

9 July 2021



# AFAM ITAB

Agriculture, Food  
& Animal Management

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## Industry Engagements

### Training Advisory Committees (ITAC) Meetings

The Food Beverage and Pharmaceutical ITAC met last month to discuss the opportunities and challenges for the skills system in NSW, as well as the impact of COVID-19 on their industry. Key issues raised included skills shortages and transferability, access to funding, new entrants and building a future workforce through career initiatives that attract students to industry.

The following ITACs have also met recently:

- Animal Care and Management ITAC (including representatives from racing and breeding)
- Agriculture and Production Horticulture ITAC
- Amenity Horticulture, Landscaping, Conservation and Land Management ITAC

Common areas of concern discussed across these industries related to skills shortages, access to funding and the need for careers promotion. These ITACs also recommended initiatives for AFAM ITAB to examine opportunities to participate and support their industries going forward.

Thank you to all committee members for contributing your insights and expertise. We

look forward to working with you further to support the skills and VET needs of your industries.

The Meat Industry ITAC and consultation arrangements will be formed shortly, and will be supported by [MINTRAC](#) working in partnership with AFAM.

## Other Engagements

As part of our ongoing work to identify opportunities in the skills system and to continue building relationships with and connections between employers, trainers and Training NSW, we have been expanding our engagement work beyond the initial ITAC meetings.

We attended the Apprentice Employment Network NSW & ACT 2021 Skills Conference where numerous speakers, including NSW Minister for Skills The Hon Geoff Lee MP, spoke about addressing skills shortages, future skill needs and initiatives to help NSW recover. We also participated in meetings with the AgSkilled 2.0 Steering Committee, presented to teachers and assessors at TAFE on our role as an ITAB and visited Tocal Agricultural College, where we toured the impressive facilities of their CB Alexander Campus in the Hunter Region and met with trainers and assessors.

Last month, we met with Training Services NSW regional officers and learned more about the issues in each of the regions. Regional managers, skills brokers and regional industry education partnerships (RIEP) officers in the Hunter, Illawarra and South East, New England and Western NSW regions discussed exciting programmes in schools and their work in helping employers find trainees and workers.

## COVID-19 Disruptions & Support

COVID-19 has caused many disruptions and challenges for industry, especially during lockdowns. The NSW government has a number of [grants and support packages](#) available to help small businesses. Please [contact us](#) to see if we can put you in touch with support.

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.

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# Regional Roundtables - Registrations Open Soon

We plan to host regional roundtables over the next couple of months. The format of these meetings will be dependent on current COVID-19 restrictions, with the first meetings potentially taking place virtually, if necessary, though this is not the preferred option.

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

Potential locations for these roundtables include Bega, Lismore, Orange, Newcastle, Tamworth and Wagga Wagga. We welcome suggestions for dates, times and venues in each of these locations or other regions that may provide a good meeting location. We also invite suggestions on the topics you would like to see discussed.

The dates, locations and registration details for these roundtables will be published on the [AFAM webpage](#) and an alert will be distributed through this newsletter and other communication channels.

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## NSW Budget Announcement - Upskilling Workers

The NSW government has announced \$318.6 million over two years, as part of their *Skilling for Recovery* program. The funding will help job seekers retrain or upskill, and support school leavers entering the workforce for the first time.

This training program will deliver on the NSW Government's commitment, under the Commonwealth JobTrainer Fund, to offer more than 100,000 low cost or fee-free training places to individuals in NSW, with a focus on school leavers disadvantaged by the pandemic.

[More information](#)

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# Smart and Skilled

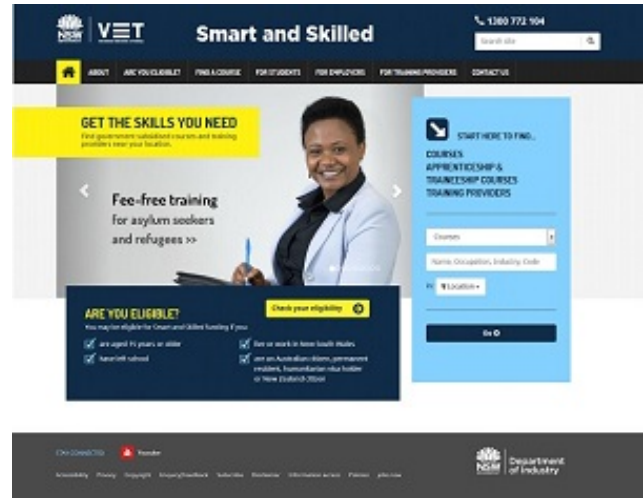
Smart and Skilled is helping people in NSW get the skills they need to find a job and advance their careers. It is administered by Training Services NSW in the NSW Department of Education, and offers subsidised training for courses on the [NSW Skills List](#).

