

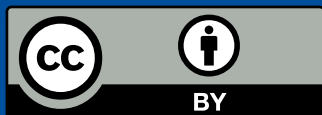
The Right Skills

STRATEGY 2025 – 2028



Do you need an interpreter?

To talk to someone about this strategy in your preferred language, call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on **131 450** and request to speak with the Department of Trade, Employment and Training on **1300 369 935**.



This document is licensed by the State of Queensland (Department of Trade, Employment and Training) under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) 3.0 Australia licence. In essence, you are free to copy, communicate and adapt this report, as long as you attribute the work to the Department of Trade, Employment and Training. To view a copy of this licence, visit creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au.

© Department of Trade, Employment and Training 2025

Enquiries:

Department of Trade, Employment and Training

PO Box 15483 City East, Brisbane QLD 4002

c/ training@dtet.qld.gov.au

Minister's message



Hon Ros Bates

Minister for Finance, Trade,
Employment and Training

The Queensland Government is focused on a comprehensive, coordinated and collaborative approach to support the long-term agility of our vocational education and training sector – putting the right skills, in the right places.

Backed by more than \$5 billion over four years, *The Right Skills Strategy 2025-2028* brings together government and industry, registered training providers, educators and students to deliver on priority skills solutions.

More than 2.3 million Queensland workers will have a post-school qualification by 2028-29 – representing three quarters of the workforce.

High quality training opens the door to high-value jobs, so our Strategy will expand accessibility, flexibility and availability of training – including for regional communities across Queensland.

We'll support a diversity of providers in our training system and deliver on our commitments to build state-of-the-art TAFE infrastructure where it is needed. We're also committed to the next generation of trainers who can guide students towards innovation and best-practice.

The Strategy will support Queenslanders with the skills that equip them for the opportunities our economy provides, from school to a first job to lifelong learning.

Employers and businesses will also benefit from actions to bolster their existing workforce through upskilling, reskilling and industry-led micro-credentials programs which will be delivered alongside support for small businesses to hire new apprentices. By addressing emerging skills gaps, we'll work to build a workforce that is engaged, resilient and competitive.

The Right Skills Strategy 2025-2028 sets a clear direction for one of our greatest resources – our skilled people – serving established and emerging industries, securing the future of essential services, and putting Queenslanders first.

Implementing The Right Skills Strategy

Collaboration and partnerships are vital for Queensland to achieve its skills and workforce priorities. The Queensland and Australian Governments, industry, employers, students and training providers all contribute to a fit-for-purpose training sector, delivering the right skills for Queenslanders and a strong, resilient Queensland economy. Implementation of this Strategy is most effective when industry, employers, communities and government work together.

The Right Skills Strategy recognises the Queensland Government's role in providing leadership, coordination and oversight of the state's training sector. The Strategy sets out our aspirations and the framework for our significant investment, encompassing coordination and advocacy, allocating funding for courses, and delivering initiatives and programs which directly respond to priority skills and workforce needs.

Our annual Training Priorities Plans will outline how we are delivering on *The Right Skills Strategy* by supporting skills and workforce development across the state through targeted actions and investment. Those plans will be closely linked to Queensland's workforce priorities, and together support employers, industry and communities, job seekers and workers.

Strategy overview

The progress, prosperity and wellbeing of Queensland relies on having the right skills in the right place, at the right time. *The Right Skills Strategy* highlights the central role of skilled people in a robust, resilient and diverse Queensland economy. It will position us to deliver key services, respond to evolving workforce needs and capitalise on existing and emerging opportunities, for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

With significant investment of over \$5 billion budgeted across four years, the Strategy will build on the strength of Queensland's training sector by supporting greater accessibility and availability of the skills needed for industry and regions to grow and expand.

The Right Skills Strategy is also Queensland's roadmap to deliver on the National Skills Agreement. Through the National Skills Agreement, we will work alongside the Australian Government to strengthen partnerships and coordination, to achieve real, sustainable skills reform to benefit Queensland.

Our commitment

Queensland's economy is strengthened and future-proofed by Queenslanders with the right skills in the right place at the right time.

