



# School-based apprenticeships and traineeships: a good practice guide

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## Introduction

The purpose of this publication is to provide a guide to good practice in **school-based apprenticeships and traineeships**.<sup>1</sup> It is designed for all stakeholders involved in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships including students, employers, **Group Training Organisations (GTOs)**, **Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)**, schools and parents.

The guide illustrates the roles played by each of these stakeholders and highlights the features of good practice; in particular, those aspects that have a positive impact on the effective delivery and beneficial outcomes of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.

The guide is based on research published about best practice in the delivery of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships and consultation with people engaged in successful practice. The guide complements the **Department of Training and Workforce Development's** (the Department's) *School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships Policy*.<sup>2</sup> The guide's currency is to be maintained in line with updates to the Department's policy.

## What are school-based apprenticeships and traineeships?

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships are paid employment based training arrangements formalised in a **National Training Contract (training contract)** made between the employer and the student (and a parent/guardian if the student is under 18 years). They give young people in school generally aged at least 15 years the opportunity to undertake **on the job training** within an actual workplace, as part of their broader program of study. When completed successfully, students obtain a nationally recognised VET qualification that contributes to their **Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE)**. As such they are considered to be an integral part of **VET (Vocational Education and Training) in Schools** offerings.

A significant number of students undertake traineeship or apprenticeship training as part of their school education. In 2012 a total of 1447 students in Western Australian schools, of which 319 were Aboriginal students, commenced a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship program.

Moreover, in 2012, a total of 559 students completed a traineeship program (127 of those being Aboriginal students), which shows that school-based traineeships are also an effective way of gaining nationally recognised qualifications while still at school.<sup>3</sup> This means that students leave school already holding qualifications that they can use to either look for work or pursue further education and training opportunities in their chosen field.

The Western Australian Government recently confirmed its commitment to offering school-based apprenticeships and traineeships by issuing its latest *School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy*.

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1 Emboldened terms are further defined in the "Glossary" section of this publication.

2 See the section, "Links to other useful publications", for a link to the policy and other related documents.

3 Data provided by the Department of Training and Workforce Development. Due to the longer durations involved in undertaking apprenticeship training, most school-based apprentices will not complete training until after leaving school.

The policy outlines the requirements, responsibilities and roles of all stakeholders. As outlined in the policy, school-based apprenticeships and traineeships are founded on **competency based training** in an employment arrangement under a training contract with a national qualification outcome.

In addition to the training contract, a school-based apprenticeship and traineeship is underpinned by a **training plan** which specifies the qualification and how the competencies are to be delivered. An **Education, Training and Employment Schedule (ETES)** provides the school's approval for the student's participation and shows how the training plan integrates with the student's WACE learning and school timetable. These three documents are required to set up and implement a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship and they communicate key messages between stakeholders to the training contract.<sup>4</sup> They are also what sets school-based apprenticeships and traineeships apart from other vocational education and training in schools programs (VET in Schools).

There are many stakeholders involved in a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship. These include the student, their parents/guardians, the school, the employer and RTO. In addition to those directly involved with the student undertaking training, there are also government agencies that play a key role in the administration of apprenticeships and traineeships. These include the Department of Training and Workforce Development's **Apprenticeship Office** which registers and manages each training contract, providing support and assistance to employers and students and the federally funded **Australian Apprenticeships Centres (AAC)** that lodge the training contract and ETES with Apprenticeship Office and administer incentive and support payments for both eligible employers and students.

Key to the success of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships is the effective cooperation of all the stakeholders involved in the training contract processes. Due to the number of stakeholders involved, it is often difficult for all to know exactly what their responsibilities are and how to make the most of the school-based apprenticeship and traineeship system. This guide aims to improve this situation.

## What is good practice in school-based employment based training?

A number of general principles have been identified through research and consultation as being critical to good practice in the delivery of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. These principles apply across the duration of the training contract and are:

- 1 effective communication between stakeholders;
- 2 stakeholder awareness and understanding of roles and responsibilities;
- 3 collaboration between stakeholders in the establishment, maintenance and adjustment of the training plan;
- 4 parental involvement and support;
- 5 mentoring and pastoral support;
- 6 incorporation of career development principles;
- 7 development of foundation skills; and
- 8 systematic record keeping.

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4 For more detail on the specific requirements and administrative aspects of establishing a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship, refer to the policy at the section, "Links to other useful publications".

There are also several principles of good practice which apply to specific stages in the training contract process. These include:

- 9 rigorous selection and effective matching of students and employers;
- 10 understanding and completing the training contract, ETES and training plan collaboratively;
- 11 effective induction for employers and students;
- 12 the centrality of paid workplace learning in training delivery and assessment; and
- 13 timely and appropriate assessment and training contract variation/completion.

These aspects of good practice need to be observed by stakeholders to ensure that each stage is effectively engaged and completed.

This guide begins by exploring the general principles that apply at all stages throughout the process. It then explores specific stages and steps in the school-based apprenticeship and traineeship process and the particular roles that stakeholders play at each of these critical stages.

The principles are supplemented with a number of case studies that demonstrate how applying these principles contribute to good outcomes.

## General principles of good practice at all stages of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships

The following principles are essential to achieving good practice in all school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.

### **1. Effective communication between stakeholders**

Effective communication between all stakeholders is essential to good practice in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. This is an underlying principle for all other aspects of good practice.

There are more stakeholders involved in a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship when compared to a regular course of schooling or a post school apprenticeship or traineeship. Therefore effective communication between all stakeholders is critical to ensuring they understand their various roles and responsibilities in the process and that they all work in an informed, coordinated and collaborative way for successful outcomes.

There are a number of ways to achieve this effective communication. One measure often cited as highly effective is to regularly gather all stakeholders — student, school representative, employer, RTO and/or GTO, parents/guardians — together for a face to face meeting. This enables all parties to be aware of how the training is progressing, identify and discuss any issues, changes to the training plan or training arrangement.

Keeping everyone abreast of how the training contract is progressing is critical to good practice, so that no one receives any unexpected surprises. All stakeholders are assisted to understand what others are doing and therefore what their own role and responsibility is in supporting ongoing progress.

The use of communication tools for tracking progress was also cited as another key mechanism to share information between all stakeholders. Instruction on how to use these communication tools can be built into induction processes so that all stakeholders know how to best use such tools to assist in creating a clear shared understanding.

Use of telephone, email and text messaging was also seen as useful for providing updates and reminders of significant events and milestones.

In summary, a proactive approach to communication on the part of *all stakeholders* is required to ensure effective involvement and collaboration between everyone in the school-based apprenticeship and traineeship process. A combination of regular face to face interaction with the use of communication tools and technologies can facilitate this.

### **Principle 1. Effective communication between stakeholders**

- Effective communication is integral to the successful coordination and collaboration of all stakeholders in the school-based training arrangement and the achievement of successful outcomes for all.
- Regular face to face meetings are the best way to ensure all stakeholders are on the same page, know what is expected of them and how everything is progressing.
- Progress tracking tools are also useful for communicating between stakeholders.
- Email, phone and text messaging can be useful for keeping stakeholders updated and informed on progress, activities and events throughout the training contract.

## **2. Stakeholder awareness and understanding of roles and responsibilities**

A school-based apprenticeship or traineeship is a school program with legislated requirements under the *School Education Act 1999*, as well as under the *VET Act 1996*. In addition to managing requirements of the training contract, stakeholders must manage their **duty of care** and the associated occupational safety and health risks for school students when out of school in the workplace or at the RTO.

Any one of the stakeholders may initiate discussions for a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship, but the school must be included from the start.

The Department's *School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships Policy* identifies the responsibilities of each different stakeholder group in the training contract processes.

For employers (and GTOs) this includes the need to:

- comply with the requirements of establishing and delivering the training contract (including the need to vary this contract if the student finishes school before concluding their training);
- comply with all relevant legislation including the *VET Act 1996* as well as the *National Code of Good Practice for Australian Apprenticeships*;
- for GTOs, comply with the *National Standards for Group Training Organisations*<sup>5</sup> and other relevant state based legislation; and
- provide the requisite duty of care and support to enable the student to perform safely and effectively.

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5 For links to these resources, please refer to the section, "Links to other useful publications".

For students this includes meeting eligibility requirements, agreeing to the terms of the training contract, making their declarations on the ETES and taking responsibility for their own safety, health and welfare throughout the school-based apprenticeship or traineeship.

For parents/guardians this means taking responsibility for the student's adherence to the training contract if under 18 years of age and contacting Apprenticeship Office if for any reason they believe the contract is at risk.

