



ACT
Government

RTO Forum Skills Canberra

Thursday 19 February 2026

10:00am – 12:30pm

Olympus room – Hellenic Club (Woden)

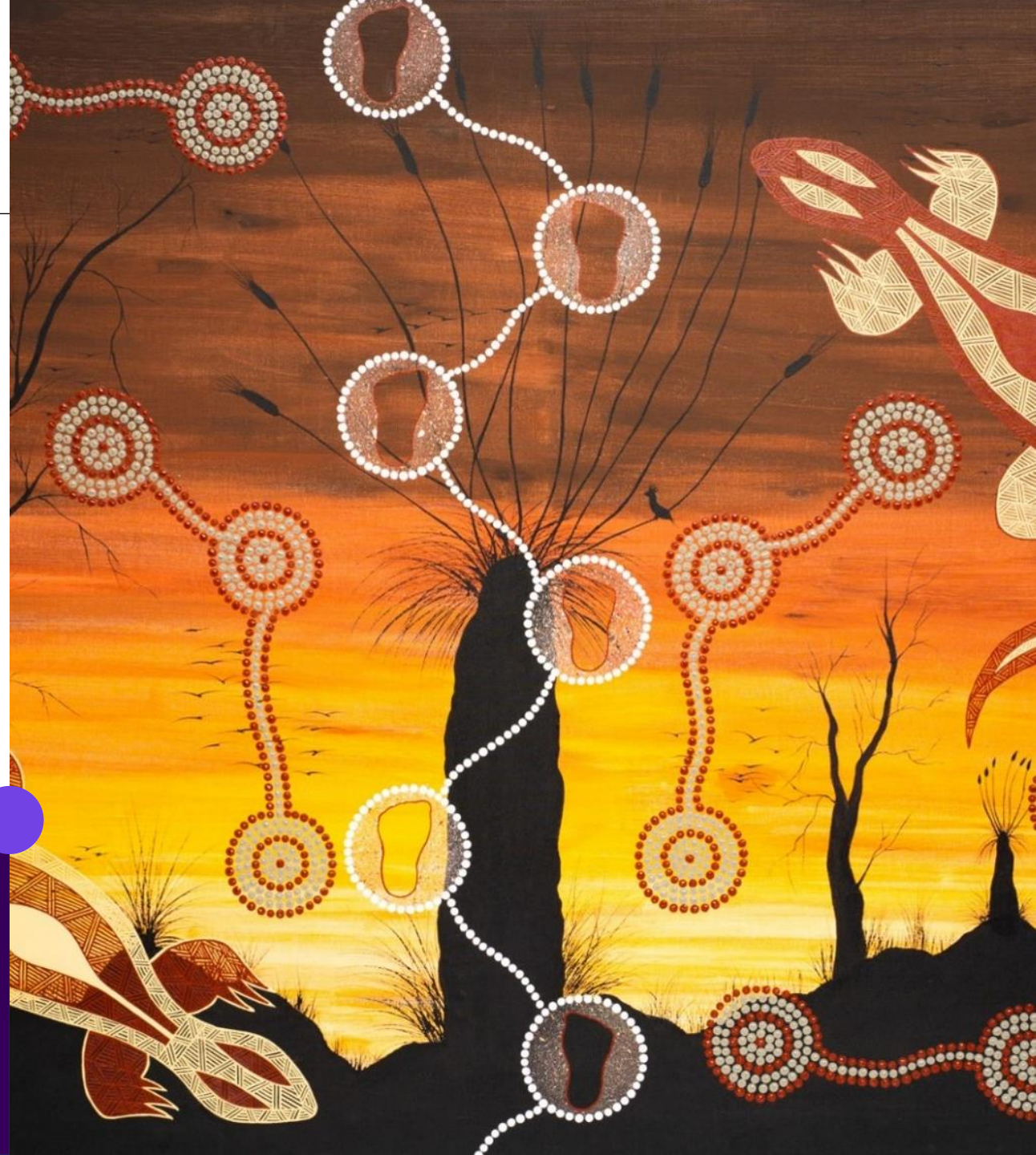


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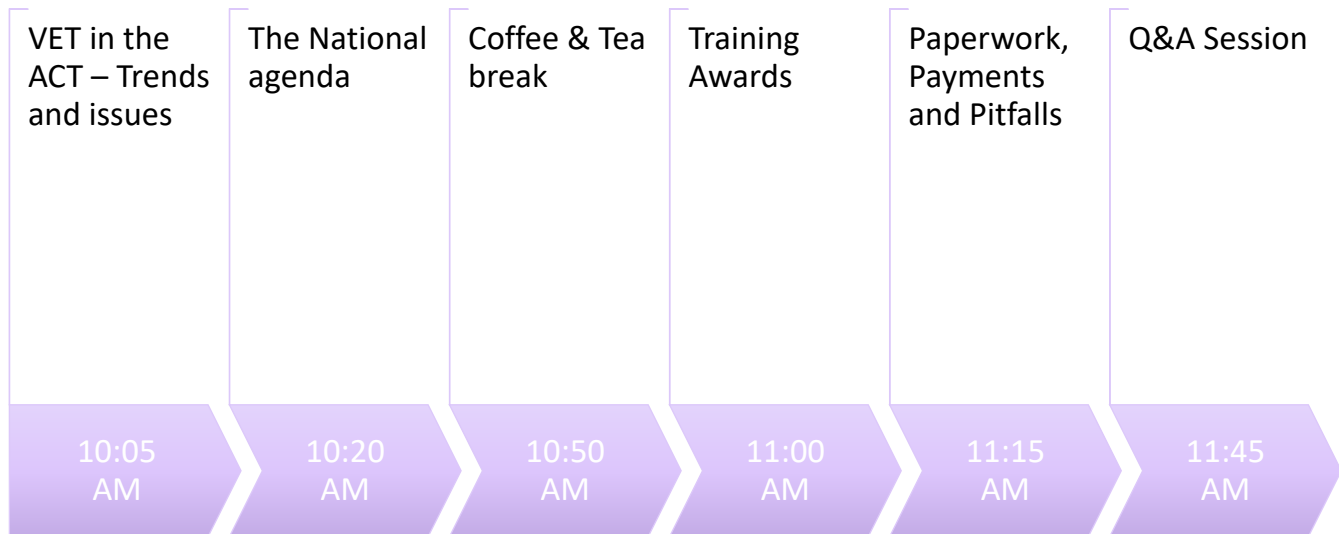
WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

Mark Harriott

Executive Branch Manager, Skills Canberra



Agenda



VET in the ACT

Trend and Issues

Andre Diez de Aux

Senior Director, Skills Policy and
Strategy





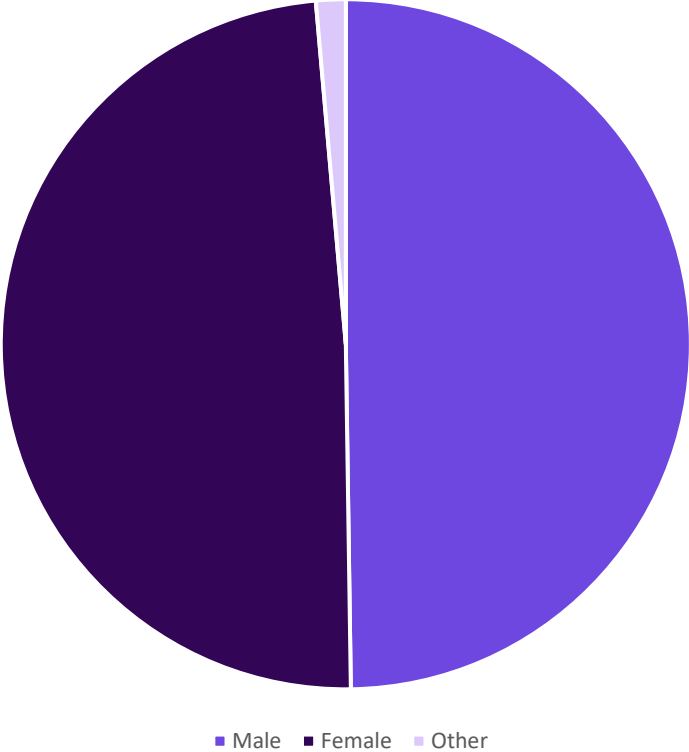
Objectives

- Give an overview of learners in VET in the ACT
- Give an overview of government-funded ACT VET activity, both over the medium and longer terms
- Show an increasing number of young people in the ACT are going straight into the labour market

