



# Issues Paper 2

## Promoting new Apprenticeship and Traineeship Pathways

### Introduction

The Training and Skill Development Act (T&SD Act) has been in operation in its current form for over a decade. In that time the training needs of enterprises and their employees have changed significantly.

Broader changes in the economy have resulted in an increase in casual, self-employment and independent contractor arrangements. Employment arrangements in growth sectors like Health and Community Services, the emergence of work in the 'gig' economy, the use of labour hire arrangements add to the level of complexity in the labour market. Supporting life-long learning, up-skilling and specialisation is placing additional pressures on employers and enterprises to attract and retain qualified staff through apprenticeship and traineeship arrangements.

Alternate pathways to trade accreditation through the Skilled Worker process and the Certificate of Recognition have been used progressively less over the past several years. These pathways are open to only a limited subset of trades (hairdressers, bakers, cooks, pastry chefs). This review provides an opportunity to promote apprenticeships and potential alternative pathways to trade training.

Stakeholders also report there are barriers to the diversification of apprentice skill sets outside the standard qualification, which makes it difficult to embrace new technology and ways of working.

## CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

1. Does the T&SD Act support the diversity of training approaches required by prospective apprentices and trainees and their employers? If not, where should improvements occur?
2. Could the T&SD Act better support the recognition of current competencies within training contract arrangements?
3. Could the T&SD Act provide more flexibility in relation to pathways to an apprenticeship and to trade certifications? For example, could the T&SD Act better enable participation in pre-apprenticeship entry pathways and their recognition as part of the transition to a full qualification?
4. Should the T&SD Act provide a pathway from institutional training to trade certification? If so, how?
5. Does the T&SD Act provide appropriately for Group Training Organisations (GTOs) as distinct from other employers? If not, what changes are required to improve its application to differences in the employment arrangements within which an individual is able to train?
6. Is there a role for the use of contracts of training in higher education? If so, could the T&SD Act better enable the use of training contracts in higher qualifications, including higher education? If so, how?
7. Is the current process for certification of completion of training contracts (including trade certification) appropriate? If not, are there any changes required in the T&SD Act?
8. Are the current durations of apprenticeships and traineeships suitable to industry's needs? If not, what changes to the duration of apprenticeships and traineeships could be made to better meet industry's needs?
9. Do the current competency-based completion arrangements provide sufficient flexibility to apprenticeship and traineeship durations? If not, how could they be changed to provide greater flexibility? Are changes to the T&SD Act required in relation to this?
10. Is there a role for training contracts in relation to skill sets or micro-credentials<sup>1</sup>?

## Declared trades

Section 6 of the T&SD Act currently requires the declaration of an occupation to be a trade or a declared vocation. The Minister has delegated this responsibility to the Training and Skills Commission (TaSC) and guidelines have been established which further define this process.

# Case study

The use of light gauge steel frame has increased rapidly in domestic, commercial and industrial construction, which has resulted in a demand for skilled and qualified employees to erect and fix pre-fabricated steel frames.

The current Certificate III in Carpentry does not provide the necessary training and experience in steel frame construction.

Much of the steel frame installations in South Australia are undertaken by manufacturers via sub-contractors. The broader industry is seeking to create a pathway for individuals so they can gain the necessary skills and experience to work in the industry.

A recent industry review raised concerns about gaps in available training, which resulted in an application to the Training and Skills Commission to approve a new declared vocation, Steel Frame Installer, which is aligned to the Certificate II in Construction. The 24-month traineeship is intended for registered employers operating in the steel frame industry.

The Certificate II in Construction qualification for this pathway was added to the Traineeship and Apprenticeship Pathways Schedule in November 2018.

The T&SC Act provides the framework for declaring trades or declared vocations. Within this framework, the TaSC is tasked with advising and making recommendations to the Minister about the occupations that should constitute trades and declared vocations.

Stakeholders have raised varying views on the declaration process in light of national consistency across states and territories, while others conversely noted the value of South Australia retaining responsibility for particular matters, including declaring trades and declared vocations.

## CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

11. Is the process for declaring trades and vocations for the purposes of training contract arrangements appropriate? If not, in what ways could it be improved and/or what alternative arrangements would you propose?

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12. Should the trade and declared vocation process be simplified and limited to what is necessary for licensing or harmonisation purposes?

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13. Do you have any other suggestions for amending the T&SD Act in relation to declaring trades and vocations?

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# Promoting the T&SD Act's objects of equity and participation

One of T&SD Act's objects is promoting equity and participation in and access to education, training and skills development<sup>2</sup>. The TaSC is also charged with promoting and encouraging the development of investment, equity and participation in, and access to, vocational education and training and adult community education<sup>3</sup>.

Some sections of the community, for example women and mature aged people (aged 21 years and above) who may wish to enter an apprenticeship or traineeship, are underrepresented in some apprenticeships and traineeships. People who live in regional, rural and remote areas may also face barriers to commencing and completing apprenticeships and traineeships.

## CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

14. How can the T&SD Act be improved to support promotion and attraction to apprenticeships and traineeships, particularly for those in the community that are underrepresented in apprenticeships and traineeships?

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15. Is there sufficient emphasis under the T&SD Act for achieving completions? If not, how could this be addressed through the T&SD Act?

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16. What is the appropriate level of flexibility in the apprenticeship system that the T&SD Act should accommodate? What flexibilities, for example, part-time training, would you like to see accommodated?

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## References

1. Micro-credentials can be described as highly customised, short term courses delivered through flexible (notably, online) platforms that provide learners with a specific skill that contributes to their overall skill set and/or qualification
2. T&SD Act, section 3(c)(i)
3. T&SD Act, section 10(2)(a)