For schools/school principals, in accepting that the school-based apprenticeship or traineeship is part of the school program, this means assuming ultimate duty of care responsibility for the student (including during all agreed work or training performed out of school hours). In addition, they ensure the student's work-readiness, complete the ETES to present to the AAC at sign up, endorse the training plan and provide relevant ongoing support to enable the student to complete their training.

For RTOs this means coordinating the development of the training plan with the employer and student, establishing off the job training arrangements with the student, school and employer, determining appropriate evidence for assessment, gaining school endorsement of the training plan, keeping stakeholders informed of any changes to it, student's progress and/or completion as appropriate and issuing the qualification.

It is only by being fully informed of their and each other's roles and responsibilities and then having the capacity to discharge them, that stakeholders can be effectively engaged in the school-based training contract processes.

A key principle of good practice, therefore, is that all stakeholders are aware of their role and responsibility throughout the training contract. All stakeholders — employers/GTOs, students, parents/guardians, school principals/authorised school representatives and RTOs — should ensure they are aware of and understand the part they need to play throughout the training contract, so that the student may achieve completion and/or effective transition to further training, education or employment.

Other key players in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships include the Department's Apprenticeship Office, who not only register and monitor the training contract, but act as a key point of contact for further information for all stakeholders involved during the training contract and AACs who provide advice on available federal support and incentive payments to employers and students.

For more details of stakeholder roles and responsibilities, refer to the Department's *School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy*, Appendix 2<sup>6</sup>.

The Training Accreditation Council (WA) or the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), while not a stakeholder in the training contract, have a role in investigating and managing any issues with the quality of the RTO's delivery of training and assessment for a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship.

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6 For links to these resources, please refer to the section, "Links to other useful publications".



### **Principle 2. Stakeholder awareness and understanding of roles and responsibilities**

- Industry/employers/GTOs: understand the requirements of the National Training Contract, employer responsibilities including duty of care requirements and standards under the *VET Act 1996*.
- Students: understand the expectations of a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship and take responsibility for their own conduct, health and safety in the workplace.
- Parents: be informed about the requirements of a school-based training contract and support the student to meet these requirements.
- School/principal: ensure work-readiness of student, complete the ETES, endorse appropriateness of training plan to the WACE, be satisfied that appropriate duty of care measures are in place to ensure student well being and achievement and provide support to the student as necessary.
- Registered Training Organisation: coordinate and implement the training plan to ensure it meets the needs of the student and employer and fulfills duty of care requirements.
- Apprenticeship Office: provide advice to all stakeholders on any issues or concerns arising throughout the National Training Contract.
- Australian Apprenticeships Centre: provide assistance to the employer, student and RTO and administer Commonwealth Government support and incentive payments to eligible students and employers.
- Training Accreditation Council/ASQA: investigate and manage issues about the RTO compliance with training and assessment standards.

### **3. Collaboration between stakeholders in the establishment, maintenance and adjustment of the training plan**

The Department's *School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships policy* emphasises the fact that the training plan should be seen as an active document that is open to amendment by the RTO at any stage in the process with the agreement of all parties. These changes may be triggered by the RTO making changes to the training arrangement, the employer making changes to the employment arrangement or other changes in circumstances that may require amendment or alteration of the training plan.

As part of the regular communication between stakeholders (Principle 1), a key item of discussion should be the ongoing adequacy of the training plan and the potential need to adjust it as necessary.

Such adjustments might include:

- change of employer/host employer;
- change of qualification/units of competency;
- changes to training delivery type;
- dates of delivery; and
- selection and/or sequence of competencies.

Any such amendments will require the agreement of all parties to the training contract. Schools also need to be notified of any changes in order to amend the ETES and clarify potential impact on the student's WACE. The Department's Apprenticeship Office must also be notified of any variations made to the training plan.

Again, mechanisms for effective and regular communication need to be in place to ensure this occurs in a collaborative and timely fashion, so that any issues arising out of possible changes to training plans are clearly identified and addressed.

*Effective communication is always key.*

**Principle 3. Collaboration between stakeholders in the establishment, maintenance and adjustment of the training plan**

- Part of the regular communication that occurs between stakeholders to the training contract should be checking the continued adequacy of the training plan at different points in the training process.
- Ongoing input should be sought from all stakeholders as to the suitability of the training plan, with any changes to the training plan agreed to and clearly communicated to all stakeholders by the RTO.

#### **4. Parental involvement and support**

The active involvement of parents/guardians in the school-based apprenticeship and traineeship process is integral to achieving a good process and a good outcome.

Parents are responsible for upholding "the responsibilities listed for the SBA/T in the training contract obligations until this person is 18 years of age."<sup>7</sup>

It is important for parents to understand exactly what those obligations are and how best to support their child to meet them throughout the course of his/her training contract.

Parental involvement in their child's education has long been recognised in research as being vital to achieving positive outcomes. However, it is identified as particularly important in relation to the complex pathway faced by school-based apprentices/trainees, who have to negotiate a timetable that incorporates school attendance, on the job training and potentially **off the job training** at an external training provider. This is in addition to the demands of homework and study already present in the senior years of high school, as well as for many, a part time job and other commitments after school.

This poses a range of potential organisational and time management challenges. Assisting their children to remain on top of such a busy schedule is an important role for parents/guardians.

Understanding the nature of the training contract (which is a legal document that parents of under 18s will need to sign), the structure of the ETES and the requirements of the training plan, is critical in being able to provide the required level of support. The selected AAC can offer assistance to parents to help them understand the training contract; schools can offer assistance to parents to help them understand the ETES and the child can explain his/her training plan.

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<sup>7</sup> School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy, p 26.

Being involved in open communication (Principle 1) with relevant stakeholders is critical for parents/guardians, ensuring they understand how the training arrangement is progressing in all spheres — the school, the workplace and the RTO — and possess the necessary knowledge to assist their child with any issues that may arise or any extra support he/she may need.

#### **Principle 4. Parental involvement and support**

- The support and involvement of parents is widely acknowledged as essential to good outcomes from school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.
- Parents/guardians need to have a clear understanding of the nature and requirements of the training contract, training plan and ETES, so they are informed and empowered to support their child.
- Open and responsive communication between stakeholders can contribute to this aim, with the child, schools, training providers and employers having a role to play in informing parents about the expectations of their child within the training contract and the responsibilities of parents in ensuring those expectations are met (in particular for those students aged under 18).

## **5. Mentoring and pastoral support**

Having in place effective measures for mentoring and pastoral support is integral to achieving good outcomes from the school-based apprenticeship and traineeship process. Research and consultations clearly confirm that without this, it is less likely that students will complete their training contract. It is certainly unlikely that they will receive the same level of benefit and positive outcomes without clear and structured support to guide and inspire them throughout the learning process.

Key to any effective course of learning, therefore, is having in place experienced, qualified and committed mentors, preferably with some relevant industry specific experience, who are able to model and reinforce the positive attributes required to perform a particular role.

The Department's *Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy* identifies that it is for this reason that industrial awards stipulate an apprentice/trainee to tradesperson/qualified person ratio to ensure appropriate levels of supervision<sup>8</sup> are in place. The policy also requires the apprentice's employer to ensure supervision is carried out by a qualified tradesperson or competent workplace supervisor to ensure industry and individual requirements relating to both training and occupational health and safety needs are met.

The workplace supervisor is in a unique position to influence the vocational and developmental experience that the student is undergoing. Therefore it is important that students have access to a supportive adult who has been through the process before, understands the issues and difficulties that may arise and is able to talk through any issues that arise throughout the training process. Some industries and GTOs have dedicated mentoring consultants whose role it is to do this.

The Department's Apprenticeship Office is also available to provide assistance and advice to students and can assist in addressing any issues or concerns a student might experience during the course of their training contract.

Ultimately, everyone involved in the training contract has a positive role to play in providing support and encouragement to the student.

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<sup>8</sup> Department of Training and Workforce Development: *Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy*, section 9.

Whatever the specific nature of the arrangements in place, effective mentoring and pastoral support can help guide students through any difficulties or setbacks, provide an example of where the training program can lead, and inspire the student to remain committed and focused on achieving the best possible outcome.

#### **Principle 5. Mentoring and pastoral support**

- Having mechanisms in place for mentoring and pastoral support is critical to maximising the benefits to be gained from a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship.
- Mentors importantly act as guides and role models, demonstrating the purpose of the training process in the gaining and application of industry competency.
- Mentoring can take a variety of forms: it may be a particular teacher or VET coordinator; a workplace supervisor assigned under the relevant industrial award; a colleague; or a dedicated mentor provided by industry, an RTO or GTO. Whatever the arrangement, it is essential that all parties — school, parents, student, training provider and employer — are satisfied that there are adequate provisions in place for mentoring and pastoral care.
- All stakeholders to the training contract have a role to play in providing mentoring, guidance and support.