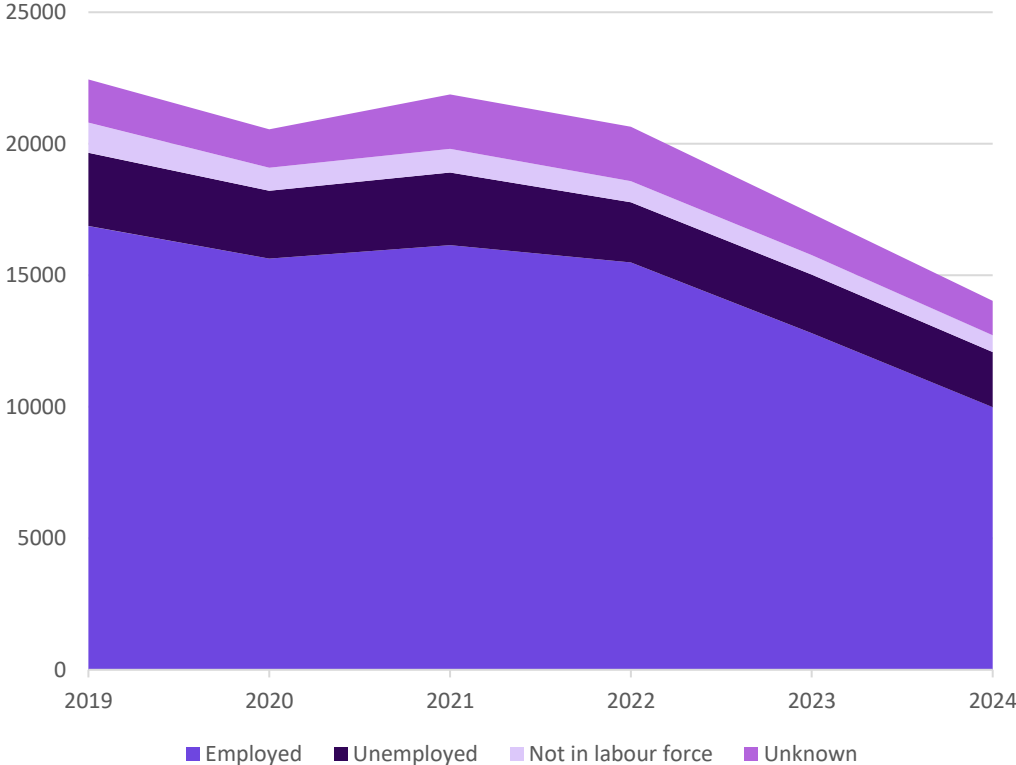


Who are our learners?

Government-funded VET students by gender



Government-funded VET by labour market status

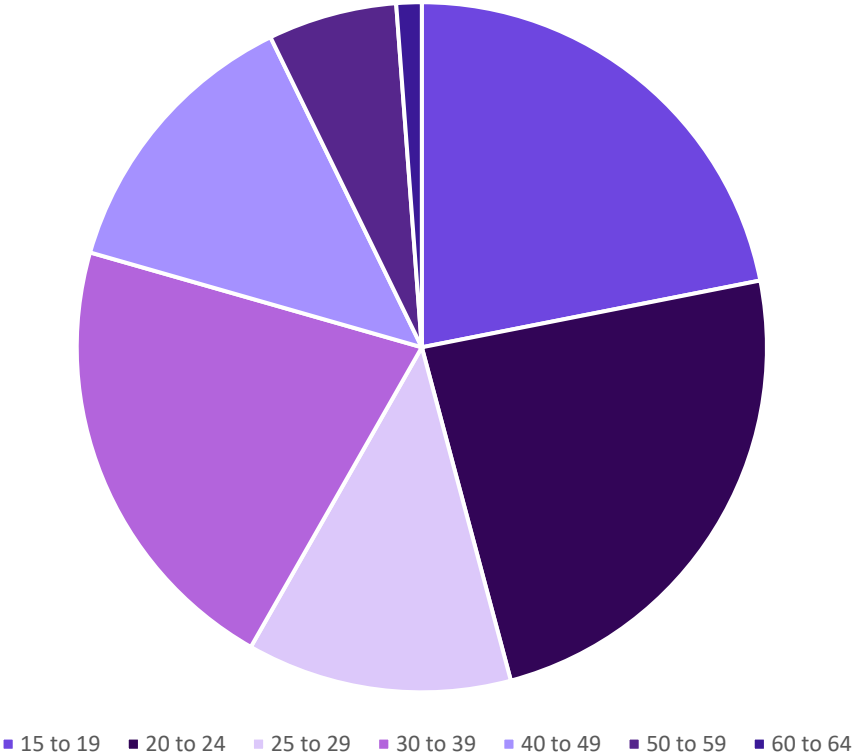


Source: NCVET Databuilder, ACT Government-funded students

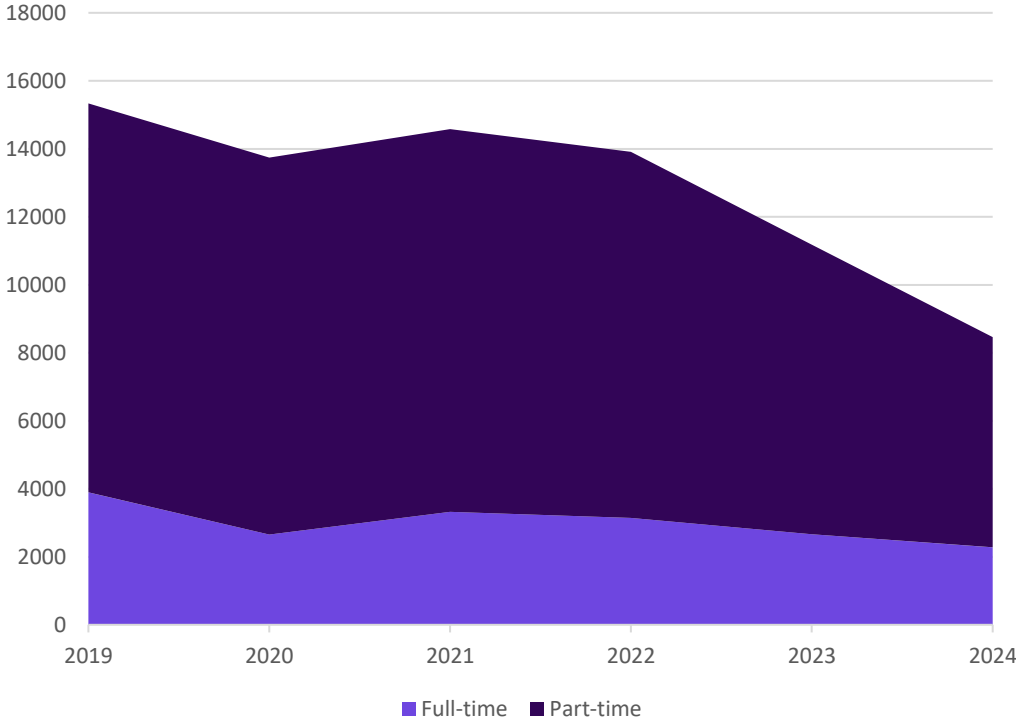


Who are our learners?

