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Industry Careers Showcase

Thank you to everyone that attended and played a role in organising the first AFAM ITAB Industry Careers Showcase. The virtual event explored the diverse careers across the agriculture and horticulture industries, with speakers highlighting the many opportunities and career pathways in NSW. Discussions also focussed on the longer-term workforce opportunities and challenges across the sector, not only those brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The showcase provided information and opportunities to the NSW [Skills Brokers](#) and [Regional Industry Engagement Partnership \(RIEP\)](#) Officers, helping them to connect with employers, training providers and peak bodies.

Thank you to the speakers who volunteered their time and expertise:

- Adrian Englefield, Horticulture Innovation Australia
- Andrew Bulkeley, FarmLink
- Andrew Horgan, Skills Impact
- Anita Campbell, Nursery & Garden Industry, NSW & ACT
- April Browne, Dairy Australia
- Ben Antenucci, NSW Farmers
- Bernard Bierhoff, Cotton Australia
- Claudia Vicary, Ag Skilled
- Gillian Meppem, Grains Research Development Corporation
- Jenny Hughes, Cotton Australia

AFAM hosted this event in partnership with Training Services NSW and AgSkilled. We look forward to identifying additional opportunities to showcase the career opportunities across all the industries we support.

Regional Roundtables - Going Virtual

Prior to the current COVID-19 outbreak, the AFAM team had been planning to host regional roundtables throughout NSW to meet with industry stakeholders across the state. These roundtables will now need to take place virtually, throughout October.

The roundtables aim to connect via conversation our stakeholders who are based in rural, regional and remote NSW, to discuss unique skills challenges and needs, and potentially identify shared and industry-specific opportunities, challenges and actions.

The dates and registration details for these virtual roundtables will be published on the [AFAM webpage](#) in the coming weeks. An alert for when registrations are available will be distributed through this newsletter, social media and direct emails.

Training & Assessor Qualifications to be Revised

A review of the entire [TAE Training and Education Training Package](#) will commence shortly, with the project running until December 2022. The project is being managed by [PWC Skills for Australia](#) and will include a review of six qualifications and 55 units of competency.

The TAE qualifications are an important part of the VET sector and the quality of training and assessment is important. However, most of the reports in the industries we work with indicate there are shortages of skilled trainers and assessors with both the required industry knowledge and the training and assessment qualifications.

This is an opportunity for the industries we work with to identify and address some of the issues related to accessibility of training.

We encourage you to participate in this important review and to provide your views to the national developers who are reviewing these qualifications.

NCVER Report - Online Delivery of VET During COVID-19

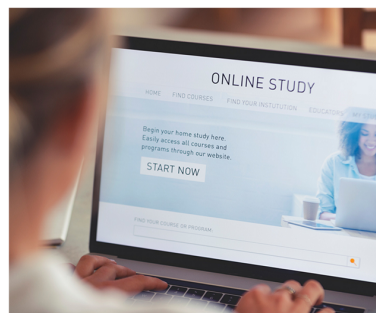
[A new NCVER report](#) is the first of two reports which will examine how the VET sector has responded to COVID-19. This first report investigates the extent to which RTOs shifted to online training delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic. It compares the incidence of online training delivery during 2020 with pre-pandemic figures from 2019 and includes an examination of training type and subject result during these periods.

Since the commencement of COVID-19 restrictions in Australia about 12 months ago, there has been a substantial shift to online training and approximately 71% of surveyed RTOs have maintained at least some of this initial shift to online training. RTOs intentions to maintain online training and assessment remain high and are more likely to consider blended delivery modes for future training delivery.



The online delivery of VET during COVID-19: part 1

Sheila Hume & Tabatha Griffin
National Centre for Vocational Education Research



INFORMING • INFLUENCING
THE AUSTRALIAN VET SECTOR

National Safe Work Month

A time to commit to building a safe and healthy workplace

October is National Safe Work month and the theme this year is **think safe. work safe. be safe.** Throughout the month, we encourage you to think about health and safety in your workplace and commit to taking proactive measures to prevent and improve safety in the workplace.

AFAM ITAB works across a number of industries that are classified as high risk, including agriculture, fishing, arboriculture, meat processing and horse racing/riding. At AFAM's Animal Care and Management Industry Training Advisory Committee (ITAC) meeting in April, the committee cited mental health as a major safety concern with nearly 1 in 6 workers experiencing mental ill health right now. Ensuring a mentally healthy work environment is critical for all industries and particularly important during these unprecedented times.