Focus areas

The Right Skills for Queensland's **ECONOMY**



What we will achieve

Queensland has the **RIGHT SKILLS** to attract investment and to power prosperity and productivity

What we will do

Over the next four years we will:

1. Deliver flexible and innovative training solutions to empower industry and employers
2. Invest in the skills for critical and emerging industries now and in the future
3. Expand access to higher level skills and lifelong learning
4. Promote and elevate the status of skilled careers to secure a pipeline of highly skilled workers
5. Partner with industry and employers to develop, attract and retain a skilled workforce



The Right Skills for **QUEENSLANDERS**



The Right Skills delivered by a robust **TRAINING SYSTEM**



Queenslanders have the
RIGHT SKILLS to secure a job
and their economic security

Queensland has a healthy, diverse and
high-quality training system that delivers
the **RIGHT SKILLS** for the workforce

Over the next four years we will:

1. Deliver the right skills to secure employment for Queenslanders
2. Create clear pathways to employment success by placing students at the centre of the training system
3. Provide lifelong training opportunities for Queenslanders to upskill or reskill
4. Set young Queenslanders up for success by strengthening the pathways from school to employment
5. Support skills for a more diverse and resilient workforce

Over the next four years we will:

1. Invest in world-class training facilities and the next generation of trainers, fostering a responsive and diverse training sector for Queensland
2. Ensure access to training for our regions and niche industries
3. Build a diverse network of local training providers delivering high-quality government-funded training
4. Enhance our use of data to strengthen training delivery and improve quality and performance
5. Strengthen pathways from training to higher education

Queensland's economy and growth industries

Queensland's economy is performing well and is driving one of the strongest labour markets in Australia. Queensland's Gross State Product reached \$510 billion in 2023-24, and is forecast to strengthen by 2.75% in 2025-26 and then remain robust at 2.5% from 2026-27¹.

Queensland has a higher total annual economic output than the corresponding output of national economies such as New Zealand, Finland and Greece. Queensland's employment growth outpaced that of most other states in Australia, increasing 2.6% over the year to July 2025². With an unemployment rate of 4.2% (as of September 2025), Queensland's unemployment rate is below the national rate.

Queensland's economy has historically been underpinned by diverse sectors including agriculture, mining, tourism, health, construction and manufacturing.

Looking to the future, Queensland's workforce must be ready to respond to a broad range of priorities – whether they stem from traditional industries, new and emerging sectors, or transformational events, such as the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The 2032 Games will drive skills demand across a range of Queensland's industries including construction and manufacturing, event management and logistics, and tourism and hospitality.

This prestigious global event also presents numerous prospects for growth and investment, promising a wealth of opportunities in the lead-up to, during and after the Games.

Developing the skilled workforce needed to deliver the 2032 Games starts now by training the tradies of tomorrow.

We want to set up more Queenslanders of all abilities for opportunities in rewarding jobs; training for the people who will build new Olympic and Paralympic infrastructure, serve up world-class hospitality to visitors from across the globe and offer the best of our Brisbane lifestyle for a once in a lifetime tourism experience.

At the same time, we recognise many Queensland businesses are already experiencing a stretched labour market and uncertainties surrounding global trade. It is critical that our training sector delivers for future priorities, and provides skills for existing, immediate workforce shortages.

Addressing shortages is essential to sustain Queensland's construction sector and ensure the successful delivery of both private and public infrastructure projects³.

This will enable us to deliver 1 million new homes, including 53,500 social and community homes by 2044, as part of our Securing our Housing Foundations plan.

With an ageing population, it is also imperative that we are delivering the skills for the healthcare and social assistance workforce – ensuring Queenslanders can continue to access world-class health and care services, when and where they are needed.

The Right Skills Strategy provides a roadmap to better support industries and future-proof economic growth, ensuring availability and access to skills training is aligned with existing and emerging priorities.



¹ Queensland Treasury (2025): Budget 2025-26

² Queensland Government Statistician's Office (2025)

³ Construction Skills Queensland (2025): Horizon 2032

Queensland's workforce

An adaptable and skilled workforce is essential to maintaining the accessible services, great lifestyle and strong economy we enjoy in Queensland.

To keep pace in a global economy and deliver for a growing population, we know we will need more Queenslanders with the relevant skills to join the workforce and enhance productivity.

