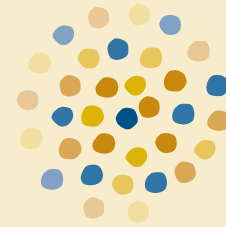




Australian Government



SKILLING AUSTRALIA

FOR THE FUTURE

SKILLS SHORTAGES AND THE PRODUCTIVITY PLACES PROGRAM

HOW IS THE PRODUCTIVITY PLACES PROGRAM DIFFERENT TO PREVIOUS APPROACHES TO SKILLS AND TRAINING?

The Productivity Places Program will provide targeted training to address skill shortages currently being experienced in many industries. The program will deliver better training outcomes for individuals and also ensure training better suits the needs of employers. More than 90 per cent of the training places will be at the Certificate III level and above.

The Program will only provide qualifications that are either an entry pathway to occupations in demand or will allow individuals to gain or update their skills, ensuring that they improve and maintain those skills needed in their industry.

A feature of the Program is the role Skills Australia will play in advising the Government on areas of skills shortage and the expanded role of Industry Skills Councils which will work with business and industry and provide advice on training options and skills development.

WHY DO WE NEED TO FOCUS ON SKILL SHORTAGE AREAS?

Skill shortages have been identified by the Reserve Bank as being a factor contributing to higher inflation and interest rates.

Investment in education, skills and training of our people is critical to expanding the productive side of the economy.

Skills Australia will be a powerful new consultative mechanism which will place productivity, industry development and business needs at the heart of the skills training system.

HOW HAVE THE ELIGIBLE QUALIFICATIONS BEEN SELECTED?

For the 1 April 2008 phase, priority occupations are:

- occupations identified as being in shortage, based on Surveys of Employers who have Recently Advertised vacancies (through the SERA survey series undertaken by DEEWR, updated every 6 months); and
- occupations that surveyed employers indicate are most difficult to fill (based on the results of one-off surveys of employers at the regional/industry level).

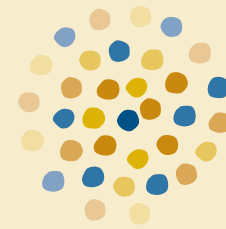
The resulting list of occupations is known as the Priority Occupations for the Productivity Places Program. Occupations are described in terms of the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations.

In consultation with Industry Skills Councils, the interim model for 1 April 2008 connects priority occupations to nationally recognised training courses at Certificate II and III.

The identification of priorities for subsequent phases of the Productivity Places Program will draw on consultations with key stakeholders including Skills Australia and Industry Skills Councils.



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DOES THIS COVER ALL SKILLS SHORTAGE AREAS?

The first 20,000 places of the Productivity Places Program are directed at providing support for job seekers to get a foothold in the labour market. Eligible qualifications have been identified with the support of Industry Skills Councils at Certificate II and Certificate III levels.

Not all occupations are supported by training at Certificate II and III levels. Occupations in some industries (mining is an example) require training at higher levels (Certificate IV and above) to support the development of appropriate skills.

Higher level qualifications are the focus of the additional training places to be provided to existing workers in subsequent phases of the Productivity Places Program.

HOW DO PEOPLE APPLY FOR THE PLACES?

The first 20,000 places are available to job seekers (people not currently in the workforce).

Job seekers who are registered with an employment service provider (ESP) such as a Job Network member or Disability Employment Network must be referred to training under the Program by their ESP.

These clients must access training under the Program through a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) delivering training under the Program.

For all other job seekers, they register directly with an RTO (some eligibility criteria apply).

More places for existing workers will be available from 1 July 2008.

HOW DO REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATIONS PARTICIPATE?

RTOs wishing to deliver training as part of the Program should visit the website at www.productivityplaces.deewr.gov.au and apply via the online submission system.