

# Questions and Answers about School Based Traineeships

School based traineeships provide students with the opportunity to attain a nationally recognised Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification as well as their Higher School Certificate (HSC) and gain valuable work skills and experience through paid employment.

## What are the main features of school-based traineeships?

School based traineeships allow senior high school students to commence a traineeship while at school. While studying for their HSC, school-based trainees work part-time and undertake their formal (off-the-job) traineeship training as part of their HSC.

## How long will it take a school-based trainee to complete their traineeship?

Generally school based traineeships are undertaken part-time during Years 11 and 12 and are completed by the end of the HSC, although they can extend over 3, 4 or 5 years for students who undertake their HSC over a longer period.

## What qualifications will I receive when I have completed my traineeship?

There are two types of qualifications issued to trainees: a qualification issued by the registered training organisation (RTO) on successful completion of the formal (or off-the-job) training, and a qualification issued by State Training Services to mark the trainee's successful completion of the traineeship training contract.

The RTO qualification will be in the form of a Certificate II or Certificate III in the relevant vocation name. This is a qualification that is nationally-recognised by industry.

In most cases, State Training Services will issue a qualification known as a **Certificate of Proficiency**. Because traineeships involve both formal (off-the-job) training and on-the-job training, a Certificate of Proficiency is only issued when the trainee can show evidence that both aspects of their training have been successfully completed.

If the trainee has successfully completed their on-the-job training but has not successfully completed their formal training before the end of their traineeship, State Training Services will issue the trainee with a **Completion Certificate**, which can be upgraded to a Certificate of Proficiency when they successfully complete their formal training through their RTO.

## How and when are certificates issued?

The RTO will issue its qualification when the trainee has successfully completed all the assessment requirements and is confirmed by the RTO as competent.

When the expected completion date of the traineeship is approaching, State Training Services will send a letter to the employer asking them to confirm in writing that the trainee has successfully completed their traineeship training. It asks the employer to attach to their letter a copy of the trainee's qualification issued by the registered training organisation (RTO). The Certificate of Proficiency will then be sent to the trainee's postal address within a few weeks of receipt of these documents.

## What are the minimum requirements that a school-based trainee must complete while they are at school?

While at school, the school-based trainee will

- enter into a Training Contract for a term of sufficient duration to allow for the completion of the formal training requirements as well as the requirement of a minimum of 100 days of paid employment. The minimum term for a school based traineeship is 18 months.
- undertake a Certificate II or Certificate III qualification as specified by the relevant traineeship.

## Who will provide the formal training for school-based trainees?

School-based trainees in NSW will undertake their traineeship training through TAFE NSW or a private training organisation. The student's school may also deliver the formal training on school premises.

## How will a school-based traineeship fit in with my HSC?

The on-the-job component will be undertaken in the workplace, and depending on the study schedule, trainees may work during school, after school, on weekends and in school holidays.

The formal (off-the-job) training is completed either face to face, flexibly or through a combination of both and may be undertaken during school time, after school and during school holidays.

## How will the school based traineeship contribute towards my HSC?

The formal (off-the-job) training undertaken by school-based trainees will generally contribute between 4-6 units of credit towards the HSC from a total 22 units required to complete the HSC.

School-based trainees may also elect to undertake the optional Industry-Based Learning Course. This course is offered as recognition of the significant work component involved in the school based traineeship. If undertaken, the course can contribute up to 4 additional units of HSC credit. Assessment of these units will be based on evidence of industry-based skills built up through paid employment as a trainee during the HSC years.

## How is a school-based traineeship established?

School based traineeships are established and protected in the same way as other apprenticeships and traineeships. The parties to the traineeship (that is, the employer and the trainee) sign a training contract, which is a binding agreement that sets out the details of the traineeship such as the vocation, details of the employer and the trainee, the commencement date and the expected term of the traineeship. The training contract also sets out the responsibilities of each party. A parent or guardian will also sign the contract if the trainee is under 18 years of age.

The training contract will become binding on both parties once the traineeship application has been approved and the probationary period (generally one month) has elapsed.

A training plan is also prepared in conjunction with the training contract. The training plan specifies the training organisation that will provide the formal (off-the-job) training and the proposed pattern of part-time employment that will result in the trainee meeting his/her minimum employment requirements by the end of the HSC year.

## What is the latest a school student can start as a school-based trainee?

Most school students undertaking school-based traineeships will commence at the beginning of Year 11 or the end of Year 10. Where possible, applications for school-based traineeships should be submitted well before the end of first term Year 11.

Students wishing to commence a school-based traineeship at a later time may be able to do so, but applications

cannot be approved unless the training plan confirms that the formal training can be completed before the HSC and the minimum part-time employment of 100 days can be met by 31 December of the HSC year.

## What employment protection do I have as a school-based trainee? Are there differences in comparison to a full-time trainee?

In NSW, an approved traineeship can only be terminated by consent of the parties or by order of the Vocational Training Tribunal. As a State 'training arrangement' law, the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001 is not subject to federal WorkChoices laws. Therefore, under the NSW apprenticeship legislation, an employer cannot unilaterally dismiss a trainee unless permission to do so is obtained from the Vocational Training Tribunal.

## Can a school-based traineeship be cancelled before the HSC?

Traineeships, including school-based traineeships, can be cancelled at any time by the mutual consent of the parties.

School-based trainees whose training contracts are cancelled prior to the completion of their HSC may be able to continue their study in the HSC VET courses they have been undertaking as part of their traineeship. Cancellation of the traineeship before completion of the HSC does not necessarily impact on the HSC unit credit available from the Industry-based Learning course.

## Can a school-based trainee change employer?

Traineeships, including school-based traineeships, may be transferred to another employer subject to the consent of all three parties: the existing employer, the proposed employer and the trainee.

## What happens if an employer doesn't have enough work for their school-based trainee?

Employers taking on school-based trainees are required to make a commitment to employing and training the trainee for the duration of the training contract. As with all traineeships, employers who cannot meet their obligation to provide employment and training to their trainees because of changes that affect their business may apply for cancellation or suspension of the training contract.

Employers and/or trainees should contact their local State Training Centre (ph. 13 28 11) as soon as they become

aware of circumstances that may result in an application for cancellation or suspension of the traineeship. Centre staff may be able to assist the employer and trainee by organising placement of the trainee with another employer.

Applications for cancellation or suspension of the traineeship supported by both the employer and the trainee will be approved. Applications for cancellation or suspension supported by one party only may be referred to the Vocational Training Tribunal for a determination.

## What support will be provided to school-based trainees?

School-based trainees who need help with their formal traineeship training should contact their school's VET co-ordinator or school-based traineeships co-ordinator in the first instance. If school-based trainees have questions or need help regarding their on-the-job training with their employer they should contact their local State Training Centre (ph. 13 28 11) for assistance.

## What help can State Training Centres provide directly to school based trainees and their employers?

State Training Centres provide assistance to school based trainees through the Independent Industry Support Service (IISS) which has been established to support all school based trainees, including those enrolled in NSW Trade Schools. Trainees can access the IISS by contacting their local State Training Centre on 13 28 11.

School based apprentices/trainees and employers can contact their local State Training Centre for:

- information about the availability and suitability of apprenticeships and traineeships for the workplace
- advice about entering into a School Based Traineeship training contract and their obligations under the training contract
- enquiries about varying the training contract
- help with problems in the workplace
- help with training or assessment services provided by the registered training organisation
- support for the implementation of school-based traineeships across NSW

## Supporting Apprenticeships and Traineeships in NSW Schools