning the Queensland Training Award is just the beginning for this talented and hardworking, passionate and dedicated young woman.



**Monday:** Full day at school  
**Tuesday:** Three lessons and a spare for study  
**Wednesday:** Workday at the salon  
**Thursday:** Three lessons and study time  
**Friday:** TAFE in Year 11, transitioning to salon work in Year 12  
**Saturday:** Work at the salon  
**Sunday:** A well-deserved reset and rest day spent with friends, her horse, and cleaning her room



## Useful links

For information about Training, Tafe, Gateway to Industry Schools, School to work transition, incentives and subsidies, priority skills list and more, scan the QR code:



or visit: [www.cairnsrjc.com.au/employerresources/Schoolbasedapprenticeshipsandtraineeships](http://www.cairnsrjc.com.au/employerresources/Schoolbasedapprenticeshipsandtraineeships)

## References

This guide was created using some of the information in the following documents:

- >> Gateway schools to food, wine & tourism industry - Employer guide
- >> Redlands Regional Jobs Committee - Employer Guide
- >> Australian Apprenticeships website
- >> Department of Employment, Trade and Training website

## Acronyms

- ACAP - Apprentice Connect Australia Provider
- DTET - Department of Trade, Employment and Training
- GTO - Group Training Organisation
- QCE - Queensland Certificate of Education
- RTO - Registered Training Organisation
- SBAT - School based Apprentice or Trainee
- SRTO - Supervising Registered Training Organisation
- VET - Vocational Education Training



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***Get in touch with the Cairns Regional Jobs Committee to be connected with schools, Government support representatives, training providers and vocational partnerships across the Cairns region.***

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