Between 2024-25 and 2028-29 employment in Queensland is projected to increase by 6.2%, more than 185,000 workers. Over the same period, more than 250,000 workers are needed to replace Queenslanders who retire or change jobs. All up, there are more than 430,000 job opportunities expected in Queensland in the near future.

More of these jobs will require formal qualifications, which is why we are investing in a robust and high-quality training and skills system that aligns with industry needs and fosters innovation. We also know that the on-the-job skills that people gain through experience are invaluable and recognise the role that employers play in building a skilled workforce.

We are on the right track; Queensland's workforce is becoming more skilled than ever with the number of working Queenslanders who hold a certificate III or above as their highest qualification projected to increase to more than 1.8 million (59%) by 2028-29.

Skills are a key ingredient in driving prosperity. But there is more to be done with a growing need for advanced skills to match the rapid developments occurring across Queensland's job market – including the growing healthcare and services sectors and the construction required to deliver housing and the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.



3,007,000

Employed

ABS Labour Force September 2025



492,400

People aged 15-24 employed

73.6% participation rate

ABS Labour Force September 2025



4.2%

Unemployment rate

ABS Labour Force September 2025



9.1%

Youth unemployment rate

ABS Labour Force September 2025



1,467,000

Women employed

64% participation rate

ABS Labour Force September 2025



331,800

People with disability employed

60% participation rate

Disability, Ageing and Carers 2022 (aged 15-64 years)



67.1%

Labour force participation rate

ABS Labour Force September 2025



75,500

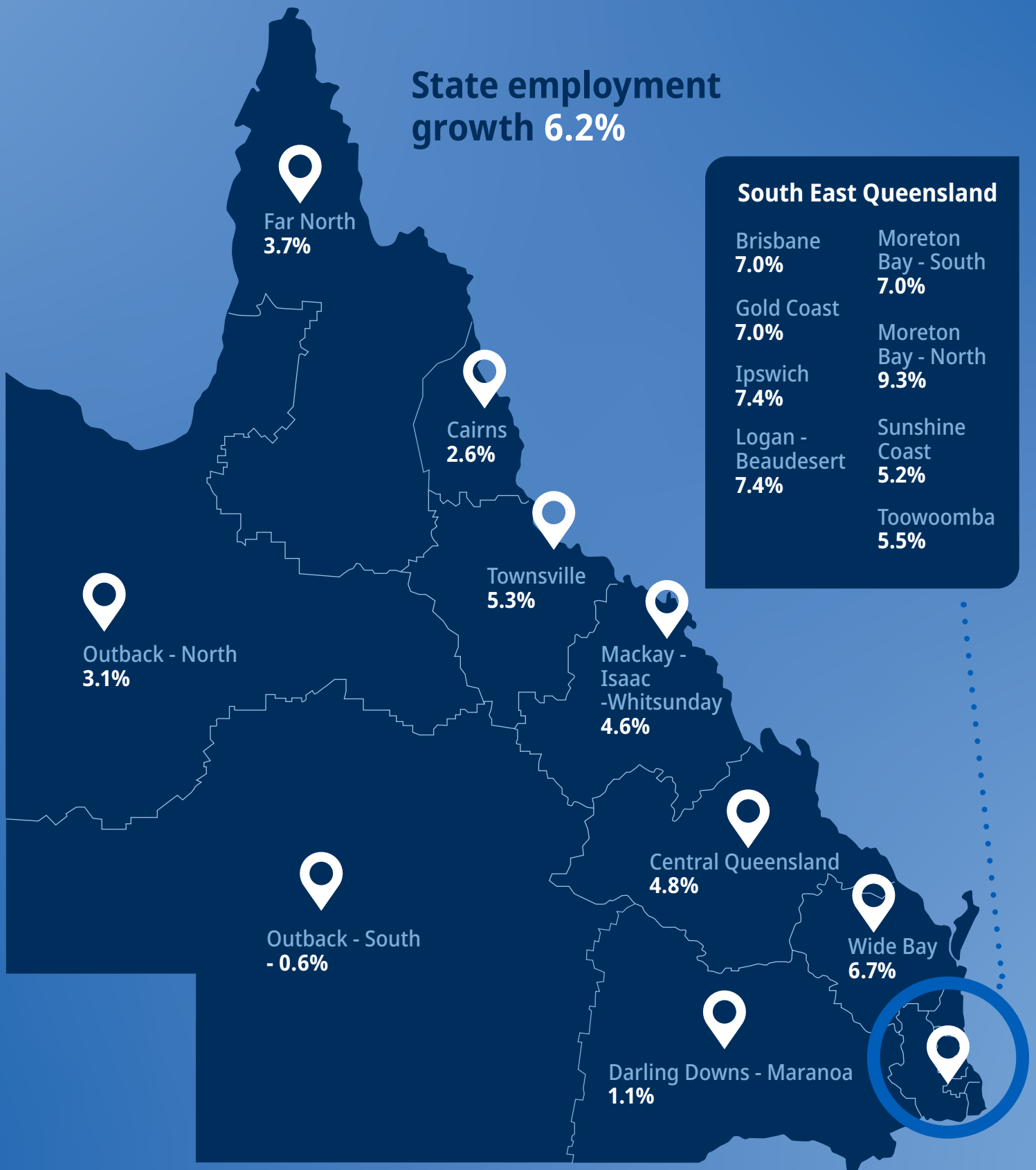
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples employed