Government-funded VET students by age group

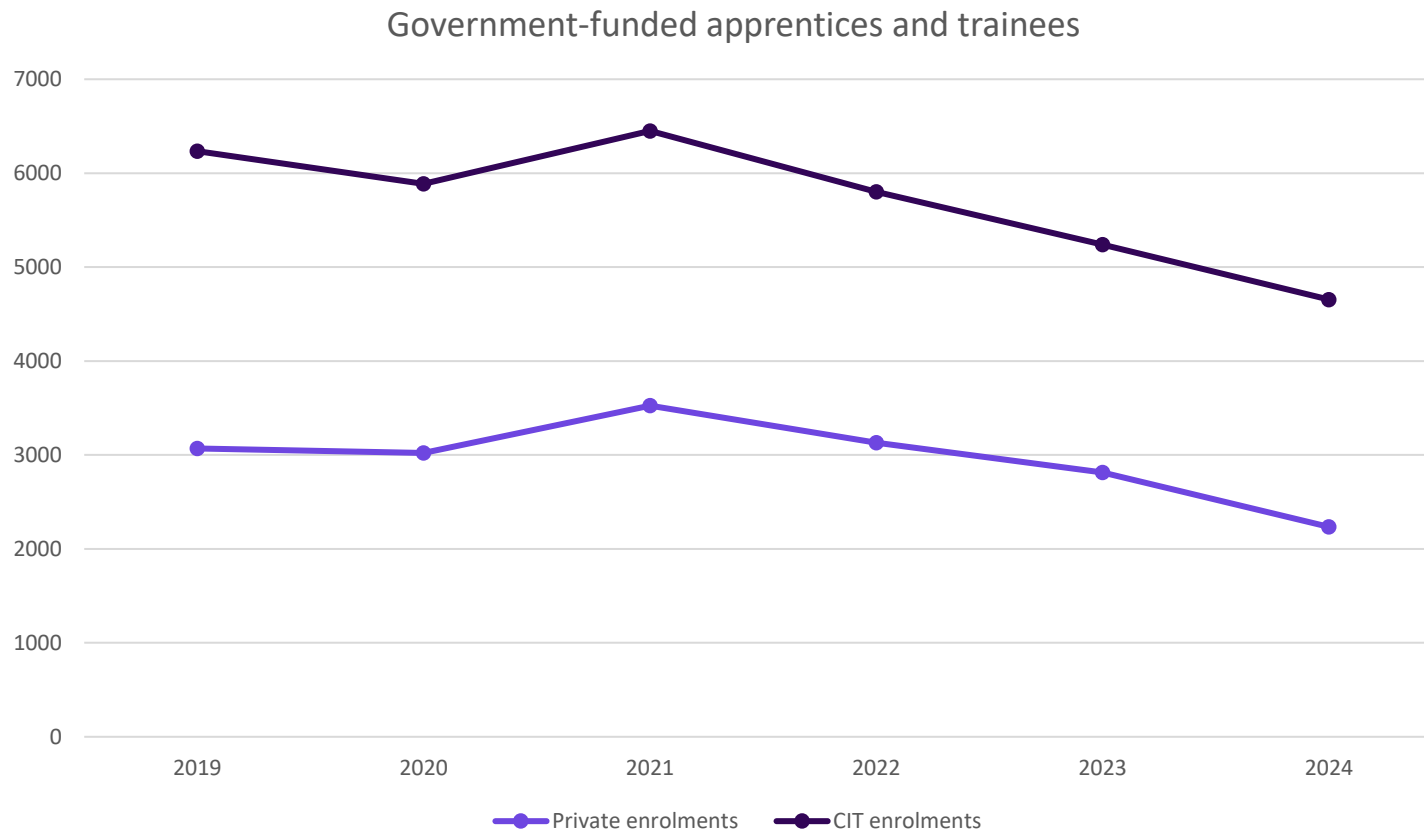


Part- vs full-time government-funded learners (excluding apprentices and trainees)



Source: NCVET Databuilder, ACT Government-funded students

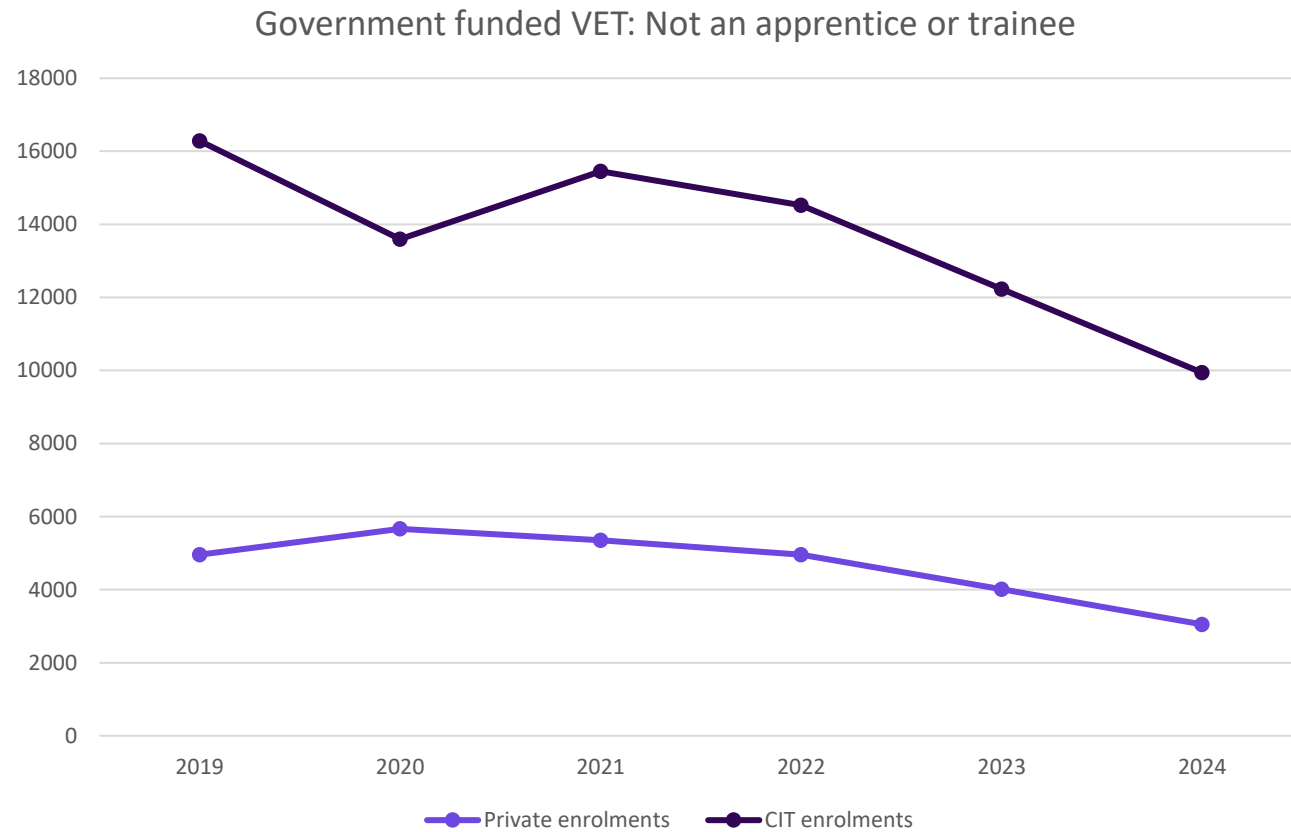
ACT Government-funded VET: Apprentices and trainees



