



# WHAT IS AN APPRENTICESHIP OR TRAINEESHIP?

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Apprenticeships and traineeships are formal training arrangements between an employer and an employee. They combine work with study for a qualification, certificate or diploma.

They can be full-time, part-time or school-based. Anyone who's old enough to work can do one. There are wide variations of arrangements, particularly around pay, support and time off. Interestingly, a degree of success of a training arrangement depends on employers' HR practices and communication skills.

The training has to be registered and recognised by your state or territory training authority. They decide which qualifications are apprenticeships and which are traineeships.

### Why consider hiring an apprentice or trainee?

Hiring an apprentice or trainee can be a cost-effective way to build skills in your business while supporting someone starting a new career.

Young workers can bring enthusiasm and new skills to a workplace and can become loyal and valuable employees.

You could also be eligible for financial incentives.

### What am I responsible for?

Best practice employers understand their obligations to young workers and recognise that their guidance and support can shape young employees' futures and their attitudes to work.

As an employer you are also responsible for:

- meeting legal requirements (such as employment conditions and occupational health and safety);
- providing appropriate supervision and support for the apprentice or trainee;
- lodging the required training documentation.

### STARTING AN APPRENTICESHIP OR TRAINEESHIP

Before someone can start an apprenticeship or traineeship, the employer and employee need to register with the state or territory training authority. This is called 'signing up'.

#### Step 1: Contact an Australian Apprenticeships Centre

To find the nearest one, go to [australianapprenticeships.gov.au](http://australianapprenticeships.gov.au) or call 13 38 73. These centres advise on apprenticeships and traineeships and can help choose the right training.

They can give you information about the paperwork you need to fill in and the supervision, facilities and support you'll need to give your apprentice or trainee.

They also look after Australian Government incentive payments.

#### Step 2: Contact a Registered Training Organisation

Apprentices and trainees need to be enrolled for training through a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). RTOs are often called 'trade schools' and give nationally recognised training. They can also assess apprentice and trainees' skills, and help work out a training plan.

#### Step 3: Fill in the paperwork

The Australian Apprenticeships Centre will help you fill in and lodge all the paperwork, including the training contract.

## Can new employees be paid as trainees while they're learning on-the-job or during their probation period?

They can only be paid as a trainee if they are doing a registered traineeship that is recognised in the state or territory where they are working. They cannot be paid as a trainee just because they are new, learning on the job or on probation.

## How long does an apprenticeship usually take?

Apprenticeships usually take 3 to 4 years full-time.

## Can an existing employee start an apprenticeship or traineeship with their current employer?

Yes, provided there is no pay reduction. You will still need to register the apprenticeship or traineeship with your state or territory training authority. The Pastoral Award 2010 specifies that they are entitled to stay at the same pay rate.

## What pay rate does an employee get after they finish their apprenticeship or traineeship?

They are entitled to the rate for their classification in their modern award. This is based on their age, qualifications and skills.

## Are apprentices and trainees entitled to paid sick leave and annual leave?

They are entitled to personal (sick) leave and annual leave under the National Employment Standards and the Pastoral Award 2010 the same as other employees.

Some school-based trainees get an extra loading instead of paid annual leave, personal leave and public holidays.

## Do apprentices and trainees get penalty rates and overtime?

They are entitled to the same conditions as other employees, including penalty rates, overtime rates, allowances and breaks.

## Do apprentices and trainees get paid while they are at training?

Full and part time trainees must be paid for any time spent doing training. School-based trainees don't get paid for training – they get an hourly rate for all hours they work on the job.

Whilst there are guidelines for payment, the reality is that farmers and employees usually negotiate this and make arrangements that suit their circumstances.

## Who pays for the training?

State and territory training authorities decide who pays for training. Some modern awards require the employer to cover the cost of training.

Often the employer will pay for all or part of the training, even if they don't have to. Sometimes the government covers the training costs. For more information **contact your state or territory training authority.**

Visit [fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/helping-the-community/campaigns/apprentice-campaigns/national-apprentice-campaign](http://fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/helping-the-community/campaigns/apprentice-campaigns/national-apprentice-campaign)

### REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATIONS (RTOS)

These organisations deliver accredited courses in Agriculture from Certificate II, through to Advanced Diploma and pathways to degree levels.

Certificate II in Agriculture is offered to Year 10, 11 and 12 students as a Vocational Education and Training in Schools program or an Australian School Based Apprenticeship.

These progressive qualifications provide training from the early skills of a farm hand right through to dairy business management.

At all stages the students are involved in dedicated vocational training – with classroom participation for developing knowledge and on-farm practical experience.

At the Diploma and Advanced Diploma levels, projects are undertaken on the individual's home farm, or in a managed work placement to ensure relevance and extra value for their study experience.

Developing the skills, knowledge and technical competence of people on farm is central to a farm's success.