## **6. Incorporation of career development principles**

In the current economic environment, it is important that people have the skills to be able to negotiate multiple career transitions across their lifespan. The era of having a “job for life” is increasingly becoming a thing of the past and therefore everyone needs to be prepared for the reality of having to manage several career transitions throughout their lives. This often involves further education or training, or having to refresh or build on skills and competencies they may have gained earlier in life. The Department of Training and Workforce Development’s Career Centre<sup>9</sup> offers a wide range of resources, support and advice to assist decision making about career transitions.

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships need to be viewed in the context of a much broader process of learning and development, as the initial stage of a more comprehensive career journey providing additional pathways to future career options.

This means that students need to be equipped with the competencies to manage their career beyond the duration of their apprenticeship or traineeship. These competencies can be built into training plans in a number of ways. The *Australian Blueprint for Career Development*<sup>10</sup> provides a framework for building career management competencies into any program of learning. It provided the foundation for the *WA Guidelines for Career Development and Transitions*<sup>11</sup> and together they constitute valuable resources that schools, employers and RTOs can use to ensure students develop the skills and competencies they need to effectively manage their careers throughout life.

9 <http://www.careercentre.dtwd.wa.gov.au>

10 For a link to the *Blueprint* website, see the section, “Links to other useful publications.”

11 [http://www.careercentre.dtwd.wa.gov.au/practitioners/School%20Zone%20Documents/D12%200572105%20%20Western%20Australian%20Guidelines%20for%20Career%20Development%20and%20Transitions%20FINAL\(2\).pdf](http://www.careercentre.dtwd.wa.gov.au/practitioners/School%20Zone%20Documents/D12%200572105%20%20Western%20Australian%20Guidelines%20for%20Career%20Development%20and%20Transitions%20FINAL(2).pdf)

**Principle 6. Incorporation of career development principles**

- School-based apprentices and trainees need to be equipped with career competencies to manage their learning and work journey beyond school.
- The contemporary career context involves making multiple career decisions and transitions throughout life. Apprenticeships and traineeships should be seen as part of a broader career development process, not as simply a shortcut to employment.
- The *Australian Blueprint for Career Development* and the *WA Career Development and Transition Skill Commitment and Guidelines* provide frameworks that schools, employers and RTOs can use to build career competency learning into school-based apprenticeship and traineeship programs.

**7. Development of foundation skills**

The importance of developing **foundation skills**, in addition to specific technical skills acquired through training, is widely acknowledged in the available research on successful school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. As these skills are integral to a young person's ongoing learning and **employability skills**, it is essential to teach these skills as required during the on the job training component of school-based programs.

Apprenticeships and traineeships provide a learning context for students to develop literacy and numeracy skills by being more suited to some students' learning styles, interests and needs than traditional classroom teaching methods. Therefore, it is important to find ways for these skills and knowledge to be taught as part of the on the job learning performed in the workplace.

This might include, for instance, teaching fractions and numeracy skills to calculate menu requirements and ingredient quantities in the context of the hospitality industry, or teaching literacy and problem solving skills to compose appropriate correspondence in a business environment. Explicitly teaching foundation skills in the context of on the job training is one of the key benefits and advantages of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships; it helps to ensure that the literacy and numeracy requirements of tasks performed in the workplace are understood and applied successfully.

As foundation skills and employability skills are already specified in Training Package units of competency, it is the responsibility of trainers in conjunction with the employers to provide literacy and numeracy teaching and learning opportunities where appropriate throughout the agreed training arrangements, to ensure that students attain the units of competency and their associated elements.

**Principle 7. Development of foundation skills**

- Although apprenticeships and traineeships have a strong basis in on the job training, this training should aim to enhance and build upon earlier learning experiences and the foundation and industry competencies developed in off the job training, by providing opportunities for the practical application of those skills.

## 8. Systematic record keeping

Systematic record keeping across all of the organisations involved in a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship is critical to ensuring that key documents are secure and trackable, and can be accessed by relevant stakeholders as needed.

This includes systems to ensure the security and integrity of:

- the training contract;
- the ETES;
- the training plan;
- any progress tracking communication between stakeholders;
- assessment documentation; and
- each school's workplace learning management plan.

As many of these documents require input from multiple stakeholders, for instance the ETES and the training plan during their development or variation, it is important that each organisation has in place efficient and timely procedures for ensuring processing and turnaround within the required timeframes.

The Department's Apprenticeship Office has processes in place for registering, monitoring and compliance in relation to the training contract.

### **Principle 8. Systematic record keeping**

- Having in place clear systems for managing all training related documentation is essential to an efficient and effective school-based apprenticeship and traineeship program, including the capacity to track a student's progress.
- This applies to all stakeholders in the training process: employers/GTOs, RTOs, schools, students and parents/guardians.
- Systematic recording keeping ensures that all stakeholders are in possession of the information they need to play their role and that all of the paperwork and documentation requirements of a school-based apprenticeship and traineeship are met.

## Principles of good practice at specific stages

In addition to the general principles of good practice outlined above, there are several time-sensitive principles that enhance good practice when applied throughout the training contract process.

### **9. Rigorous selection and effective matching of students and employers**

From the outset, a clear factor in ensuring effective delivery of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships is to make sure the student is well matched to the employment based training opportunity.

This involves establishing a good, shared understanding of the student's interests, aspirations and ability. These should be matched with the employer's capacity to provide work based training that is complementary and appropriate to those interests, aspirations and ability, as well as to the requirements of the SBA/T qualification.

This process of selection may be performed by a number of different stakeholders, depending on the context, and the nature of the program on offer. Sometimes it will be a VET in Schools coordinator or careers advisor who will assess students' aptitudes and personality before students meet with an employer. Sometimes a GTO will act as the liaison between schools, students and host employers.

Research suggests that students with some prior knowledge of the area of work they enter tend to perform better than those with no prior knowledge of the industry.

Students, therefore, should be encouraged to undertake some paid work or work experience in their industry of interest as useful preparatory experience before entering into a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship.

It is important that the suitability of the employer also be determined prior to the establishment of a training contract. Schools are required to undertake a risk assessment of the employer, workplace and RTO prior to confirming participation by a student. Similarly, group training organisations are required to do the same with each intended host employer. Once the training contract is registered, the nominated RTO in the course of preparing the training plan will consider the on the job training, when, where and how such training will be provided and by whom.<sup>12</sup>

These assessments are required for each stakeholder to be clear that they can fulfill their respective duty of care requirements and provide a suitable learning environment, adequate and skilled supervision and training relevant to the student's learning needs and the requirements of the qualification. VET coordinators or group training field officers will often have established relationships with employers, industries and RTOs, making selection and student matching more effective.

The effectiveness of student selection and matching is improved by clear and effective communication (Principle 1) between all stakeholders. This ensures a common understanding of each others' expectations, the employment and training arrangements and the respective entitlements, roles and responsibilities (Principles 2 and 4) are established prior to commencement of the SBA/T.

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<sup>12</sup> See the *Department's Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy*.

This collaborative (Principle 3) and upfront preparation enables the school to more confidently complete the ETES in preparation for handover to the AAC at the training contract sign up.

**Principle 9. Rigorous selection and effective matching of students and employers**

- In establishing a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship, it is important that whoever is arranging workplace training (whether the employer, school, student, parent/guardian, GTO, RTO or other agency) has a clear understanding of the student's interests, aspirations and ability, so that these can be well matched to available opportunities.
- It is also essential that the suitability of employers and RTOs be carefully assessed prior to establishing a training contract, so that it is clearly established that they are both able to offer training suited to the student's needs as well as the requirement of the qualification and that the environments of the workplace and RTO are compatible with duty of care requirements for a school student.
- Having clear communication between stakeholders is essential to establishing a clear understanding of the student's interests, needs and aspirations, the responsibilities of stakeholders (student, school, employer, RTO) in meeting those needs, and whether these needs can be met through a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship arrangement.

## **10. Understanding and completing the training contract, ETES and training plan collaboratively**

A key stage in the process of commencing a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship is signing the training contract, attaching a completed ETES and developing a training plan.

The training contract forms the basis for the delivery of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. The contract is a legal commitment made between an employer and the school-based apprentice or trainee and, in the case of students under 18 years of age, the employer and the student's parent or guardian.