60.6% participation rate

Census 2021 data (aged 15-64 years)

Regional employment growth projections

Growth projections between 2024-25 to 2028-29



Future workforce growth industries

Industries with growing skills needs between 2024-25 to 2028-29



Source: Jobs Queensland (2025): Anticipating Future Skills Series 6 (top 10 industries by number of new workers)

Trends shaping our future workforce

Queensland's economy continues to change and adapt in response to local and global trends. This means shifts in how we do our work as well as what we do. According to the latest workforce trends more than 20% of jobs globally are anticipated to undergo transformation, driven by new technologies, increased economic uncertainty and demographic shifts⁴.

- **Technological advances** will be the most influential trend shaping the evolution of skills over the coming five years, including artificial intelligence, big data, networking and cybersecurity.
- **Economic uncertainty** highlights the need for resilience, flexibility, and agility to sustain a competitive edge.
- **Demographic shifts** with an ageing population and fewer working age people placing even more emphasis on workforce development and training.

These trends underscore a need for the right reskilling and upskilling strategies for future resilience and opportunity.

Over the next 20 years, the average worker can expect to change occupations 2 to 3 times⁵

⁴CSIRO (2025), Jobs and Skills Australia (2024)

⁵Source: Productivity Commission (2025): Building a skilled and adaptable workforce Inquiry interim report.

Queensland's training system

Queensland's training system needs to be ready for today and tomorrow. It is a system made up of the students who undertake training, the providers who deliver it, and the employers and industries that contribute and benefit from skilled workers.

Around 1 in 5 Queenslanders undertake some form of vocational education and training each year with around 1,400 registered training organisations, demonstrating a clear and sustained demand for skilling, reskilling and upskilling across the state⁶.

In 2024-25, more than 246,000 Queensland Government-funded students participated in training provided by over 330 registered training organisations, known as Skills Assure Suppliers, including the state's largest training provider TAFE Queensland. The Queensland Government is investing \$201.1m in new TAFE Centres of Excellence and working to ensure TAFE modernises and is able to continue offering world-class training for 2032 and beyond.

Over 38,000 apprentices and trainees commenced training in 2024-25. Businesses – including Queensland's more than 495,000 small and family businesses – play a vital role in offering opportunities for apprentices and trainees to earn while they learn while providing real-world experiences for the next generation of skilled Queenslanders, including hairdressers, childcare workers, electricians, carpenters and plumbers.

The recognition of prior learning and skills of Queenslanders with diverse backgrounds is an important function of our skills system and, in a tight labour market, is critical in addressing skills shortages in our priority industries. The strength of our skills system is also reflected in the importance of international education and training in Queensland, that contributed \$6.85 billion to Queensland's economy and supported over 30,000 jobs in 2024⁷.