One of the key goals of vocational education and training is to create a safe workforce, as well as an effective workforce. Safety considerations are priority considerations for the Industry Reference Committees working in this area, and for the ITACs we are working with.

To minimise risk on farms, [Farmsafe Australia](#) and [National Farmers Federation](#) have announced measures that aim to significantly reduce injuries and fatalities in agriculture by 2030. Please utilise the free resources created by both these organisations to improve safety in your farm or workplace.

The food processing and manufacturing industry workers, who play a critical role in domestic and global supply chains, have been at the forefront of discussions of workplace safety recently as they continue to work and risk being exposed to COVID-19. [Safe Work Australia](#) has developed guidance on what employers can do to protect their employees from COVID-19 in the workplace to mitigate these risks.

[More information](#)

Feedback on New Qualifications Concept

The Government is inviting feedback on how vocational education and training (VET) qualifications could be redesigned to better meet the current and future training needs of employers and learners.

A new concept for qualification design has been proposed and feedback is being collected through an online survey, which closes 10am, Monday 20 September 2021.

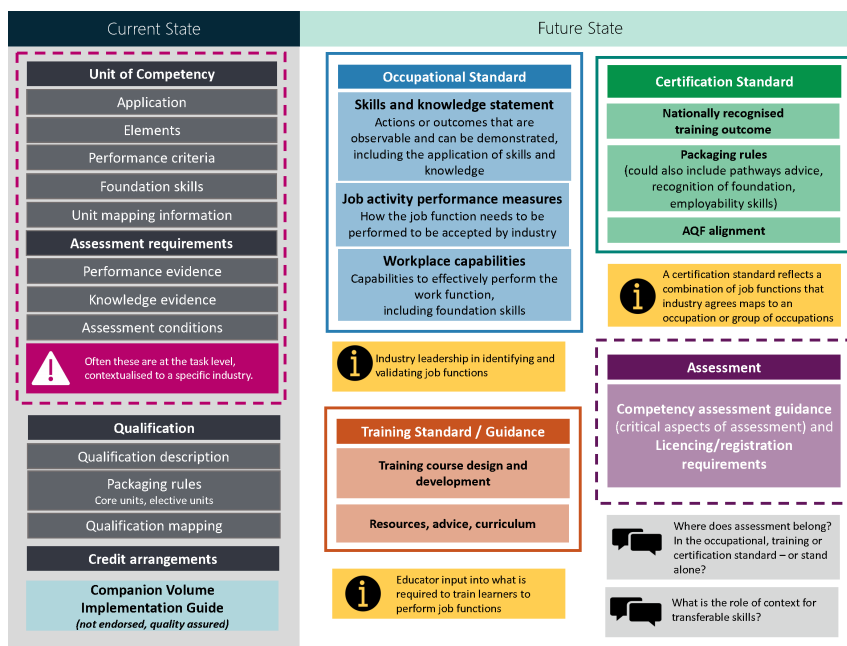
[View the concept](#)

[Complete the survey](#)

Everybody is invited to provide feedback, in particular those in the VET sector involved in the design, development and delivery of national training products.

This is a fantastic opportunity for you to provide feedback on the future shape of national VET qualifications.

This reform initiative is part of the Government's work with industries and the VET sector to simplify, rationalise and streamline qualifications, to remove complexity and improve career pathways for workers. For more information about VET reform activities, visit www.skillsreform.gov.au.



National Training Package Projects

The following projects are underway to review and update national qualifications and skills standards. Follow the links to find out more and to provide input.

New projects underway



Ag & Horticulture Core Skills Project

This project will look at the common skills that feature across all sectors of the industry. It will focus on the broader qualifications that apply to these sectors, and which can be contextualised to apply to numerous job roles. [Read more](#)



Water Allocation & Entitlement Skills Project

Access to water resources is vital to Australian farmers and it is equally vital that farming communities understand the water market. Skills standards related to the acquisition, management and trading of water will be developed. [Read more](#)



Trainers of Assistance Dogs Project

Growing evidence for how assistance animals can improve the quality of life for people with impairments and disabilities is driving demand for more skilled trainers of assistance dogs. The specific skills standards for this job role will be developed and packaged as a specialisation in existing qualifications. [Read more](#)



Sugar Milling Project

The skill needs of the sugar milling industry will be identified and addressed as part of this project. Consultation will take place to review the *Certificate II in Sugar Milling Support* and the *Certificate III in Sugar Milling Industry Operations*, along with 41 units and one skill set. [Read more](#)

The following projects have also been approved by the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) for 2021-22. Project webpages will become available in upcoming weeks, as each project is scoped and planned.