The school and RTO are not parties to the training contract, but they are integral to its implementation because the employer and student must nominate an RTO in the training contract and the school (through the principal or other authorised school representative) must complete and sign the ETES. The ETES demonstrates the school's endorsement of the student's participation in a SBA/T and how the proposed SBA/T qualification will contribute to the student's Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE).

The training contract and ETES are then lodged with Apprenticeship Office within 21 days of commencement of employment. Once the training contract has been registered by Apprenticeship Office, the RTO is notified of their nomination as the preferred training provider and has six weeks to develop a training plan, in discussion with the employer and the student.

It is critical that the employer is closely involved in the development of the training plan, to ensure that it is tailored to the industry and workplace requirements of the employer, as well as to the requirements of the training package qualification.



It is also a requirement that students be involved in the development of the training plan, so that the training program is well tailored to the learning or personal needs of the individual student. It is preferable to involve the school and may be desirable to include other stakeholders in the development of the training plan, such as a parent or guardian, advocate or mentor.

Involving these other stakeholders might be of benefit particularly if the student requires any extra or special assistance to perform their duties or tasks in the workplace. For example, due to disability, long term health condition, cultural needs or learning difficulties, additional support may need to be factored into the training plan or adjustments made to the employer's workplace.

As the training plan is the central guiding document for the on and off the job training throughout the SBA/T training contract, having all relevant stakeholders agree upon and understand it is critical to good practice. This collaborative approach will ensure that the training plan is closely tied to the operational needs of workplaces and employers and is appropriately structured to maximise student learning and achievement of the specified competencies (Principle 9).

*Again, effective communication is key.*

**Principle 10. Understanding and completing the training contract, ETES and training plan collaboratively**

- In being connected to a training contract and the ETES, it is important that key stakeholders have the opportunity to be involved in, or consulted on, the development of the training plan.
- Employers and students should be involved in developing the training plan to ensure that it is suited to the needs and capacity of both the workplace and the student.
- It may be beneficial to involve other stakeholders of the training contract in the development of the training plan, especially the school and possibly the parent/guardian, advocate or mentor.
- Clear communication between stakeholders is, once again, essential to achieving a shared understanding of the training plan and its requirements in achieving the intended outcomes of the training contract. This will further assist all stakeholders to understand their roles and responsibilities throughout the training contract.

**11. Effective induction for employers and students**

Another key stage and critical success factor in the offering of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships is having in place adequate preparation for both students and employers, so that all parties are clear about their expectations and responsibilities. By ensuring effective inductions are carried out, there are no unwelcome surprises when the employment and training start.

Induction programs for industry and students can be structured and delivered by schools, RTOs or group training organisations. They convey key information regarding the intent of training, the responsibilities of each party to the training contract (Principle 2), established procedures for communication (Principle 1), record keeping (Principle 8) and expected timelines for assessment and completion (Principle 13 below).

They also provide a useful setting for confirming duty of care requirements and pastoral care arrangements (Principle 5), in addition to information about industry based workplace health and safety requirements and the rights and entitlements of employees.

Western Australian Department of Education, Catholic Education Office and Association of Independent Schools policies<sup>13</sup> on workplace learning require schools to provide induction for employers and students, in order to provide key information regarding rights and responsibilities, as well as processes and procedures for managing the school-based apprenticeship or traineeship.

Research shows that having a structured induction and orientation process in place is a key success factor in ensuring good training outcomes and therefore should be included as part of an overall good practice school-based apprenticeship and traineeship model.

Offering these programs at the commencement of employment and training provides another opportunity to achieve the aim of clear and effective communication between parties to the training contract, ensuring they understand the requirements of the training contract, ETES and training plan (Principles 3 and 10), including their roles and responsibilities within them and the key aims and outcomes of the employment based training process.

**Principle 11. Effective induction for employers and students**

- Induction programs for employers and students provide a useful means to reinforce the requirements of the training contract, ETES and training plan and to demonstrate in an industry setting the processes involved in training, including methods and protocols for communication and record keeping.
- They also provide a useful forum for emphasising duty of care arrangements, workplace health and safety requirements, as well as worker rights and entitlements.
- Orientation and induction programs provide another opportunity to create and maintain clear communication and a shared understanding between stakeholders of the training contract.

**12. The centrality of paid workplace learning in training delivery and assessment**

Meaningful, structured and paid learning that occurs in the workplace is critical to the definition of a school-based traineeship or apprenticeship. It is what distinguishes it from conventional VET in Schools programs and institutionally-delivered training.

Paid employment in the workplace provides the highly valued context for the student to learn from skilled employees and for the employer to provide third party evidence to the RTO about how well a student applies their learning to everyday workplace activities expected of employees in that industry.

It is therefore critical that learning in actual workplaces be prioritised in the delivery of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. The Department's *School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy* underlines this priority by stipulating that students must spend a minimum average of one day per week learning in an actual workplace.<sup>14</sup>

It is important that school timetabling and scheduling systems accommodate this requirement for school-based apprentices and trainees to fulfill their training contract obligations in the workplace as part of their training program.

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<sup>13</sup> For links to these publications, refer to the section "Links to other useful publications."

<sup>14</sup> This one day a week may be averaged over a 3 month period, to accommodate variations such as study leave and holidays, in accordance with the relevant industrial agreement as to the length of a full working day.

Negotiating a schedule that requires students to move between school, the workplace and possibly an RTO site is clearly a more complex arrangement than that for a student involved in a school site only program. Managing this process requires significant commitment from the student and support from teachers, parents, the employer and RTO.

As already outlined, effective coordination, collaboration and communication between all of these stakeholders goes a long way towards smoothing this process and making this complex schedule manageable for students (Principles 1, 3, 9 and 10).

In short:

- Industry/employers need to keep the RTO and the school informed of workplace expectations and requirements (particularly if these change), any unapproved student absence and provide evidence to the RTO of the student's progress towards competency.
- Parents/guardians need to provide the necessary home support to enable their child to balance their life, work and learning responsibilities. They may assist with transport arrangements to and from work where needed or possible.
- Schools/principals must ensure timetables and schedules are adequately flexible to incorporate workplace based learning requirements and inform the employer and RTO of changes to student release arrangements as part of their duty of care.
- RTOs must liaise with the school and employer to ensure the student's schedule is reasonable and manageable, formally gather assessment evidence from the workplace, report student progress and inform them of any changes to the training plan.
- Students need to utilise effective organisation techniques (such as time management/planning tools and record keeping) to manage transitions between school, the workplace, (possibly) the RTO and other aspects of their life.

**Principle 12. The centrality of paid workplace learning in training delivery and assessment**

- The need for apprenticeships and traineeships to incorporate paid learning in the workplace and perhaps time spent at the RTO, means the timetables of school-based apprentices and trainees are quite complex due to the need to move between different learning spaces.
- This complexity of scheduling means students are likely to need additional support to manage such a busy schedule and the different requirements of school, work and training, in addition to other life responsibilities.
- All the stakeholders to the training contract processes have a role to play in ensuring coordinated support is available as needed for successful outcomes by all.
- The use of agreed communication strategies enables all parties to be aware of potential issues arising and to put in place appropriate and timely support to address them.

### **13. Timely and appropriate assessment and training contract variation/completion**

The training plan contains, amongst other things, provisions for the timing and form of assessment that will be provided to gauge the student's progress towards competency in the school-based apprenticeship or traineeship qualification. These provisions must be agreed to by all parties to the training contract and the RTO, including endorsement of the training plan by the school.

It is critical that the form of assessment and the types of evidence designated as relevant and reliable indicators of competency, be established collaboratively with the active involvement of employers to ensure validity and appropriateness (Principles 3 and 10).<sup>15</sup>

While recognising the opportunity to assess competence over time, it is also critical that the timing of this assessment is accurately targeted at the point of the student's readiness. Again, close communication between employer, student and RTO about the student's progress towards competency is essential (Principle 1).

The Department has produced *Guidelines for Assessing Competence in VET*, and the *Apprenticeships and Traineeships: Good Practice Guide for Registered Training Organisations* both of which provide further advice on the effective conduct of assessment in apprenticeships and traineeships.<sup>16</sup>

Both of these guides are underpinned by legislated standards for assessment practices and may be referred to for more information about effective assessment practices.

It is important to note the Department's *School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy* endorses a competency based system where completion of the training contract may occur once the learner can demonstrate they have achieved the required competencies in accordance with the relevant industry standard. This may be achieved earlier or later than scheduled when signing the training contract.

A decision regarding the possibility of early completion would need to be made through collaborative discussion between the employer, RTO and student. Regular and effective communication about student progress towards being competent will be integral to ensuring this occurs (Principle 1). Schools also need to be notified in advance of any potential early completion, as this will impact upon the student's timetabling (Principles 3, 9 and 10).