Source: NCVET Databuilder

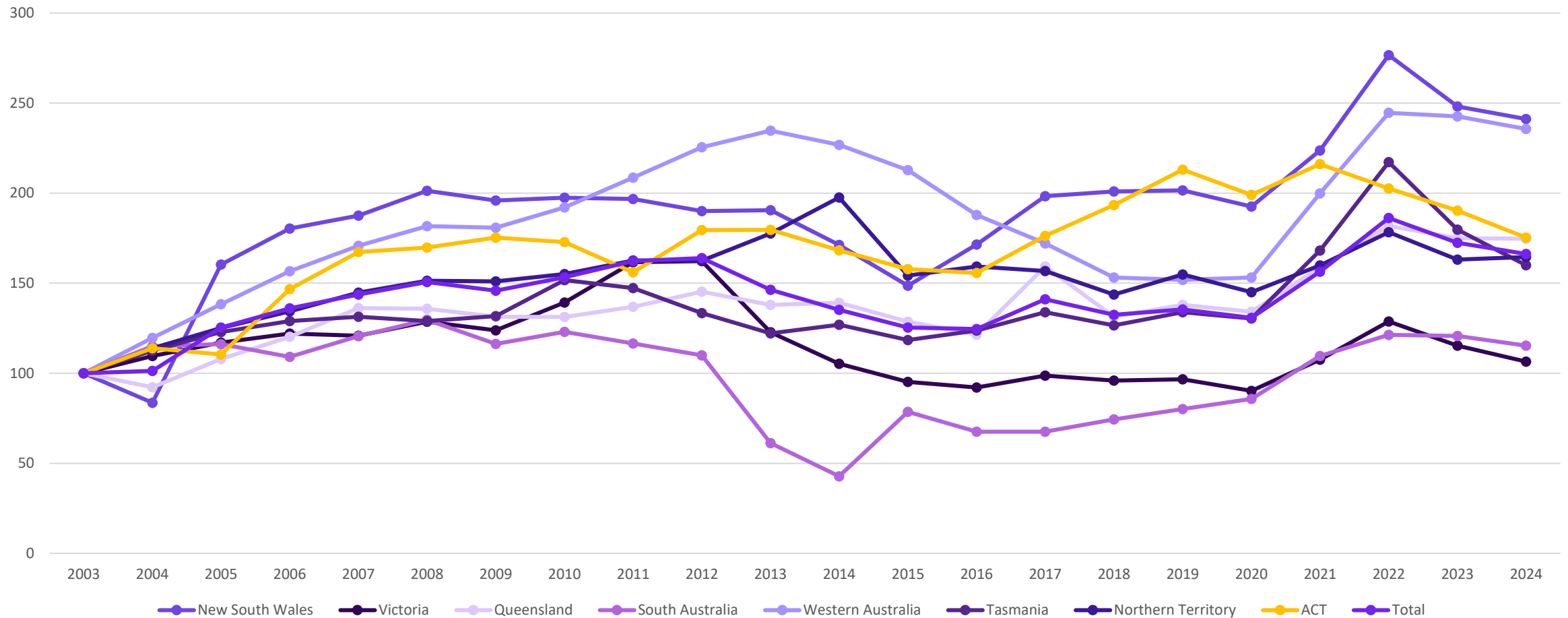


ACT Government-funded VET enrolments—not an apprentice or trainee



Source: NCVET Databuilder

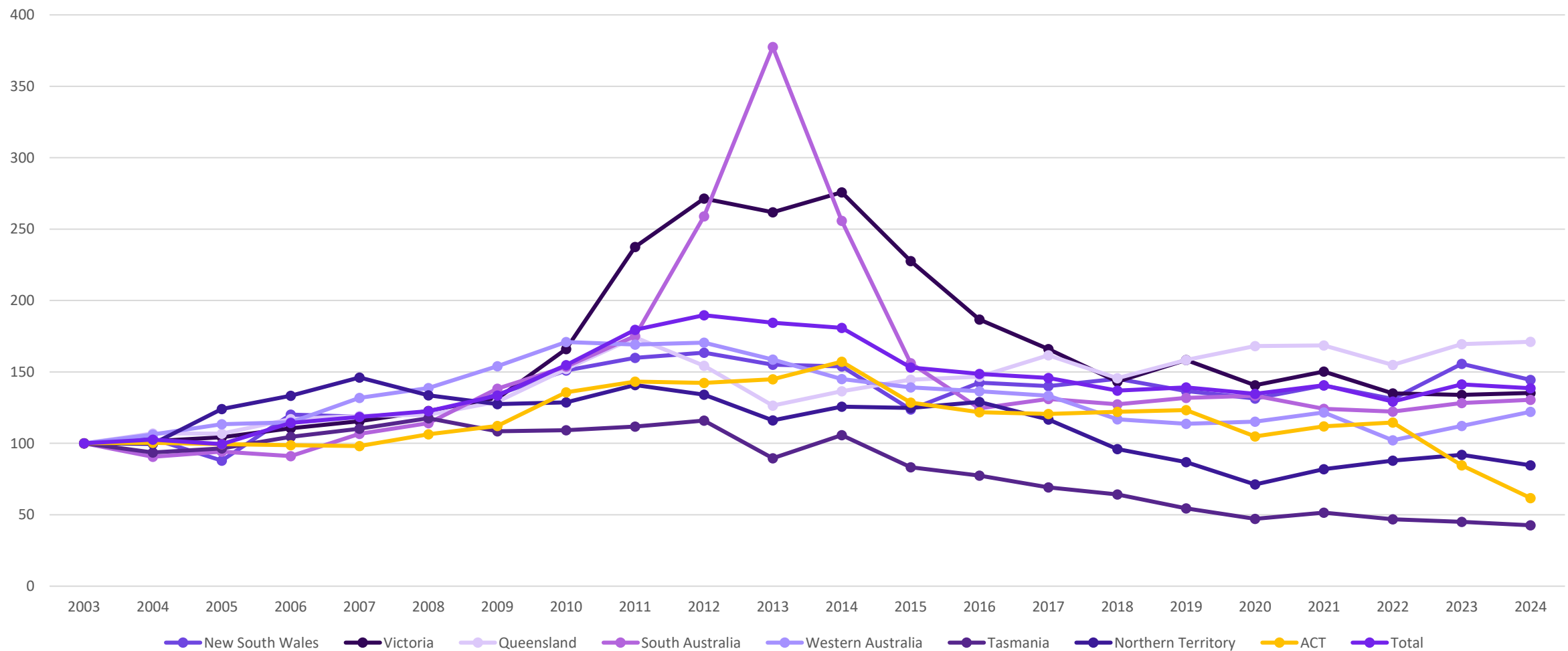
Through a longer lens: Apprentices and trainees



Source: NCVET Vocstats. Program Enrolments, training package qualifications. Apprentice / trainee status by state / territory of data submitter by year and type of accreditation.



Through a longer lens: Not an apprentice or trainee



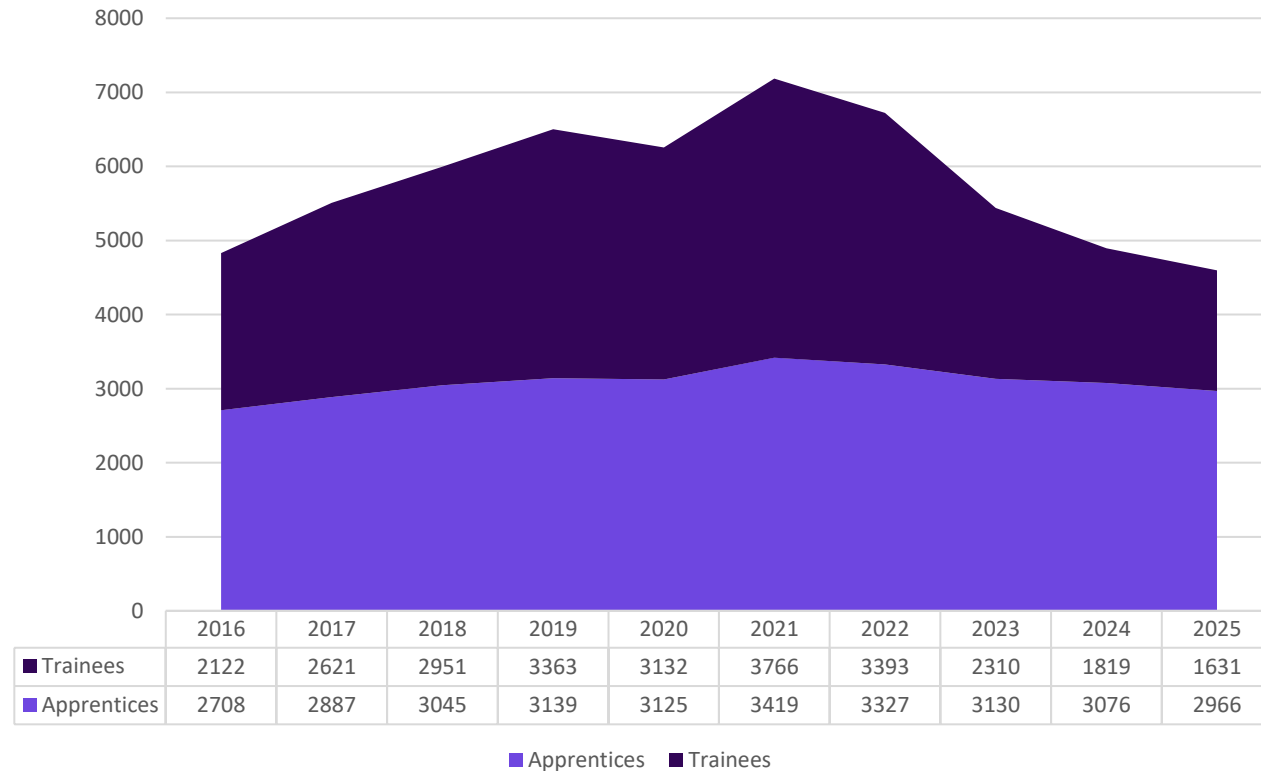
Source: NCVER Vocstats. Program Enrolments, training package qualifications. Apprentice / trainee status by state / territory of data submitter by year and type of accreditation.



