

TRAINING PORTFOLIO REPORT

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It is with pleasure I present my first report as leader of the Training Portfolio.

While not receiving a high volume of motions at Federal Conference, the Portfolio remains committed to ensuring students who choose traineeship or apprenticeships have equitable opportunity to access tertiary training. Around 3.9 million students engaged in VET training in 2014 of which about 1.4 million students received subsidised training.

Vocational Educational Training in Schools (VETis)

In March 2016, Senator the Hon Scott Ryan, Minister for Vocational Education and Skills, launched the *Preparing Secondary Students for Work* website and online assessment tool. A feature of the website is an interactive self-assessment tool to support schools planning, implementing and reviewing their existing or new VET training courses. www.pssfw.myskills.gov.au

In April 2016 Senator Ryan announced a *New pilot project to allow young Australians to trial an apprenticeship option*. The pilot will target up to 1,000 secondary school students and up to 1 000 young people who have already left school and are looking for work and will be delivered by The Apprenticeship Network in Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania over two years. It will give the target group the opportunity to have a short term placement in industries including building and construction, engineering and automotive, land and food or business and services.

Students are encouraged to access the MyFuture website www.myfuture.edu.au to build their career profile.

Apprenticeships

On July 1, 2015 The Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (Apprenticeship Network) replaced Australian Apprenticeships Centres with the Australian Government investing to \$200million annually to facilitate employers recruiting, training and retaining apprentices. The 11 Network Providers provide support free of charge to employers and apprentices throughout the apprenticeship lifecycle. Further information can be obtained by ringing Australian Apprenticeships referral line on 13 38 73 or on the website: www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au

Alternative Delivery Pilots

In December 2015, Senator Ryan released the Apprenticeship Training – alternative delivery pilots guidelines. Stream One pilots will be representative of industry sectors such as building and construction, electrical and communications while Stream Two is an open grants process for a further two pilots with applications closing on 29 July 2016.

Training Providers

The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) is at the forefront of quality assurance across vocational education and training (VET). The reputation of VET has been tarnished recently by dodgy operators and the ASQA is integral to ensuring the reputation and integrity of the VET sector. The government reiterated, in March 2016, their commitment to ensuring the integrity of the vocational education and training system by cracking down on training providers who are not doing the right thing.

VET FEE-HELP

The government provides opportunities for many Australian students through the VET FEE-HELP scheme. In early April, Senator the Hon Scott Ryan chaired a meeting in Sydney as part of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Industry Skills council to discuss vocational education and training. Present at this meeting were commonwealth, state and territory skills ministers. Following this meeting, Senator Ryan convened a series of national consultations to work towards the re-design of the VET FEE-HELP scheme. The Commonwealth Government is committed to introducing a new scheme in 2017 which is robust, sustainable and high quality. More information is available at

https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/cisc_communique_skills_session_1_april_2016.pdf

Trade Support Loans (TSL)

Trade Support Loans offer loans of up to \$20 000 to assist apprentices cover daily expenses including equipment purchases associated with completing an apprenticeship. Like the HECS system, the loan is repaid through the tax system once the loan recipient's taxable income reaches \$54 126 (2015-2016). As an added incentive a 20 per cent discount on the loan amount is offered to apprentices who have successfully completed their apprenticeship. The success of TSL is reflected in the number of apprentices accessing loans nationwide now totalling over 40 000.

Industry Skills Fund

The Training for Employment Scholarships and the Youth Employment Pathways initiatives were expanded nationally until 30 June, 2016. Members are encouraged to read the Tertiary Portfolio Report for further information relating to eligibility for Youth Allowance or on the website. The relocation scholarship is not available for Vocational Educational and Training courses. www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/youth-allowance

Thank you to the State Portfolio leaders for their support and our members who have contacted me throughout the year.