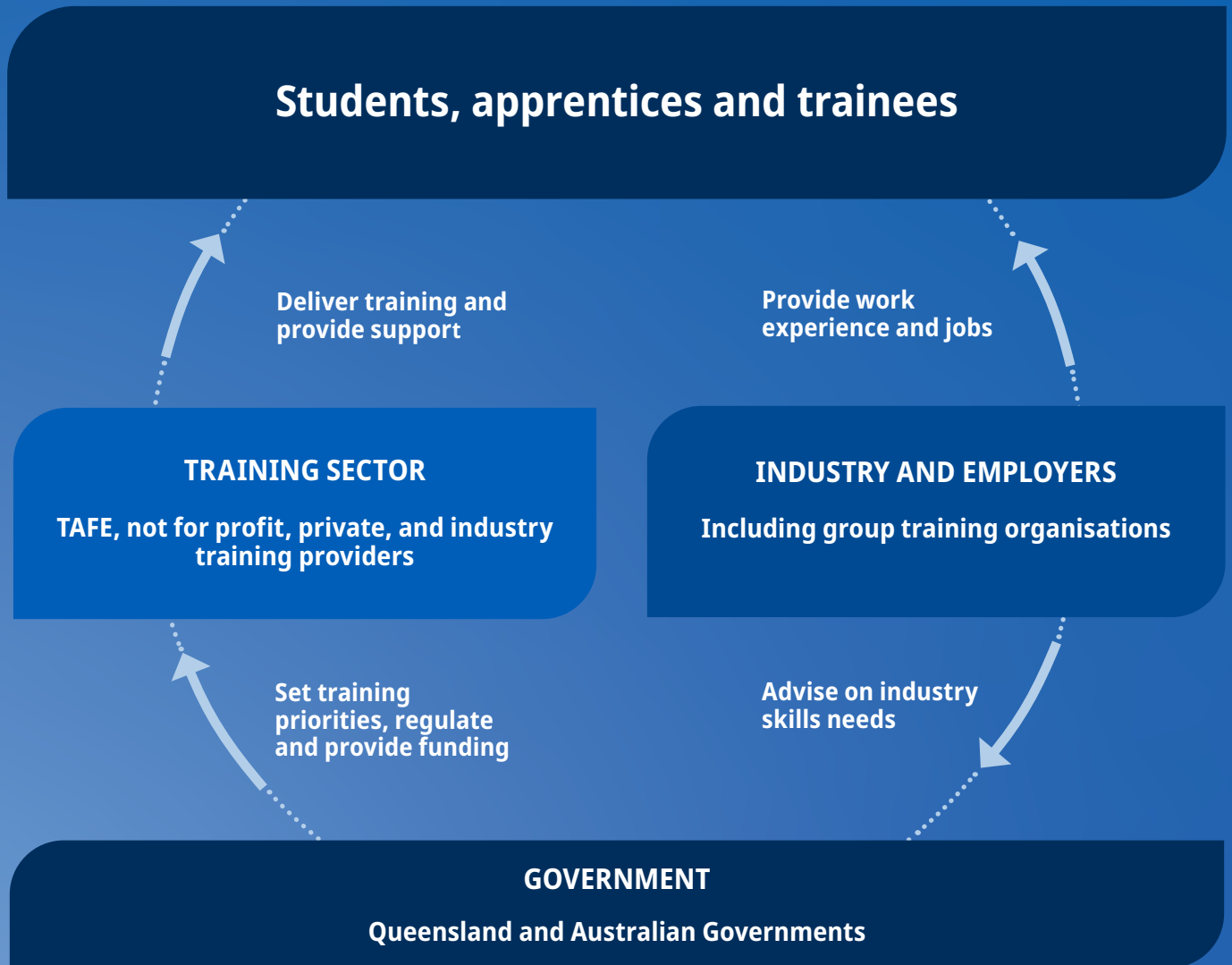
Queensland's tertiary education sector nurtures the talent that contributes to local and global economies, developing talent that attracts investment in the state.



⁶NCVER (2024): Total VET students and courses 2023.

⁷Queensland Government (2024)

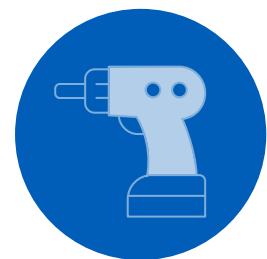
QUEENSLAND'S TRAINING SYSTEM



246,000
Queensland Government
funded vocational education
and training students
in 2024-25⁸



1.6m+
completed competencies in
the Queensland vocational
education and training sector
in 2024-25⁹



77,900
Queensland Government
funded apprentices and
trainees in training
in 2024-25¹⁰

⁸Queensland Government (2025): DTET internal dataset.