Apprentices vs trainees in training

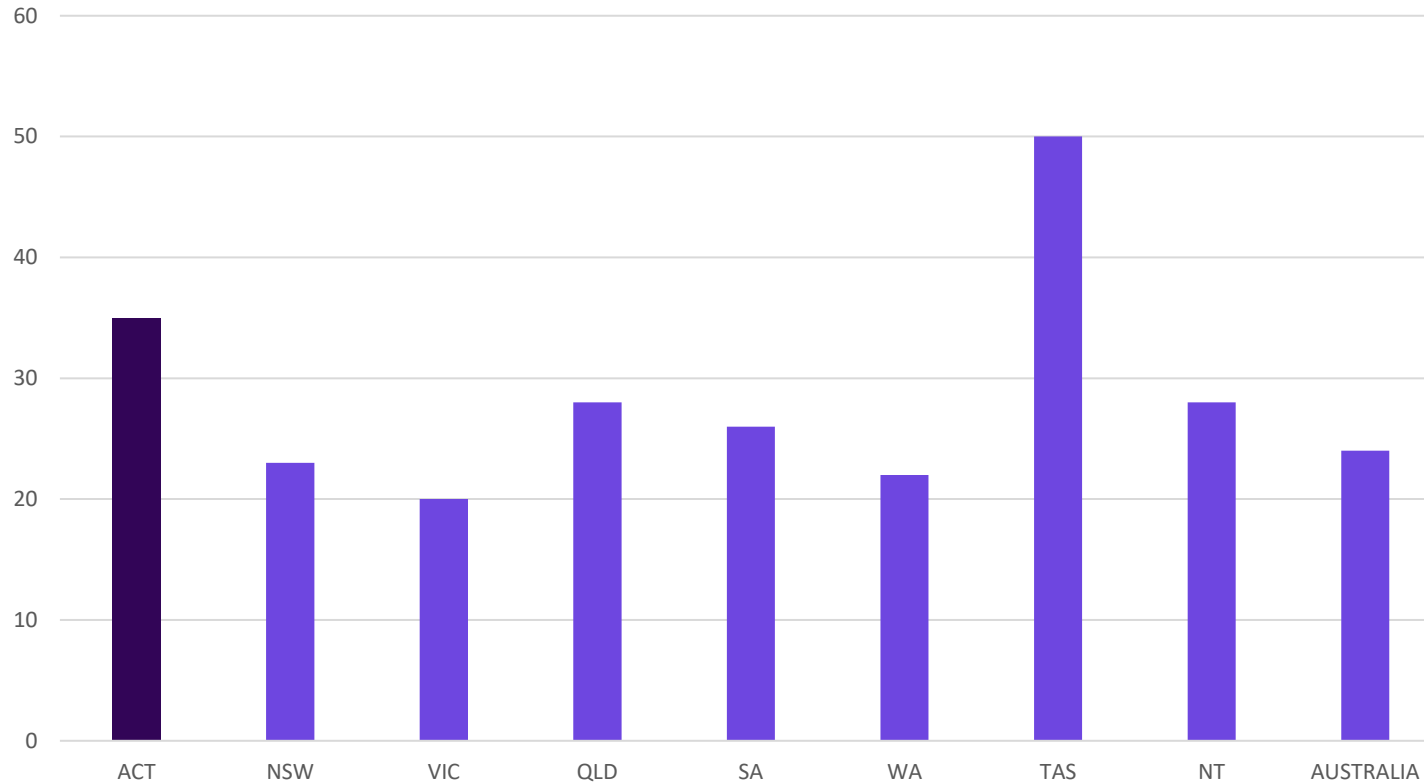


Apprentices vs Trainees in training



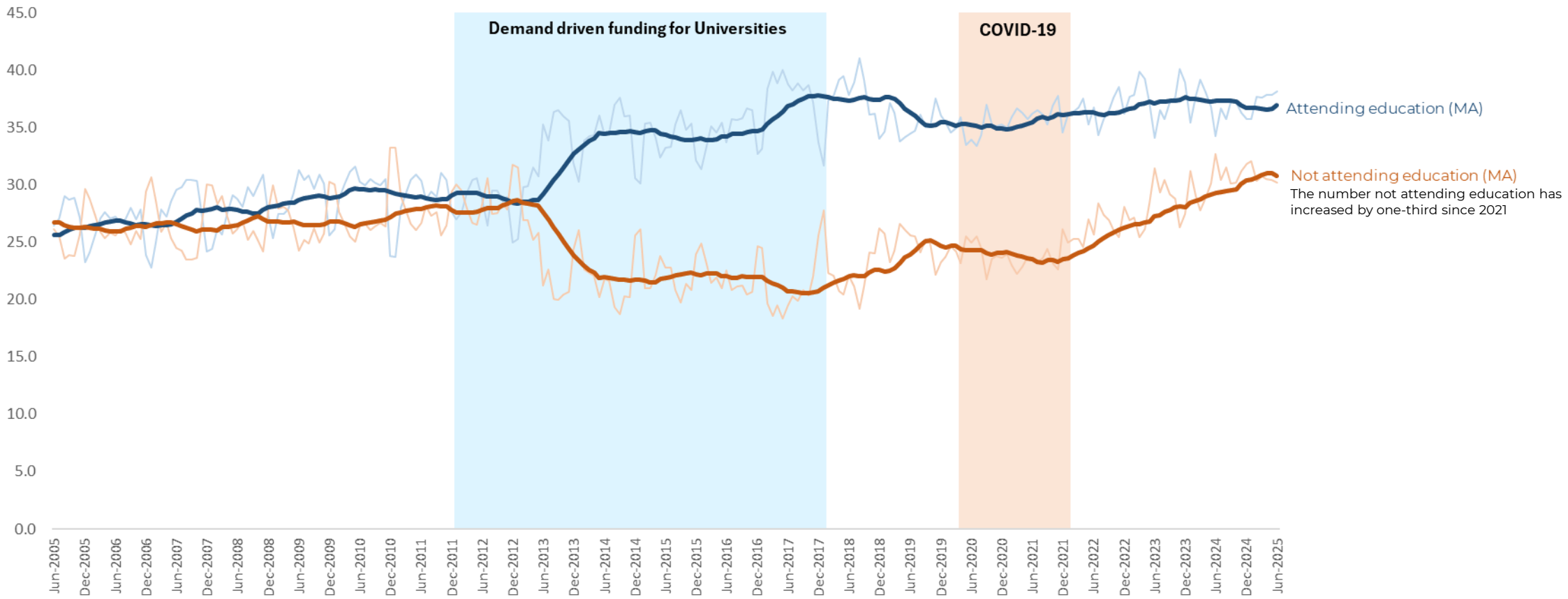
Apprenticeships as % of total government-funded activity

Apprentices as proportion of govt-funded VET students



While the number attending education remains stable, the number not attending education has steadily increased

ACT 15-24 years old full time education attendance (in 000 people)



Source: 6291.0.55.001 Labour Force, Australia, Detailed Table 03. Labour force status for 15-24 year olds by Age, Educational attendance (full-time) and Sex and by State, Territory and Educational attendance (full-time)