Similarly, the possibility of a student not completing within the term of the training contract or prior to leaving school, also needs to be communicated to all stakeholders, including the school, as this may have implications for the student achieving the WACE. In addition, there are implications for the employer, student and RTO about ongoing employment and training.

If the student is to continue their training, whether it is beyond the original term of the training contract or due to leaving school, the employer will need to negotiate a contract variation to extend the employment based training arrangements. This may be as an extension to the school-based arrangements if continuing at school or from a school-based to a non-school based apprenticeship or traineeship if leaving school. Whichever is the case, if a contract variation is not negotiated before the expiry of the original training contract, a new training contract will need to be established.

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<sup>15</sup> This point is emphasised in the guidelines for quality assessment included in the Department's *Apprenticeships and Traineeships: Good Practice Guide for Registered Training Organisations*, p 18.

<sup>16</sup> See the section, "Links and other useful publications", for links to these publications.

**Principle 13: Timely and appropriate assessment and training contract variation/completion**

- The methods and timing of assessments are critical to a positive outcome of any training process.
- There are several guides to effective assessment produced by the Department of Training and Workforce Development that may be useful in designing effective and timely assessments.
- Establishing regular communication between employer, student and RTO is integral to ensuring that assessment occurs at the most timely and appropriate occasion, to support recognition of competence that may result in training contract completion earlier than expected.
- Conversely, if the student is unlikely to complete their training within the expected nominal term of the training contract or while still at school, a variation to the training contract to enable continuation of training will need to be established through discussions between the employer, student, RTO and Apprenticeship Office.
- Decisions will need to be communicated to the school so it may address any issues relating to the student's achievement of the WACE.

## Conclusion

This guide outlines the key principles of good practice that research and consultations suggest are key to the effective delivery of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. The principles are designed to be relevant to all instances of school-based training delivered under a training contract and while relatively general in nature, may be applied to any school-based apprenticeship or traineeship pathway.

While all principles are important, the overriding finding to emerge from the research and consultation process is how critical effective communication between all parties is to the training contract processes. Without strong and effective communication, achieving a model of good practice in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships will be challenging.

Due to the number of stakeholders involved in school-based apprenticeship and traineeship programs, collaboratively establishing a variety of effective and appropriate ways to communicate in a timely way with each other is central to achieving both a good process and positive outcomes for all.

This finding also emerges strongly from the case studies (see Appendix A), which are designed to illustrate the principles of good practice presented in this guide (see Appendix B).

Four good practice checklists for different stakeholders in the training contract processes: students; parents/guardians; employers/GTOs; and RTOs are included (see Appendix C). These provide a set of questions designed to assist stakeholders to assess whether their role in the program is in line with the principles of good practice.

## Appendix A: Case studies

The following six case studies represent a snapshot in time. Each has been selected to demonstrate how one or more of the principles of good practice have contributed to successful school-based apprenticeships or traineeships.

Case study	Focus on good practice principles:
1 AFL Sportsready (WA)	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 10
2 Aboriginal Employment Strategy	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11 and 12
3 Geraldton Senior College	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11 and 12
4 Gilmore College & Kwinana Industries Council	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12
5 Hospitality Group Training	1,2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 12
6 WA Public Sector Commission	1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13

### Case study 1

#### AFL Sportsready (WA)

AFL Sportsready is a national, independent, not for profit employment and education company, assisting young Australians to achieve their desired career goals. It is a Group Training Organisation as well as a Registered Training Organisation and has been providing employment based training, including school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, in WA for around 14 years.

The majority of their school-based trainees are Aboriginal students and many are based in regional or rural areas. Training is offered in a broad range of fields, including finance, banking, horticulture and hospitality. AFL Sportready aims to work with all 250 high schools in the state. The program managers report a high level of success emerging from the program, with many trainees transitioning to full time employment with their host organisation (of those who completed in 2011, 83.5% are currently in employment or further education and training).

A number of important indicators can be cited as critical to the program's success:

- good relationships with schools, particularly the Aboriginal Education Liaison Officers and VET Coordinators;
- regular communication with all stakeholders involved, including parents, school principals, VET coordinators, employers;
- the involvement of parents is seen as particularly vital from a cultural perspective when dealing with Aboriginal students. The most successful experiences are where parents are actively engaged and involved;
- as an RTO, being able to customise the training plan to learner needs, ensuring it complements school learning and workplace needs;
- having dedicated mentor support roles including Aboriginal mentors;
- careful screening of employers, including workplace inspections and credit checks;
- commitment to students' broader career development, in taking them on a journey potentially from Certificate I through to a Diploma level qualification.

The chief element that program officers cite as integral to the program's successes, however, is the high focus and priority given to pastoral care within the program. Program staff, field officers and mentors aim to form a bond with students early on, so that the student wants to impress and perform well, resulting in high levels of engagement and success rates.

## **Case study 2**

### **Aboriginal Employment Strategy (AES)**

AES is a national, not for profit group training company and recruitment organisation that creates and facilitates career opportunities for Aboriginal Australians. Although AES ceased operations in WA mid-2013, its WA operations were based on a Career Preparatory Program that included school-based and full time apprenticeships, traineeships, cadetships and graduate programs. The school-based program engaged over 60 schools, both public and private, in a network stretching from Geraldton in the mid-west to Katanning in the southern Wheatbelt. AES recruited trainees and apprentices for a broad range of companies and industries, including the major banks, the mining and resources sector for Woodside and BHP, Telstra, Qantas, the International Hotels Group and the WA Health Department. AES aimed to recruit a minimum of 25 Aboriginal trainees each year, placing them into industries with available career vacancies that responded to the young person's career aspirations.

The program had a reported success rate of 90% in WA in terms of students moving into full time employment or training post-graduation. A number of features of good practice are cited as integral to this highly successful program:

- effective relationships between corporate partners, trainee, parent/carers and schools;
- ensuring suitability of employers in terms of commitment to Aboriginal people, by having in place supportive policies such as Reconciliation Action Plans and by encouraging their employees to undertake the "Walking in Both Worlds" cross-cultural awareness course;
- Service Level Agreements shared and accessible to all parties to the training contract;
- induction days for trainees and employers to explain stakeholder responsibilities, use of workbooks, timesheets and other required paperwork and documentation;
- once a month check-in meetings involving trainee and employer (and sometimes parent/carers); regular phone and email contact between AES, trainees and workplace supervisors;
- dedicated mentoring and pastoral support, including extra support accessible via the IEP (Federal Indigenous Employment Program);
- strong focus upon workplace based on the job learning with peer support;
- strong focus upon career development pathways, ensuring students link with opportunities for ongoing learning, including cadetships and university study; and
- a robust Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system that ensures effective record keeping, storage of and access to individual performance information.

The high success rate of the AES program demonstrated a strong culture of communication and genuine relationships between all parties. Dedicated arrangements for pastoral support, often outside working hours, ensured learners remained engaged and employers were aware of the particular learning needs of Aboriginal young people, achieving the highest possible mutual benefits and providing viable career pathways for students.

### **Case study 3**

#### **Geraldton Senior College**

Geraldton Senior College is well known for its broad range of school-based VET options, including:

- school-based traineeships;
- school-based apprenticeships;
- pre-apprenticeships in schools;
- Aboriginal school-based traineeships; and
- Aboriginal School-Based Traineeship Leadership Preparation Program.

These opportunities enable students to get a head start to an apprenticeship and also allow them to get a taste of the workplace.

Students attend three days a week at school and two days a week at Durack Institute of Technology or on work placement. Areas of vocational study include:

- automotive;
- building and construction;
- food industry;
- metals and engineering, and
- electrotechnology.

Since 2005, 533 students have completed one of these programs. 77 of these have been in the Aboriginal School-Based Traineeship Program and 109 have been in the Aboriginal School-Based Traineeship Leadership Preparation Program. The programs access a database in excess of 500 local employers to provide workplace learning and each partner in the training process has a clearly defined role through regular communication provided both informally and through formal meetings held each school term. Workplace learning logbooks are used to communicate messages between stakeholders and to help cultivate the career competency of trainees.

The involvement of parents is actively encouraged via the year 10 subject selection process and also via a formal VET parent information evening as well as their involvement in the traineeship induction and sign-up process. Potential trainees must meet a number of performance criteria in order to be eligible for the program, including having demonstrated career goals and interest in the industry.

There are numerous sources of mentoring and pastoral support in place, including a school-based traineeship coordinator, an Aboriginal school-based traineeship coordinator, an Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer and an Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer. There is a strong emphasis in all programs upon a high percentage (70 and above) of on the job training, which gives students a strong foundation for entering into further training or employment post school.



