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AFAM ITAB

**Agriculture, Food
& Animal Management**

February 2024

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If you have any questions relating to skills and training in NSW, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes,
Jess

Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance (MISA) - Input on 2024 Workforce plan

The Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance (MISA) Jobs and Skills Council are inviting food, beverage and pharmaceutical manufacturing stakeholders to share their insights on workforce challenges for inclusion in MISA's 2024 workforce plan. MISA's [initial workforce plan](#) on manufacturing workforce challenges was published late 2023.

MISA are particularly keen to understand if the challenges outlined in the initial workforce plan resonate with your experiences. Does it accurately reflect the issues your organisation or sector is facing? MISA welcome your input on the following key challenges:

- Attracting a workforce to food, beverage and pharmaceutical industry sectors
- The ageing workforce and impending skills retirement cliff
- Lack of diversity in the manufacturing talent pool
- Relevant, future-focused skills deepening and reskilling - the need for broader and more consistent skills development that meets demand for emerging industries throughout careers.

Furthermore, MISA want to know what changes you foresee in your workforce due to changes in government regulation, energy costs, technological changes, economic conditions, and other global risks.

There are several ways to provide feedback:

1. [Complete a survey](#) before Friday, 8 March 2024. It takes 10 minutes to complete the survey.

OR

2. [Share you input via email](#)

OR

3. Request a meeting with Mark Shaddock marks@manufacturingalliance.org.au

Should you wish to speak to someone regarding the workforce snapshot, please contact Mark Shaddock on marks@manufacturingalliance.org.au or 0499 599 298.



Smart and Skilled Update

On Thursday 23 November 2023, Minister Whan announced the extension of the Fee Free TAFE initiative in NSW (also known as NSW Fee Free (NFF)) for a further three years. The extension will deliver 147,400 fee free places from 1 January 2024 to 30 December 2026. For the first six months of 2024, there is a new set of eligible courses that align with national and state priorities and reflect the available places.

The NSW Skills List has been updated to indicate the revised NSW Fee Free list.

These updates cover changes because of:

- New qualifications added to the Skills List and Prices and Fees Schedule
- Updates to a Training Package and accredited courses
- Updates to Vocational Training Orders (VTOs)
- Qualifications removed from the Pre-qualified List
- Updates to tags on the Skills List for Foundation Skills and NSW Fee Free qualifications.

Addition to the NSW Skills List pending available Smart and Skilled provider

This qualification is approved to be added to the NSW Skills List once a Smart and Skilled provider has added it to their NSW scope of registration.

- RGR40619 Certificate IV in Horse Breeding (Available pathway(s): Targeted priorities Full Qualifications)

Removal from the Pre-qualified List

One qualification has been removed from the pre-qualified list as the three-year period for listing has expired without a Smart and Skilled provider requesting scope.

- SFI20219 Cert II in Fishing Operations

This means a Smart and Skilled provider would need to seek to place this qualification on scope for delivery in NSW and then apply for listing on the NSW Skills List. Qualifications stay on the pre-qualified list for period of three years. If there have been no requests to re-add the qualification to the Skills List in that time, the qualification is removed from the Pre-qualified list. Qualifications that have no or very low training activity may be added to the Pre-qualified list and can return to the Skills List if there is evidence of potential increased demand.

These changes do not appear on Version 14.2 of the NSW Skills List. For a full list of changes, refer to the official [Smart and Skilled update](#).

Download the latest [Version 14.2 of the NSW Skills List](#). "NFF Jan-Jun 24" indicates the qualification is fee-free for all Smart and Skilled students enrolling from 13 November 2023, and commencing between 1 January 2024 and 30 June 2024.

Bert Evans Scholarship Winners Announced

AFAM would like to congratulate the recipients of the 2024 Bert Evans Scholarship.

One hundred and fifty outstanding apprentices from across NSW have been awarded a life-changing Bert Evans Apprentice Scholarship, which provides crucial support to individuals who are facing hardship. The \$15,000 scholarship, spread across three years, aims to provide vital support to individuals who have demonstrated a strong aptitude for vocational education and training in difficult circumstances.

The 2024 cohort of winners includes 45 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander apprentices, 67 learners with disabilities, 46 women excelling in non-traditional trades, and 64 mature-aged apprentices, with 116 of the recipients coming from regional NSW.