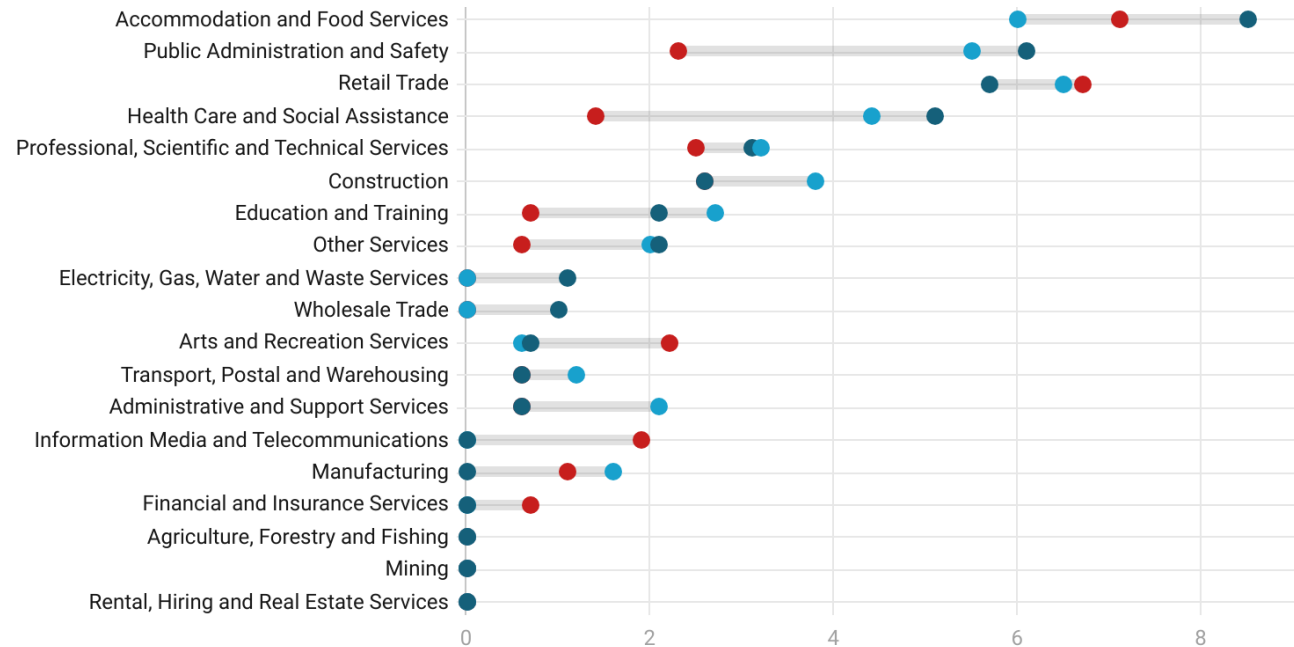


Where do they work?



Industry of main job, 15–24-year-olds in the ACT (000 people)

● August 2014 ● August 2019 ● August 2024



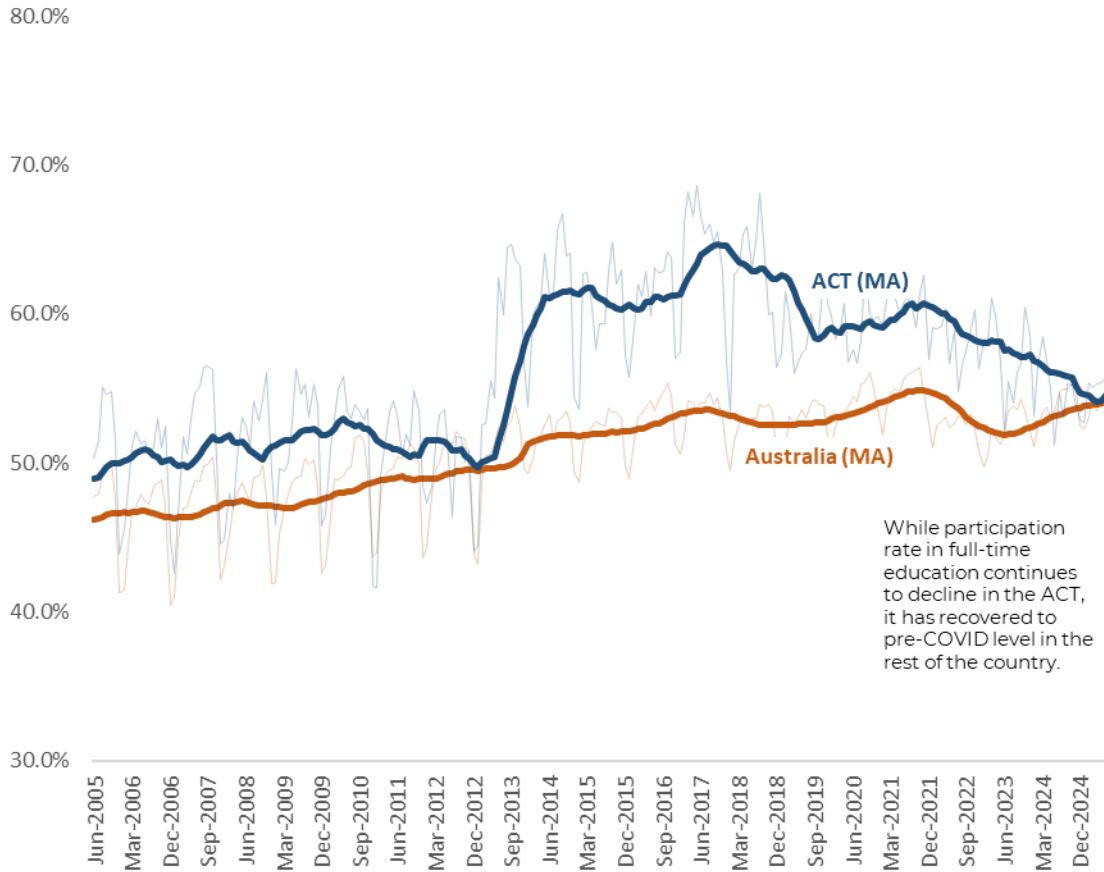
Most estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

Source: Characteristics of Employment, 2014 to 2024, TableBuilder • Created with Datawrapper

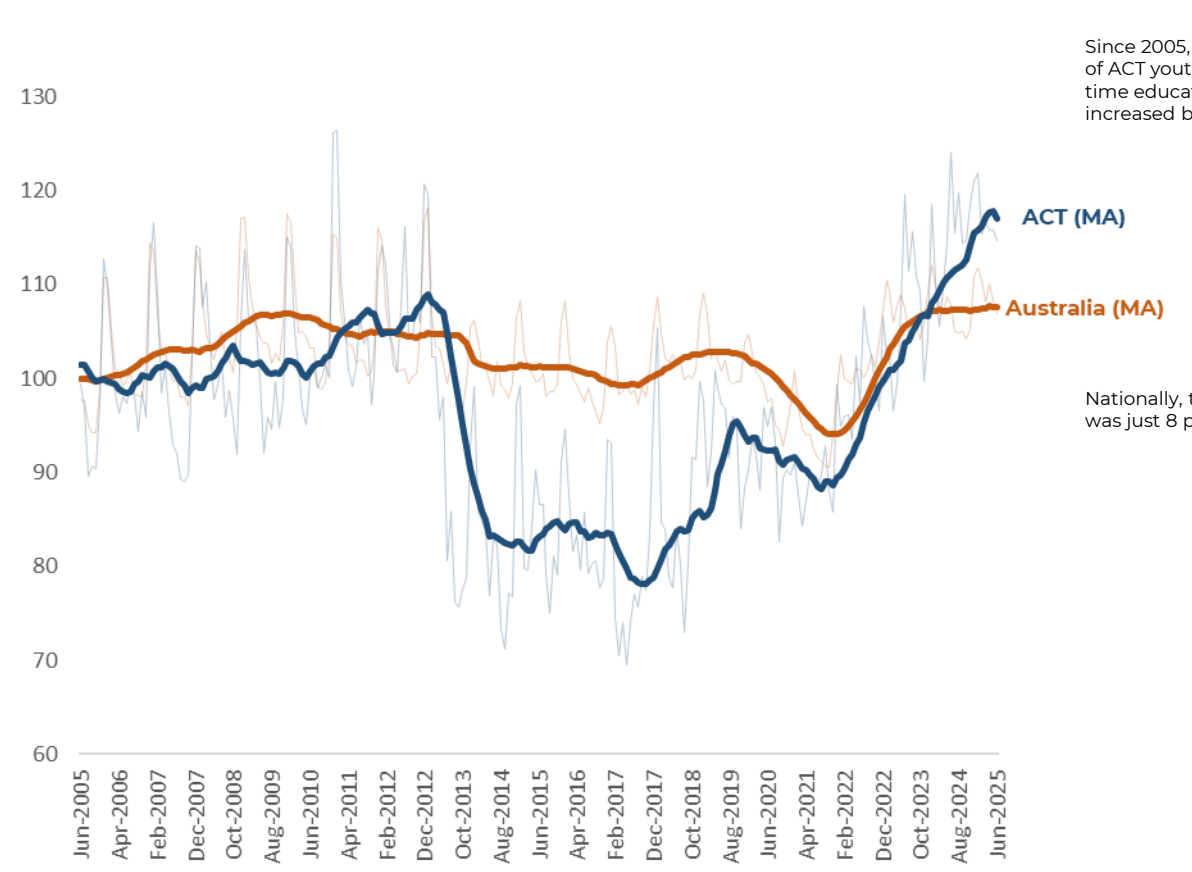
Hospitality and retail remain common for young workers, but health care and government roles are increasingly popular

The drop in full-time education participation is more pronounced in the ACT than nationally

15-24 year old participation in full time education



Young people not attending full-time education, indexed 2005=100



Source: 6291.0.55.001 Labour Force, Australia, Detailed Table 03. Labour force status for 15-24 year olds by Age, Educational attendance (full-time) and Sex and by State, Territory and Educational attendance (full-time)



National Skills Agreement

Skye Turner

Senior Director, Skills Projects and Reporting



National Skills Agreement

The NSA focuses on:

- Delivering high quality, responsive, and accessible training,
- Supporting Australians to obtain the skills they need, and
- Ensuring Australia has the skilled workforce needed in critical industries.