Companion Animal Incident Management Project

The 2019-2020 bushfires highlighted the important role of animal facility workers, emergency service workers and evacuation centres in supporting injured and displaced animals. This project will provide a national approach to the skills standards for responding to incidents involving companion animals.

Additional Clusters in the AHC Unit Sector Review Project

This project continues the full review of the AHC Training Package outlined in the 2019 – 2022 Skills Forecast. The AISC has approved work over the next 15 months on four clusters, including the Ag & Horticulture Core Skills project described above. The other clusters will include:

- Composting, organic production and permaculture
- Livestock Project
- Job Skills for Respecting Country Project

Meat Processing Skills Review Project

A full review of the AMP Australian Meat Processing Training Package, as proposed over the next three years, will start with a key project to create foundational training products that will lead to simplification of the training package and training delivery.

FBP – Indigenous Food Skills Project

There are growing national and international markets for Australia's indigenous food. New skills are required to guide the harvesting and processing of wild food including dealing with cultural issues and working in remote locations, while ensuring products meet strict international regulations relating to identification of foods as being indigenous. Skills standards will be reviewed and developed to incorporate these requirements.

Projects in final stages

Undergoing final checks:

- [Animal Reproduction Project](#)
- [Crops, Pastures and Seeds Project](#)
- [Dairy and Milk Harvesting Project](#)
- [Meat Rendering Project](#)
- [Meat Slicing Project](#)
- [Landscaping Project](#)
- [Parks and Gardens Project](#)
- [Pulp and Paper Manufacturing Review Project](#)
- [Skills for Land Rehabilitation \(Mined Land\) Project](#)
- [Horse Care Project](#)
- [Entry Level Forestry Skills Project](#)
- [High-Level Forestry Skills Project](#)
- [Remote Forestry Operations Project](#)

Endorsed and published on the national training register:

- [Food and Beverage Processing Project](#)
- [Flour Milling Project](#)
- [High Volume Production Baking Project](#)
- [Greyhound Racing Careers and Jockeys Project](#)

2021 NSW Training Awards

The NSW Training Awards are an annual event to recognise outstanding achievement in the VET sector. The Awards honour and reward the achievements of students, trainers/teachers, training organisations, large and medium employers. The Awards are conducted by Training Services NSW within the NSW Department of Education.

The [2021 NSW Finalists](#) for the individual and organisation award categories have been announced.

AFAM congratulates all Finalists for their achievements and wishes them the best of luck at this year's NSW Training Awards, which will be held virtually on Saturday 9 October 2021.



Consultation on Extending the Animal Care & Management Teach Out Period

After consultation with NSW stakeholders, AFAM supported the request to extend the teach out transition period, from the standard 12 months to 24 months, for the following qualifications:

- ACM20217 Certificate II in Horse Care
- ACM30817 Certificate III in Performance Horse
- ACM40517 Certificate IV in Equine Dentistry
- ACM50417 Diploma of Performance Horse Management

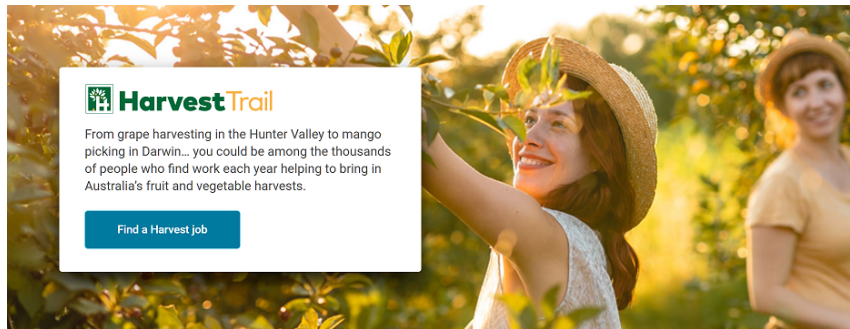
The main feedback received from NSW stakeholders was that COVID restrictions have caused difficulties in delivering and assessing the training and that an extension to the teach out period would be welcome. If the extension is approved, registered training organisations (RTOs) will have additional time to develop training and assessment materials. The extension would also minimise the disruption for existing students.

ASQA has already agreed to extend the teach out transition period of the Certificate III in Captive Animals to 30 December 2022. This extended transition period applies to all existing learners enrolled in the qualification.