## Case study 4

### **Gilmore College/Kwinana Industries Council**

Through its partnerships with the Kwinana Industries Council, Challenger Institute of Technology, and group training organisations (GTO), Gilmore College in Kwinana has been successfully offering training to school students in metals and engineering for the last 15 years as an 'Engineering Specialist School.'

The Kwinana Industries Council (KIC) is a business association with membership drawn from the Kwinana Industrial Area. It currently has 12 member companies, encompassing all the major industries and employers in the area, including BHP Billiton, Alcoa, CSBP, Cockburn Cement and the Kwinana Desalination Plant. The Gilmore College program combines off the job training at Challenger Institute of Technology with intensive, on the job block training with these industries and employers.

Over 200 students have graduated from the program in the last 10 years, with a reported 98% employment placement rate for students who have successfully completed the metals and engineering traineeship. Most students who successfully complete the KIC Metals & Engineering Traineeship will obtain employment in the fabrication or mechanical engineering trades.

The success of the program may be attributed to a number of factors, including:

- a rigorous and competitive application process, involving assessment of academic standing and school attendance, aptitude testing and interviews with the group training organisation to ensure suitability;
- a systematic process for matching students with appropriate job placements;
- extensive induction processes, covering all health and safety and documentation requirements;
- involving parents through induction, celebration and graduation events;
- strong mentoring programs in place at the partnering companies, with strong pastoral support offered via GTO field officers;
- a customised approach to the design of training plans according to the needs of industry; and
- a proactive approach to record keeping, with employers and students assisted to complete Training Record Books, monitoring reports and timesheets.

The program enjoys such a degree of success and high reputation that students have been known to transfer from Warnbro, Baldivis and Hamilton Hill to Gilmore College in order to gain access to the program. Some students have even achieved at such high levels that they have gone on to represent the program at the national 'World Skills' event. The program's signature navy coveralls are reportedly worn like a badge of honour by students.

## Case study 5

### Hospitality Group Training WA

Hospitality Group Training WA (HGT) has been running school-based apprenticeships and traineeships in Hospitality and Commercial Cookery for almost 20 years. It has developed a flexible and effective program that is both responsive to the needs of the hospitality industry it serves, as well as the needs of the individual students it trains. The program includes a combination of school and institutional training, as well as hands on experience with a host employer.

Through its close relationships with a number of schools and a vast range of employers in the hospitality industry — ranging from small cafes through to 5-star hotels — the program has provided many young people with a pathway into a career in the hospitality industry and assisted many employers in the hospitality industry to obtain the staff they need. During recent years of significant skills shortage in the hospitality industry, school-based apprenticeships and traineeships have provided an important source of new employees and development of skills for the industry.

In the last three years HGT has commenced in excess of 150 school-based apprentices and trainees with more than 60% transitioning to full time apprenticeships or qualification completion, a success rate that is almost double that of the industry average.

A number of features of good practice can be cited as contributing to the program's success:

- a rigorous selection process by which students gain prior exposure to the industry via workplace experience, followed by an industry standard interview to ensure they demonstrate interest and enthusiasm to work in the hospitality industry;
- careful screening and vetting of workplaces and employers, ensuring there are appropriate staff to undertake the training (a qualified chef, for instance) and that the workplace and work culture is suited to supporting a school-based apprentice or trainee;
- developing training plans to meet specific operational needs of employers;
- providing learners with dedicated mentoring support, provided by HGT consultants with specific industry experience;
- holding regular group discussions involving all stakeholders in the training contract (students, school, RTO, employer, parents);
- providing a broad career pathway with multiple entry and exit points, ensuring that the program provides the student with access to ongoing career and learning opportunities and adequate preparation for a full apprenticeship;
- being flexible to meet the generational and developmental needs of Generation Y learners; and
- having in place strong relationships of trust with both schools and employers and strong industry support of the program.

The success of Hospitality Group Training's program demonstrates that through actively creating strong links with schools and industry and having in place strong student selection and mentoring processes, school-based apprenticeships and traineeships can provide a highly effective pathway for students to access career opportunities in real workplaces.

## Case study 6

### WA Public Sector Commission

The WA Public Sector's School-Based Traineeship Program (SBTP) is a youth employment initiative that provides WA public high school students with the opportunity to work two days per week, over two years, in a WA Public Sector Agency, while undertaking a Certificate II in Government or Information Digital Media and Technology.

The Public Sector Commission (PSC) coordinates the promotion of the SBTP to agencies and metropolitan public schools, the referral and selection process and provides ongoing advice and support to the agencies. The PSC also assists in the delivery and coordination of induction days and off the job training days.

In mid-2013, the program had 39 participants in year 12 and 23 participants in year 11. Anecdotal evidence suggests the program has a high completion rate, leading to employment for most trainees at the end of the program.

A number of key factors underpin the success of the program:

- strong relationships between schools, students and agencies formed by PSC that ensure effective communication and support;
- a rigorous application process, involving submission of student resumes and written application, followed by a panel interview, short listing and registration with a pool of potential trainees;
- involvement of parents via an information session and sign up evening coordinated by PSC, to communicate all the key roles and responsibilities of the training contract processes;
- information sessions held for workplace supervisors;
- structured induction processes for students, coordinated by the PSC;
- major focus on training on the job;
- workplace coordinators, overseen by the PSC for all trainees, who conduct monitoring, visiting and assessing students;
- use of email reminders to inform stakeholders of upcoming events or any other useful information, such as wage increases; and
- having a dedicated records management system in place for processing and storing program documentation.

The program has delivered strong results against its key aims of providing young talent to the WA Public Sector, developing a talent pool with industry specific knowledge and providing students with an effective transition pathway from school to work.

## Appendix B: Principles of good practice

### **General principles of good practice**

- 1 Effective communication between stakeholders
- 2 Stakeholder awareness and understanding of roles and responsibilities
- 3 Collaboration between stakeholders in the establishment, maintenance and adjustment of the training plan
- 4 Parental involvement and support
- 5 Mentoring and pastoral support
- 6 Incorporation of career development principles
- 7 Development of foundational skills
- 8 Systematic record keeping

### **Principles of good practice at key stages**

- 9 Rigorous selection and effective matching
- 10 Understanding and completing the training contract, ETES and training plan collaboratively
- 11 Effective induction for employers and students
- 12 The centrality of paid workplace learning in training and assessment
- 13 Timely and appropriate assessment and training contract variation/completion

## Appendix C: Checklists for good practice

The checklists on the following pages provide answers to questions that stakeholder groups might ask in seeking direction for good practice.

The stakeholder groups include:

- students;
- parents/guardians;
- employers/group training organisations; and
- RTOs.

### **For students**

- Do you understand the terms of your training contract and your obligations to it, including the need to take responsibility for your own health and safety in the workplace?

*If you do not understand or are confused by the terms and obligations of your training contract, contact the Apprenticeship Office on 13 19 54.*

- Do you understand the purpose of the Education, Training and Employment Schedule (ETES) and the significance of your signed declaration at Section 3 of the ETES?

*Your school should provide you with a copy of your ETES once signed. If you do not have access to this document, you should contact your school in the first instance or alternatively, the Apprenticeship Office on 13 19 54.*

- Were you involved in the development of your training plan?

*You have a right to be involved in the development of your training plan. If you do not feel you were adequately involved, contact your training provider in the first instance or alternatively contact the Apprenticeship Office on 13 19 54.*

- Do you have a copy of your training plan? Do you clearly understand it?

*Your training provider should provide you with a copy of your training plan. If you do not have access to this document, contact your training provider immediately. If you are having trouble understanding the terms of your training plan, contact the Apprenticeship Office on 13 19 54.*

- Do you understand your rights and responsibilities in the workplace?

*For more information regarding your rights and responsibilities in the workplace as a school-based trainee/apprentice, see the Department of Commerce's Labour Relations webpage at: [http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/labourrelations/content/Employees/Young\\_Workers/Your\\_workplace\\_rights\\_and\\_obli.html](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/labourrelations/content/Employees/Young_Workers/Your_workplace_rights_and_obli.html) or the Fair Work Commission website: <http://www.fwc.gov.au> and [http://www.fwc.gov.au/documents/factsheets/About\\_dispute\\_resolution.pdf](http://www.fwc.gov.au/documents/factsheets/About_dispute_resolution.pdf)*

- Are you able to contact the people involved in your training if you need to?
  - Your employer?
  - Your training provider?
  - Your school?