## Are you eligible for government-subsidised training?

- 15 years old or over?
- no longer at school?
- living or working in NSW?
- an Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident, humanitarian visa holder or New Zealand citizen?

If you answered 'Yes' to all four questions, then you're eligible to enrol in a government-subsidised course with an approved Smart and Skilled training provider.

For more information, please visit the [Smart and Skilled](#) website.



# AgSkilled - Funded Training

AgSkilled seeks to upskill NSW's cotton, grains, production horticulture, viticulture and rice growing industries to manage the challenges of the future. It is a \$15million investment by the NSW Government to offer fully funded accredited training to meet training needs across four key pillars: production, technology, business and safety.

## New Courses

Two new courses have recently been added to the list of available training:

- Farm Crop Trials
- Grapevine Pest and Disease Management

[Click here](#) to see a full list of courses

## Student Eligibility

Participants must meet the standard Smart and Skilled eligibility criteria:

- 15 years old or over
- no longer at school
- living or working in NSW
- an Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident, humanitarian visa holder or New Zealand citizen.

[More information](#)

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# 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](#)

**Barrangirra:** 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](#)

**Free Workshops to Assist in Supervising Your Apprentice or Trainee:** a series of face to face and/or virtual workshops 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 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](#)

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# Market Comparison Tools Now Available

The Market Comparison Tool, designed to help users choose a training provider or course that will help them achieve their goals, is now available on the [NSW Department of Education website](#). This web-based tool includes a comparison feature for Smart and Skilled providers using three metrics: student satisfaction, employment outcomes and whether a student finishes their course. It also contains personality and subject quizzes designed to match users' interests and strengths with course and career options.



## Discover your career pathway

Take quizzes to help identify your interests, values and skills. Then view the results to find occupations and courses that suit you.



## Explore industries and courses

Learn about career opportunities and industries you're interested in. Then explore courses to find the right ones for you.



## Compare options for your course

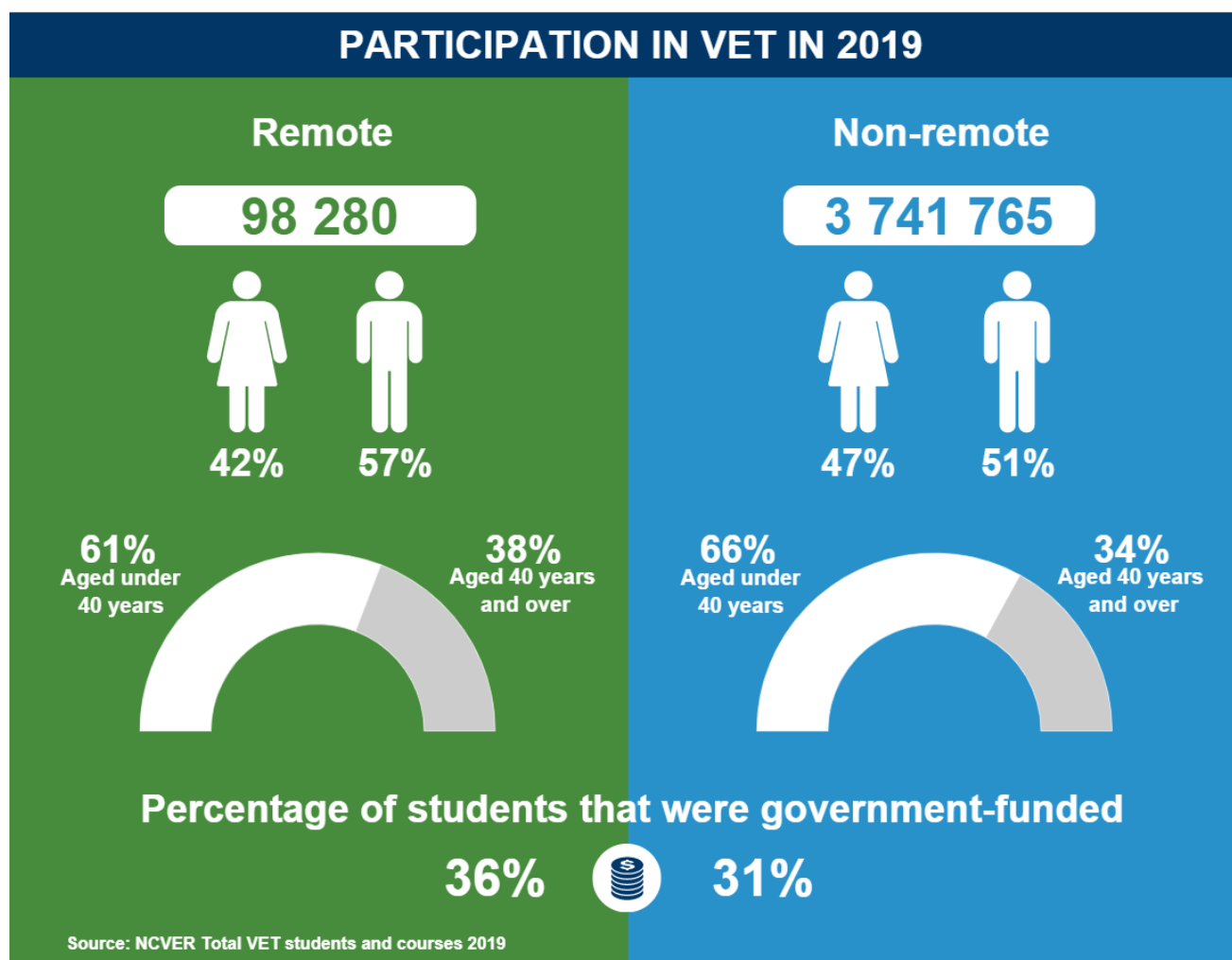
Know which course you'd like to do? Find a course provider that suits your learning preferences and location.