Harvest Trail

[Harvest Trail](#) can help connect employers and workers to fill harvest jobs around Australia. It offers a platform to advertise jobs, with Service Providers also available to provide advice about harvest work or recruitment.

Workers may also be eligible for [AgMove](#) financial assistance, to help with the costs of relocating to take up short term work. AgMove is an Australian Government initiative.



Summer Skills - Register Your Interest to Participate

Smart and Skilled providers interested in delivering part qualifications approved under [Skilling for Recovery](#) are invited to register your intent by completing [this form](#) by 17 September 2021.

Part qualifications on the list are either a nationally accredited skills set or locally designed skills groups that have been approved for delivery under Skilling for Recovery by the National Skills Commission.

The Department will evaluate the requests based on the demand of courses in each region. Priorities will also vary in each region based on industry demand.

If you would like more information, please get in touch with your local [Training Services NSW regional office](#).

Update for Smart & Skilled Training Providers

According to Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia (ITECA), TAFEs and registered training organisations that are contracted through the Smart and Skilled program to deliver government-subsidised courses can now access four monthly payments (August – December 2021), based on their estimated monthly average earnings.

The New South Wales Government has announced the reinstatement of Advance Payments for Smart and Skilled funded providers to support cash flow. Eligible providers will receive an offer of variation for their existing Smart and Skilled contract which will give access to payments equal up to 70% of the provider's estimated average monthly earnings (i.e. a provider with \$10,000 estimated monthly earnings will be able to access up to \$7,000 as a monthly advance payment for four months until December 2021).

The ITECA has organised a [meeting](#) with Training Services NSW, to provide members the opportunity to discuss this initiative.

About Smart and Skilled

Smart and Skilled is helping people in NSW get the skills they need to find a job and advance their careers. It is administered by Training Services NSW in the NSW Department of Education, and offers subsidised training for courses on the [NSW Skills List](#).

[Latest Smart & Skilled Update](#)

NSW Grants, Opportunities & Scholarships

Training Services NSW is offering the following grants, opportunities and scholarships to employers and vocational learners. Follow the links to find out about more.

Aboriginal Business Advisory Initiative: support for existing Aboriginal owned and operated businesses to grow and diversify their business. [More details](#)

Barranggirra: to provide end to end support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners through culturally appropriate mentoring to ensure successful retention and completion of training and improved post-training employment outcomes. [More details](#)

Resources to Assist in Supervising Your Apprentice or Trainee: a series of videos and resources are available. [More details](#)

Free Training for Veterans: to broaden their career opportunities and help transition to civilian life after service, veterans and their partners will have access to free training. [More details](#)

Skills Brokers: sixteen skills brokers are located across NSW to help employers locate new staff who are trained and ready to fill roles with specific skill requirements; find ways to upskill existing staff; redeploy existing staff who have been stood down; and respond rapidly to skills needs. [More details](#)

[Other support and opportunities:](#)

Skilling for Recovery - JobTrainer: this is the NSW program supported by the Australian Government's JobTrainer Fund. It has now been extended until June 2022. Skilling for Recovery offers fee-free and low-fee training options for school leavers, young people and job seekers. [More details](#)

Free Support to Help Create Mentally Healthy Workplaces: SafeWork NSW has a range of programs, tools and resources available to help on the journey to create mentally healthy workplaces. [More details](#)

COVID-19 Support

Services NSW is working with federal, state and local government and the private sector to bring together all the COVID-19 support and services for businesses on the [Services NSW website](#).

TAFE NSW has developed a website that collates information and programs to assist small businesses in the recovery period from COVID-19. The [Small Business Recovery website](#) includes information on JobTrainer, the Boosting Apprenticeships Commencements Scheme, fee-free apprenticeships and traineeships, mature age workers' scholarships, foundation skills programs, the Adult Migrant English Program, AgSkilled, and the Women in Business Program.

The pandemic has brought about new challenges and your mental wellbeing is important. If you are feeling stress, anxious or negatively impacted by COVID-19, there are resources and services available to help on the [NSW government website](#).

Online Course - Skill Up from Home

Skill up from home with a range of fee-free online training courses. These online courses are available to those who are unable to work due to public health orders or on JobSaver, and therefore at risk of unemployment.

There are further courses in business skills and soft skills across the food and fibre training sectors.

Courses include: Agricultural Chemical Skill Set, Farm Business Management and Healthy Soils.

[View courses](#)