*You should be able to talk to everyone involved in your training and employment if you need to, using face to face, phone, email or text message communication. Contact details for each should be on your current ETES.*

- Are you satisfied with the level of support and advice you are receiving?

*You should have access to someone who is able to provide support and guidance throughout your training contract term. This may come from one or more of your employer, trainer, school, family or friend, or the Apprenticeship Office on 13 19 54.*

- Do you feel confident to complete any written paperwork required as part of your training and employment?

*You should be properly shown how to complete any paperwork required as part of the training process.*

- Do you feel you are able to develop the broader skills (eg literacy, numeracy, communication, problem solving) you need to improve your career prospects?

*You should have opportunities as part of your training to develop broad skills and competencies that will enable you to pursue further work or training options.*

## **For parents/guardians**

- Are you satisfied you understand the requirements of the training contract, and your responsibilities as a parent/guardian of a school-based apprentice/trainee?

*For more information regarding your responsibilities as a parent/guardian of a school-based apprentice/trainee, see the Department's School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships Policy at: <http://www.dtwd.wa.gov.au/dtwd/detcms/navigation/about-us/policies-and-guidelines/?page=9&tab=Main#toc9> or contact your child's school or Apprenticeship Office on 13 19 54 for more information.*

- Do you have access to a copy of and understand the completed training contract and Education, Training and Employment Schedule (ETES)?

*The Australian Apprenticeships Centre will provide a copy of the training contract on request at or following sign up. The school should provide you with a copy of your child's ETES. If you do not have access to this, contact the school immediately. If you are having trouble understanding the ETES, contact the school or the Apprenticeship Office on 13 19 54.*

- Do you feel comfortable in speaking with all stakeholders to the training contract processes?
  - With the employer?
  - With the RTO?
  - With the school?

*You should have options for communicating with the various stakeholders to the training contract processes. The ETES has contact details for each.*

- Are you satisfied there are adequate measures in place for supporting your child?

*Your child should have access to someone who is able to provide pastoral support.*

- Do you feel confident in completing any paperwork that is required as part of your child's employment and training?

*You should receive adequate information to be able to complete any paperwork required as part of the training contract processes. If you are having trouble understanding any paperwork or reporting requirements, contact your child's school or RTO, or alternatively Apprenticeship Office on 13 19 54.*

- Are there any out of school hours and/or school holidays work requirements to be met under the proposed training contract? If so, are you clear that the school has accepted duty of care responsibilities for these arrangements, as a part of your child's school program?

*You should be satisfied and informed that adequate duty of care arrangements have been made by the school for any work your child may perform outside of school hours, prior to you signing the training contract. Work and training requirements during school holidays should be negotiated between all stakeholders to the training contract processes (you, your child, employer, RTO and school) before signing the training contract. The results of agreed plans should be recorded on the ETES and the RTO's training plan.*

### **For employers/group training organisations**

- Are you familiar with the legal requirements of employing a school-based apprentice/trainee?

This includes:

- The Vocational Education and Training Act (1996);
- The Vocational Education and Training (General) Regulations 2009;
- Industrial Relations Legislation concerning wages, insurance, employment conditions, and occupational health and safety;
- Any specific industrial or licensing obligation;
- The National Code of Good Practice for Australian Apprenticeships (<http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/publications/national-code-good-practice-australian-apprenticeships>).

*For more information about your roles and responsibilities as an employer of a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship see:*

- *the employer's obligations specified in the national training contract;*
  - *the Department's School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy at <http://www.dtwd.wa.gov.au/dtwd/detcms/navigation/about-us/policies-and-guidelines/?oid=MultiPartArticle-id-8702458> ; and*
  - *Industrial arrangements for school-based apprentices and trainees under State instruments via Wageline, or modern awards via Fairwork Commission.*
- Were you adequately consulted by the RTO on the development of the training plan, including the timing, methods and evidence required for assessment?

*Good practice suggests that training is most effective when the employer has had active input into the development of the training plan. If you are not satisfied with your level of input into the training plan, contact your chosen RTO to discuss.*

- Do you have access to a copy of the training contract, training plan and Education, Training and Employment Schedule (ETES)? Do you understand them?

*The Australian Apprenticeships Centre should provide you a copy of the training contract at or following sign up. The RTO should provide you with a copy of the training plan and the school should provide you with a copy of the ETES for your records. If you do not receive them or have trouble understanding them, contact the respective organisation, or alternatively contact Apprenticeship Office on 13 19 54.*

- Are you able to easily communicate with other stakeholders to the training contract processes if required?
  - With the school-based apprentice/trainee;
  - With the training provider?
  - With the school?
  - With parents/guardians?
  - In the case of a GTO, with the host employer?

*You should have multiple options for communicating with the various partners to the training contract. The ETES should provide contact details for all of the above.*

- Are you able to easily understand and complete any written paperwork required as part of the training contract processes?

*You should receive adequate information to be able to complete any paperwork required as part of the employment and training process. If you are uncertain about any of the paperwork required, contact the respective organisation, or alternatively contact Apprenticeship Office on 13 19 54.*

- Are you satisfied with the duty of care requirements negotiated with the school (including for any work to be performed outside school hours or during school holidays)?

*You should be satisfied and informed that adequate duty of care arrangements have been made by the school for any work the student may perform outside of school hours, prior to you signing the training contract. Work and training requirements during school holidays should be negotiated between all stakeholders to the training contract processes (you, student, parent/guardian, RTO and school) before signing the training contract. The results of agreed plans should be recorded on the school's ETES and the RTO's training plan.*

- What provisions are in place for supervision in the workplace? Are these adequate?

*The Department's Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy discusses supervision as being in line with the relevant industrial award, duty of care and OSH requirements, as well as being monitored around progress in the apprentice/trainee's skill level and nature of the workplace and tasks.*



## For RTOs

- Have all the following been consulted in developing the training plan? If not, how might you keep them informed of any changes made to the training plan?
  - Employer/GTO?
  - Student?
  - School?
  - Parent/guardian?

*While the VET (General) Regulations 2009 require you to develop the training plan with the employer and the apprentice/trainee (student), under the respective education systems/sector workplace learning policies, schools are required to have managed the risks to students learning off the school site, eg during on or off the job training which may take place at the employer's or the RTO's site. The school is also expected to endorse the training plan as specified in the Training Contract notes for Q.19. It is therefore advised that the school be consulted as early as possible.*

- Has the employer, school and student (and/or possibly parent/guardian) been supplied with a copy of the training plan?

*The VET (General) Regulations 2009 require the employer and student to have a copy of the training plan. The school needs to endorse the training plan (see above point). Others may request the RTO for a copy of the training plan.*

- Have assessment methods and suitable on the job evidence for assessment been established in the training plan through discussion with the employer? Has full on the job training and assessment been discussed with the employer? Does the employer have the capacity to train in all aspects of the qualification or are alternative arrangements required to gather sufficient, valid, current and authentic evidence to make judgments about competency?
- What mechanisms are in place for regular communication with:
  - Employer/GTO?
  - Student?
  - School?
  - Parent/guardian?
- If there is any out of school hours or school holiday work required under the training contract, what arrangements has the RTO agreed to regarding on and off the job training arrangements during these periods?

*Any on or off the job training arrangements agreed to during out of school hours or school holidays should be recorded on the school's ETES and the RTO's training plan.*

- What measures are in place for mentoring and pastoral support of the student while under the auspices of the RTO? Are these adequate?

*The Department's School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy suggests that support be provided at point of need. This may be in relation to support for learning by the RTO or pastoral care/duty of care while at the RTO's facilities.*

## Glossary

### **Apprenticeship Office**

The section within the Western Australian Department of Training and Workforce Development responsible for regulating and administering the apprenticeships/traineeships system in Western Australia through Part 7 of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*. It supports employers and apprentices/trainees throughout the apprenticeships/traineeships with the aim of maximising successful completions. The Apprenticeship Office can be contacted on 13 19 54. For more information, see [www.dtwd.wa.gov.au/apprenticeshipoffice](http://www.dtwd.wa.gov.au/apprenticeshipoffice).