# New NCVET Report: Equity Groups in VET

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) has recently released a new report on equity groups and VET. The report looks at student participation, achievement and outcomes. It highlights how different equity groups fare in their training journey. The six featured groups include: people with disability, Indigenous, non-English speaking background, low socio economic status, remote and not employed.

View the report on the [NCVER website](#).



## National Training Package Projects

### New Projects Approved for 2021-22

Eight new projects to review and improve national qualifications and skills standards have been approved to commence. The projects are across the agriculture, horticulture, animal care, food, pharmaceutical and meat processing industries.



They were approved by the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) on 22 June, based on the project proposals (cases for change) submitted as part of the [2021 Annual Updates](#) to the IRC Skills Forecasts and Proposed Schedules of Work.

The projects will be overseen by the relevant Industry Reference Committees and will be managed by Skills Impact. Consultation will take place with the broader industry to review and develop the necessary skills standards.

## Agriculture, Horticulture, Conservation and Land Management

**Review of Unit Sectors Project:** This project continues the full review of the AHC Training Package outlined in the 2019 – 2022 Skills Forecast. It will consist of four sub-projects across the following areas and sectors:

- Community and common work-related skills
- Composting, organic production and permaculture
- Livestock
- Indigenous

**Water Trading 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.

## Animal Care and Management

**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.

**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.

## Food, Beverage and Pharmaceutical

**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 concerns and working in remote locations, as well as ensuring products meet strict international regulation relating to identification of foods as being indigenous. Skills standards will be reviewed and developed to incorporate these requirements.

**Pharmaceutical Good Manufacturing Practice Project:** Recent industry and RTO feedback on previously updated units have indicated a need to update the units to improve training delivery and accurately reflect current Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) requirements.

**Sugar Milling Project:** Current sugar milling qualifications will be redesigned to reflect the skills shared across industry job roles, and to encourage use of training within the VET system.

## Meat Processing

**Meat Processing Skills Review Project:** A full review of the AMP Australian Meat Processing Training Package will start with creating foundational training products that will lead to simplification of the training package and training delivery. MINTRAC will support this project development, identifying stakeholders for participation through their networks, and managing the revision of draft skills standards.



## Update on Current 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.

### Validation Underway:

- [Horse Care Project](#)

### Validation complete and further updates being made:

- [Animal Reproduction Project](#)
- [Crops Pastures and Seeds Project](#)
- [Dairy and Milk Harvesting Project](#)
- [Landscaping Project](#)
- [Parks and Gardens Project](#)
- [Skills for Land Rehabilitation \(Mined Land\)](#)

### In Final Stages:

- [Meat Rendering Project](#)
- [Meat Slicing Project](#)

### Endorsed by AISC:

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

For the July update on national training package projects from Skills Impact, [click here](#).

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