NSW Training Awards 2024: Be Recognised

Applications are open now for 2024 NSW Training Awards. The Awards are a great way to receive recognition for the effort that individuals, Employers and RTOs put into vocational education and training (VET) and for organisations to showcase their commitment to VET. The Awards raise the profile of organisations and the awareness of industry to the organisations' dedication to skills for the workforce.

Don't miss out on your chance to be recognised with a NSW Training Award!

Closing dates are as follows:

- Individual Award categories close **Sunday, 17 March 2024**.
- Organisation Award categories close **Sunday, 31 March 2024**.

The [NSW Department of Education website](#) contains all the information you will need including the [award categories](#) for both individuals and organisations, [how to enter](#), [eligibility and selection criteria](#) and [frequently asked questions](#).



Premier's Vocational Education in Schools Scholarship

This scholarship is open to teachers in NSW secondary schools, specifically Vocational Education and Training accredited teachers, or teachers undertaking a VET co-ordination role at their school. The scholarship is for a study to research

current issues in vocational education that impact students in schools.

Areas for research may include, but are not restricted to:

- the role of workplace learning in the delivery and assessment of VET courses
- school-based Apprenticeship and Traineeship pathways
- partnerships between vocational education providers and industry
- curriculum structures, delivery patterns and arrangements of vocational education
- articulation of vocational education credentials acquired by students into post-School vocational education and training.

The successful applicant will undertake a study tour and follow-up activities of up to five weeks internationally or within Australia. One scholarship of \$15,000 will be offered for travel during 2025.

To apply, register for updates and read the terms and conditions or FAQs, visit the [NSW Department of Education website](#). **Applications close 11.59pm (AEST), Friday, 3 May 2024.**



Jobs and Skills Councils Project Updates:

[AgTrade Apprenticeship](#): Skills Insight is in the process of producing a report, outlining the insights provided by stakeholders and presenting advice for how an agricultural trade apprenticeship could be implemented.

[AHC Improvements](#): Submitted to the Training Package Assurance Body.

[Tree Felling Project](#): In the finalisation stage.

New Projects

[Essential Meat Processing Skills](#): This project managed by [MINTRAC](#) as part of their collaborative partnership with Skills Insight, is a continuation of the [project work in 2022](#) to update the AMP Training Package so that it is reflective of current industry skills requirements, compliant to training standards and ready for any future qualifications reform. Stage 2 will focus on three Certificate II meat processing qualifications in Food Services, Abattoirs and Meat Retailing.

[Meat Safety Induction Pilot](#): This project managed by MINTRAC as part of their collaborative partnership with Skills Insight, was initiated by the Agriculture Workforce Working Group (AWWG) and aims to improve workplace safety by establishing a nationally consistent, voluntary induction training program to be piloted in the meat industry.

[Shearing and Wool Classing](#): Six qualifications and 33 units of competency will be reviewed to better reflect the skill level of the tasks described and the skills required by industry.

[Connecting RTOs & Employers Research Project](#): Skills Insight is undertaking a research project to examine how barriers to training are being experienced and addressed in the racing and breeding industry. They will engage with relevant organisations to uncover insights into existing solutions and what makes them successful. Stakeholder feedback is welcomed throughout the project.



NSW Grants, Opportunities and Scholarships

The following grants, opportunities and scholarships are available to employers and vocational learners. Follow the links for more information.

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

[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.

[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.

[Medium Business Support Grant](#): available to business and non-profit organisations

with more than 20 and less than 200 full-time equivalent employees who were directly impacted by storms and floods from August to September 2022. **Closes 11.59pm 29 March 2024.**

[OCHRE Opportunity Hubs](#): aim to provide First Nations young people with the confidence and knowledge to follow a supported pathway between school and further education and/or employment through partnerships with schools, coordination of local opportunities, mentoring, support and more.

[On Farm Connectivity Program](#): to enable primary producers in agriculture, forestry and/or fisheries to take advantage of digital agribusiness solutions to boost productivity and improve safety. **Applications close 30 June 2024 or when funding is exhausted, whichever occurs first.**

[Premier's Vocational Education in Schools Scholarship](#): for a study to research current issues in vocational education that impact students in schools. The scholarship is open to teachers in NSW secondary schools, specifically Vocational Education and Training accredited teachers, or teachers undertaking a VET co-ordination role at their school. **Applications close 11.59pm (AEST), Friday, 3 May 2024.**

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

Other Grants and opportunities:

[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.

Please feel welcome share this newsletter with anyone you think might be interested.

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