### **Australian Apprenticeship Centres (AAC)**

Contracted by the Australian Government to promote apprenticeships, to assist with the completion of training contracts and to provide advice to the parties involved on the options available for the selection of apprenticeships and RTOs. AACs assess, approve and process payment of Australian Government incentives to eligible employers and personal benefits to eligible apprentices as well as carry out a monitoring support service to the employers and apprentices. For more information, visit [www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au)

### **Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)**

The policy framework that defines all qualifications recognised nationally in post-compulsory education and training in Australia. The AQF comprises titles and guidelines that define each qualification, as well as the principles and protocols covering cross-sectoral qualification links and the issuing of qualifications and statements of attainment. For more information, see [www.aqf.edu.au](http://www.aqf.edu.au)

### **Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF)**

The national set of standards which assures nationally consistent, high quality training and assessment services for the apprentices/trainees of Australia's VET system. The AQTF is the current version of the framework, effective from 1 July 2010 and consists of the *Essential Conditions and Standards for Initial Registration* and the *Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration*. For more information, visit [http://www.nssc.natese.gov.au/vet\\_standards](http://www.nssc.natese.gov.au/vet_standards)

### **Competency Based Training (CBT)**

According to NCVER, competency based training is training that is performance and standards based and related to realistic work practices. It has been a pivotal part of training reform in Australia and overseas. Competency is described as "the specification of knowledge and skills to the standard of performance expected in the workplace."<sup>17</sup>

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17 NCVER 1999, "Competency-Based Training: Review of Research," p 1.

**Duty of care**

Duty of care is a legal requirement that a person or entity acts toward others with a level of care and due diligence that is reasonable under the given set of circumstances. If the person's or entity's actions do not meet this standard, then they may be considered negligent and any resulting damages may be the subject of legal action. The Department's *School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships Policy* outlines in more detail the requirements for duty of care that apply under school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. As these are integral to the school program, the duty of care is vested primarily in the school. The school negotiates with the employer and RTO to manage the pursuant risks of a school student learning off the school site to ensure that adequate duty of care provisions are in place.

**Education, Training and Employment Schedule (ETES)**

The ETES is a key piece of training documentation that must accompany a SBA/T training contract when it is lodged with the Apprenticeship Office. The ETES details how the student's school-based apprenticeship or traineeship arrangement and school program are integrated, the contribution made by the training program to the student's WACE, the school's endorsement of the student's participation in a training contract and the school's willingness to fulfill its duty of care and risk management obligations throughout the training contract period. The student and school principal or other authorised school representative sign the ETES declaration prior to the ETES being lodged with the training contract. The school is responsible for making any changes to the student's release arrangements for employment and/or training on the ETES and providing amended copies to other stakeholders.

**Employability skills**

Employability skills are defined as "the non-technical skills and knowledge necessary for effective participation in the workforce." They include skills such as: communication, teamwork, problem solving, initiative and enterprise, planning and organising, self-management, learning and technology. (<http://deewr.gov.au/employability-skills>)

**Foundation skills**

Foundation skills encompass both Core Skills (of reading, writing, oral communication, numeracy and learning) described by the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) and Employability Skills. Foundation Skills include language, literacy and numeracy (LLN). Foundation Skills exist on a continuum from very basic skills to highly developed and specialist skills. ([http://www.nssc.natese.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/54803/Foundation\\_Skills\\_in\\_VET\\_Products\\_for\\_the\\_21st\\_Century.pdf](http://www.nssc.natese.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/54803/Foundation_Skills_in_VET_Products_for_the_21st_Century.pdf))

**Group Training Organisation (GTO)**

According to Group Training WA, GTOs are "organisations whose business it is to actively canvas industry for training placements for apprentices and trainees". In a group training arrangement the GTO acts as the primary employer to apprentices and trainees and places them with other businesses known as "host employers", whilst they are undertaking their formal training. [ . . . ] The GTO arranges and monitors the on and off the job training and takes responsibility for all paperwork including wages, superannuation and other employee benefits. The GTO ensures the quality and quantity of the apprentices' and trainees' employment and training experience by rotating where necessary from business to business." (<http://www.grouptrainingwa.com.au/group-training-organisations-are-australias-leading-employers-apprentices-trainees-0> )

### **National Training Contract**

A National Training Contract (training contract) forms a legally binding agreement between an employer and employee for the training of apprentices and trainees including those who are school-based, leading to a nationally recognised qualification. In signing the contract, the parties (employer, student and parent/guardian – for those students under 18 years of age) are bound by the obligations detailed in it and the legislation of the State or Territory in which it is to be registered. The contract contains information such as commencement date of employment as an apprentice/trainee, qualification, employer's details, apprentice's/trainee's personal details, RTO, employment arrangements and nominal term.

### **Off the job training**

Training that takes place away from a person's job, usually at the RTO's premises or on the premises of the employer/enterprise, for example in a special training area.

### **On the job training**

Training acquired or learned while working at a job under an employment agreement. Training is provided by the workplace supervisor/employer.

### **Registered Training Organisation (RTO)**

A training organisation registered by a state or territory registering body, such as the Training Accreditation Council in WA, or the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) in accordance with *AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration* within a defined scope of registration. All RTOs in Australia and the qualifications they are scoped to deliver are listed on <http://www.training.gov.au>

### **School-based apprenticeships/traineeships**

School-based apprenticeships/traineeships allow senior secondary students to start an apprenticeship/traineeship while also completing the Western Australian Certificate of Education. Under these arrangements the student is both a full time student and a part time employee, with the same employment and training responsibilities as other apprentices/trainees. An important feature of apprenticeships/traineeships is the integration of the employment role and the structured training program in developing the required competencies. Employers are required to provide training in the workplace for the practice of these competencies to complement the training (which is the responsibility of the RTO).

### **Training plan**

The training plan outlines the training delivery and assessment strategy to be undertaken throughout the apprenticeship/traineeship training contract. It is developed by the nominated RTO in accordance with the *VET Act 1996* and *VET (General) Regulations 2009* and in negotiation with the parties to the training contract.

### **Vocational Education and Training (VET)**

According to NCVER, Vocational education and training encompasses “post-compulsory education and training, excluding degree and higher level programs delivered by further education institutions. VET provides people with occupational or work-related knowledge and skills. VET also includes programs which provide the basis for subsequent vocational programs.”

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/resources/glossary>

### **VET in Schools**

Vocational education and training in schools (VETiS) allows secondary school students to complete part or all of a nationally recognised vocational qualification while still studying towards their secondary graduation. Students can study vocational education and training as well as regular school subjects – either with a State Training Provider, private RTO, RTO school or at their own school under the auspices of a RTO.

### **Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE)**

The Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) is the Western Australian senior secondary certificate recognised nationally in the **Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)**.

Generally, students complete two years of senior secondary study to achieve the WACE, although there is no time limit. Students may meet the WACE requirements over a lifetime. The WACE is recognised by universities, other tertiary institutions, industry and training providers. Achievement of a WACE signifies that a student has successfully met the breadth and depth, achievement standard and English language competence requirements in their senior secondary schooling, as set by the State Government. [http://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/internet/Publications/WACE\\_Manual](http://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/internet/Publications/WACE_Manual)

## Links to other useful publications

### **Department of Training and Workforce Development publications**

*School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy*: <http://www.dtwd.wa.gov.au/dtwd/detcms/navigation/about-us/policies-and-guidelines/?page=9&tab=Main#toc9>

*Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy*: <http://www.dtwd.wa.gov.au/dtwd/detcms/navigation/about-us/policies-and-guidelines/?page=9&tab=Main#toc9>

*Apprenticeships and Traineeships: Good Practice Guide for Registered Training Organisations*, 3rd Edition, 2012: <http://vetinfonet.dtwd.wa.gov.au/VETpolicyandguidelines/Pages/VETPolicyandGuidelines.aspx>

*Guidelines for Assessing Competence in VET*, 5th Edition, 2013: <http://vetinfonet.dtwd.wa.gov.au/VETpolicyandguidelines/Pages/VETPolicyandGuidelines.aspx>

### **Other publications**

*Australian Quality Training Framework Standards for Registration*, 2010: <http://natese.gov.au/?a=69330>

*Australian Blueprint for Career Development*: <http://blueprint.edu.au>

Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, policy 2-B9: *Out of School Learning and Training 2011*: <http://internet.ceo.wa.edu.au/AboutUs/Governance/Policies/Documents/Education/Policy%202B9%20Out%20of%20School%20Learning%20and%20Training.pdf>

*National Code of Good Practice in Australian Apprenticeships*: <http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/publications/national-code-good-practice-australian-apprenticeships>

*National Standards for Group Training Organisations*:  
[http://grouptraining.ntis.gov.au/\(S\(m2w2gqrbjwiztbohitnt245\)\)/national\\_launch.aspx](http://grouptraining.ntis.gov.au/(S(m2w2gqrbjwiztbohitnt245))/national_launch.aspx)

*Western Australian Department of Education Workplace Learning Policy V2.1 November 2010*: <http://det.wa.edu.au/policies/detcms/policy-planning-and-accountability/policies-framework/policies/workplace-learning.en?oid=au.edu.wa.det.cms.contenttypes.Policy-id-3785103>



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