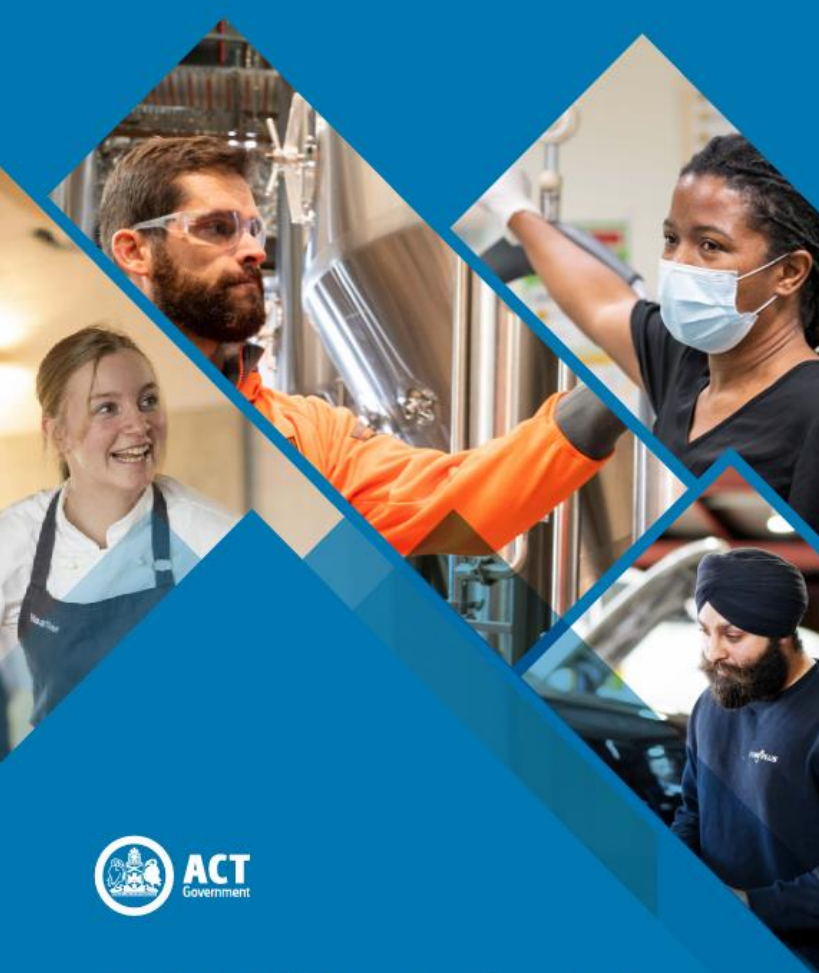
Priority areas include:

- Women's participation and gender equality,
- Working closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and training providers to support skills development and career opportunities,
- Supporting TAFE at the centre – including workforce capability, Centres of Excellence and leadership networks,
- Improvements for data and data systems, and
- Digital capability uplift for learners.

ACT Skills Action Plan

Outlines the ACT's commitment to delivering agreed national priorities, with a focus on local workforce needs.

- Sustaining essential care services
- Developing Australia's sovereign capability and food security
- Supporting the Net Zero transformation
- Delivering housing supply
- Ensuring Australia's digital and technology capabilities
- Gender equality
- Closing the Gap
- Improving the regulation of VET qualifications and quality



ACT Skills Action Plan
2024–28



National Skills Agreement

Policy Initiatives

- The ACT is progressing eight special policy initiatives under the NSA.
- The ACT was the first jurisdiction to have all implementation plans finalised with the Commonwealth – agreed in October 2025.
- The implementation plans are publicly available on the Federal Financial Relations website:
<https://federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/taxonomy/term/1141>



National Skills Agreement

Canberra Institute of Technology

Four policy initiatives will be delivered by the Canberra Institute of Technology

- Measures to strengthen the VET workforce
 - Growing the skills, capacity and capability of the CIT workforce to address NSA objectives and ensure a future ready workforce.
- National TAFE Network
 - Establish a National TAFE Network to foster collaboration between the teachers and administrators of public training providers to develop resources, improve the quality of teaching and learning practice, and enhance the status of TAFE.
- TAFE Centres of Excellence
 - Centres of Excellence will be established to coordinate with industry, universities and governments to grow the future skilled workforce and meet emerging challenges.
 - Electric Vehicle
 - Cyber Security, with a focus on sovereign capability

National Skills Agreement

ACT Government – Skills Canberra

Skills Canberra has begun to implement all other initiatives.

- **Enhanced VET Data and Evidence**
 - Focused on ensuring accurate and timely access to high quality data to measure the achievement of outcomes and support reform within the VET system.
 - The ACT is closely engaged with the interjurisdictional working groups.
 - The sector will be consulted on draft documents this year.
- **Closing the Gap**
 - An initial funding injection to support workforce needs, as well as engagement of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultant to form recommendations for shared decision-making frameworks.
 - Skills Canberra has begun initial consultation with the Elected Body and Aboriginal Services Development team, and ACT Procurement to progress the actions.

National Skills Agreement

ACT Government – Skills Canberra

- Ensuring Access to Foundation Skills Training
 - Expansion of the ACT ACE Grants Program and review of foundation skills offerings.
 - The 2025-2027 ACE Grant Program was finalised in December. Seven successful projects will commence this month – further information on Skills Canberra website
- Improved Completions – Especially for Priority Groups
 - To further understand and address non-completion in the ACT..
 - Establishment of a **Completions Grants program** – the first round is expected to open in coming months. Program aims are under development but likely to focus on supporting learners to complete training and transition successfully into meaningful employment.
 - Establishment of a **Careers Hub** in the ACT – to improve alignment between learner ambitions and course choice and training pathways. Procurement will be undertaken to inform recommendations about Hub establishment and needs.
 - Establishment of a **free text message support service** for ACT VET students – to check in with learners at key points in their training journey and connect them with resources and support.
 - Further **completions research** in the ACT context – to evaluate and refine completions initiatives, build the national evidence base and share best-practice knowledge and case studies.

Qualification Reform

- Skills Ministers agreed qualification reform would be embedded in the Training Package Organising Framework in December 2024.
- Reforms aim to support:
 - Enhanced responsiveness to change
 - High-performing, simple and user-centric
 - Safety and quality
 - Resilient and adaptable skilled workforce
 - Uptake in nationally recognised training
- As of October 2025, there were 73 active training package development projects, with 63 using the updated 2025 TPOF templates.
- Skills Canberra understands these reforms can see administrative impacts on your organisations. We continue to advocate for you in national forums, to stress that reforms should be streamlined and introduced in a way that considers RTO capacity.

Qualification Reform

How?

- Ten Jobs and Skills Councils - <https://www.dewr.gov.au/skills-reform/jobs-and-skills-councils>
- Peak bodies and stakeholders fostering reform values and sharing best practices.
- Early engagement and more agile delivery models of new and revised qualifications.
- Review and update internal STA processes to support faster uptake.

Implementation

- Strategic Industry Advisory Committee (SIAC)
- Jobs and Skills Councils (JSC) led Quality Qualification working group (JSC WG)
- JSCs adopting the new approach under the TPOF in tandem with industry needs and priorities
- Release of The National Training Register (NTR) website at training.gov.au

Questions?

General skills enquiries: skills@act.gov.au

Email: skills.projects@act.gov.au if you would like further information or to share your ideas.

Subscribe: Join the [Skills Canberra email newsletter](#) to stay updated on consultations and grant opportunities.

Talk to us today: Officers are available at the [Policy Table](#) for clarification or discussion.





Training Awards

Elodie Auvray
Event and Engagement Manager



Training Awards

ACT and Australian Training Awards Journey

With **Jiwon Kwack**

2025 ACT Trainee of the year winner and ATA finalist.

and **Stewart McLeod**

2025 ACT Apprentice of the year winner and ATA finalist.

2026 ACT Training Awards

Key dates

- Nominations: Wednesday 25 February - Tuesday 21 April 2026
- Interviews: Monday 29 June to Friday 2 July 2026
- Presentation event: Thursday 3 September 2026

Category targets

- Student categories
- small and large Registered Training Organisations
- small and large Employers
- John Scott and Norm Fisher

Sponsorship



ACT
Government

Paperwork, Payments and Pitfalls

Anita Dolstra

Senior Director, Skills Program Operations
and Support



Agenda & Timings



Objectives — 2 min

How we'll engage today — 2 min

Compliance Guide review — 6 min

BSSS rules for ASBA units — 7 min

ACT vs NSW training contract — 4 min

Training Plans & Record Books — 4 min

Payments & procedures — 3 min

Wrap-up & transition — 2 min

Breakout Q&A — 30 min

Session outcomes



- Understand key focus areas for 2026
- Know where to find guidance and what's coming next
- Leave with clear actions and a way to nominate workshop topics

How we'll run today



- Presentation (≈30 minutes) → Breakout conversations (≈30 minutes)
- Staffed tables: ask questions, get answers or a follow-up booked
- We'll also point you to existing resources where helpful

How to nominate topics



- Suggest workshop topics to staff at tables
- Complete anonymous post-forum survey (tick as many topics as you like)
- Workshops cadence: about every 2 months, online
- We'll publish dates and registration via Skills Canberra news

Today's topics overview



- Compliance Guide for Australian Apprenticeships — revision focus
- BSSS rules for ASBA units counting towards the ACT SSC
- ACT vs NSW: determining the right training contract
- Training Plans & Training Record Books — compliance essentials
- Payments & procedures — where to get help

Compliance Guide — context & objectives



- New revision is in progress
- No change to policy intent — no new rules
- Focus on simplifying and streamlining while maintaining compliance

Compliance Guide —simplifying



- Clearer wording where possible to aid interpretation
- Example area: Training Contract suspension rules
- Aim: make requirements easier to read and apply (no change to what RTOs must do)

Compliance Guide — streamlining



Lighter processes where feasible without reducing assurance

Example: Additional Support Funding process for extra group tutorials

Aim: faster reporting/approval while keeping compliance intact

Compliance Guide — what to expect next



- Skills Canberra news item will announce publication
- An online workshop will walk through the revisions with RTOs and stakeholders
- Bring your operational questions to that session

BSSS rules for ASBA units — snapshot



- Only completed UoCs count towards the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate (SSC)
- BSSS relies on AVETARS records to confirm completed UoCs
- There is a deadline for UoCs to be counted (Year 12 timeline)
- UoCs completed in Year 10 and Credit Transfer do not count
- E-units are based on nominal hours: 1.0 E = 100 nominal hours (see [Victorian training package purchasing guides | vic.gov.au](https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-training-package-purchasing-guides))

BSSS E-unit calculation — example



HLTWHS001 — 20 nominal hours

SISOFLD001 — 30 nominal hours

Total = 50 hours \Rightarrow 0.5 BSSS E-units

BSSS changes — why this matters



- Schools are concerned uptake of ASBAs could drop due to counting rules
- RTO decisions on sequencing, reporting, and communication can help mitigate this

What RTOs can do to help



- Plan Training Plans with the SSC in mind
- Report completed UoCs in AVETARS by 31 Oct of Year 12
- Remember: Year 10 UoCs won't count towards the SSC
- Report completions promptly to help students plan ahead
- Keep Training Plans up-to-date; share with school (with permissions)

ACT or NSW training contract — the rule



- Jurisdiction is determined by the apprentice/trainee's actual workplace location
- Relevance: key for RTOs without access to NSW training subsidies

ACT vs NSW — scenarios



- Multi-site employers: use the primary workplace for the apprentice
- Remote or mobile work: confirm the base workplace location
- GTOs: provide first host employer's workplace location

ACT vs NSW — support materials



- Two fact sheets drafted to help employers to provide the correct workplace details on training contracts
- We'll notify you via a news item when they're published
- Two versions:
 - employers in general
 - GTOs

Training Plans & Training Record Books



Audit lens

- These are always reviewed during a Skills Canberra RTO audit

Employer compliance lens

- In 2026, Field Officers will renew focus on checking these during employer visits

In summary

- Ensure documents are current, accurate, and available

Training Plans — pitfalls & fixes



Training plan is not kept up to date

Why: Out-of-date plan → misaligned training

Fix: Review and update the plan whenever changes occur (e.g., unit changes, employer changes, delivery mode changes); reissue to all parties, and ensure the plan is reviewed and updated at least once every 12 months — retain evidence

Training plan is incomplete

Why: Invalid plan; key components missing

Fix: Ensure all required fields are completed, including units, timelines, responsibilities, signatures, and training arrangements

Employer does not recall having a training plan or negotiating it

Why: Employer not engaged → training may not meet workplace requirements

Fix: Re-engage the employer, explain their role, review the plan with them, and obtain proper acknowledgement

Training Record Books — pitfalls & fixes



Training record book (or equivalent) not provided on or before commencement

Why: AA can begin recording learning from day one; gives AA and employer guidance on workplace tasks to be undertaken

Fix: Issue the record book (or equivalent) before training starts, confirm receipt/access in writing and retain evidence, and brief both the apprentice/trainee and employer on their obligations

Training record book (or equivalent) does not meet ACT requirements

Why: Missing/unclear info → hard to show progress, support learning, or assess

Fix: Identify what information is missing, update the documentation so all ACT-required elements are included, ensure the information is captured clearly (in one document or across several), and reissue the corrected version to all parties

Payments & procedures — how to get help



Bring questions to the VETPO team table during the Q&A session

- If complex, we'll investigate and get back to you
- We can also connect you to relevant guidance and contacts

Payments — common pitfalls & tips



Pitfall	Why it matters	Fix
Claiming more units than the minimum required	Payments capped at minimum units → over-claiming leads to rejection	Only claim for the minimum number of units needed to complete the qualification
Submitting claims before required admin steps completed (contract approval, NOB acceptance, training plan signed date)	Claims automatically invalid until all prerequisites are met	Check all steps are completed before submitting any claim
Incorrect or missing AVETMISS reporting	Missing or mismatched data prevents payment	Validate AVETMISS files; ensure outcome codes, dates, and identifiers are correct

Payments — common pitfalls & tips (cont.)



Timing mismatches between activity and claims

Fix: make sure you understand all the timing rules for payments in the compliance guide

Uploading a payable outcome in NAT file, then later uploading another file that changes it to a non-payable outcome, reversing the payment.

Fix: always check your files before you upload (extra tip: using a checklist can help).

Missing out on payments for completed qualifications

Fix: Make sure you upload units before recording a 'Completed' training contract, as AVETARS does not allow for unit payment claims to be uploaded on a Completed training contract.

Payments — common pitfalls & tips (cont.)



Pitfall: Timing mismatches between activity and payment claims

E.g.:

- submitting a claim before the training contract is approved
- submitting after the 8-week window
- recording unit result dates outside the contract period.

Why it matters

Claims are automatically rejected when timing rules aren't met, and late or incorrectly-timed submissions can't be paid without prior approval.

Fix

Make sure you understand **all timing rules** for payments in the Compliance Guide and always check contract status and key dates before claiming.

Extra tip: if unsure, always email skills@act.gov.au for advice or permission, before you act.

Q&A session — tables overview



System Design & Analysis table — AVETARS questions

Compliance & Performance or VET Program Operations table — compliance, funding, eligibility & payments

Field Officer Program table — employer/apprentice case support

Thank you / Q&A



- You can move to breakout tables now
- Please fill in the survey and keep in touch via skills@act.gov.au
- We appreciate your feedback and ideas

Questions?

Key contacts:

Skilled Capital and grants – skills.projects@act.gov.au

General skills enquiries – skills@act.gov.au