⁹ibid.

¹⁰ibid.

Our shared skills priorities

Queensland is signatory to a five-year National Skills Agreement with the Australian Government. The National Skills Agreement commenced on 1 January 2024 and sets out shared commitments to build a training system that is responsive, high-quality, and meets the needs of both individuals and the labour market¹¹.

The National Skills Agreement addresses critical workforce shortages by focusing on:

- delivering housing supply
- sustaining essential care services
- developing Australia's sovereign capability and food security
- gender equality
- ensuring Australia's digital and technology capability
- Closing the Gap
- delivering reforms to improve the regulation of vocational education and training qualifications and quality
- supporting the Net Zero transformation.

Priority groups include women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and people with disability.

Our progress in achieving the vision and priorities in *The Right Skills Strategy* will be aligned with the National Skills Agreement Outcomes Framework.

¹¹Australian Government (2024): National Skills Agreement.



Skills pathways for all Queenslanders

The Queensland Government is making the state's strong training system even stronger, supporting Queenslanders at all stages of their working life to benefit from skills.

Queenslanders told us that training should give them skills that industries need and that lead to jobs – no matter where they live.

Government funding makes free and reduced cost training available, delivered by a network of Skills Assure Suppliers, which have met additional quality and delivery requirements.

These include a focus on improved access and outcomes for students of all abilities, including those in regional Queensland, and demonstrated links to employers and industry. Skills pathways for all Queenslanders recognises the needs of diverse learners and offers a variety of foundation skills training and skills disability support to ensure that all Queenslanders can participate.

The Queensland Government funds hundreds of courses based on evidence, data, industry advice and student outcomes. This means students will be able to choose free or low-fee training that lines up with jobs and employer skills needs at different career stages.

A range of additional supports and pathways are also offered to enable all Queenslanders, including school students, to select the right training for them and get started in their career.

Skills at school

Vocational Education and Training (VET) in School provides secondary students with:

- access to school-based apprenticeships and traineeships to get a head start on their career
- access to subsidised priority certificate I or II level qualifications
- connections to targeted industries through the Gateway to Industry Schools program
- more opportunities to explore career options through Career Tasters



Skills to start your career

Career Start provides eligible Queenslanders with:

- access to free and low-fee certificate III qualifications for jobs in demand
- access to free and low-fee apprenticeship and traineeship training in priority and emerging industries
- increased access to training in regional and remote areas
- access to foundation skills such as language, literacy, numeracy, digital literacy and employability skills



Skills to take your career to the next level

Career Boost provides eligible Queenslanders with:

- access to free and low-fee certificate IV and above qualifications in priority and emerging industries
- more opportunities for workers to upskill and reskill
- opportunities to become a trainer and assessor to share expertise with the next generation



Support to find your career path

Additional support is available to all Queenslanders including:

- information about career and training pathways that is easy to understand
- supported training pathways for women and priority cohorts to take-up skilled careers



FOCUS AREA

The Right Skills for Queensland's ECONOMY



Queensland's economy is growing and expanding into new industries, requiring more skilled workers. However, a tight labour market and undersupply of skilled workers is a potential constraint to economic growth, particularly for regional Queensland.

At the same time, the demand for a workforce with higher-level skills is increasing. Rising skill levels have underpinned Australia's productivity growth in recent decades and are critical for Queensland's growing services sector, where a well-qualified labour force plays a much greater role.

Industry has told us that workers and industries need to keep pace with rapid technological change and automation. More support is needed for existing workers and career changers who face barriers to upskilling and reskilling. This includes access to free and reduced cost training, recognition of existing skills, and finding the time to train while managing other commitments. Additional support for workers and employers will unlock the benefits of a more adaptable, diverse and skilled workforce.

Developing a workforce that has the right skills, at the right time, in the right place, is a priority of this Strategy. Doing so will help grow Queensland's labour market and deliver a more skilled and resilient workforce to boost Queensland's productivity.



Queensland has the **RIGHT SKILLS** to attract investment and to power prosperity and productivity

Over the next four years we will:

- **Deliver flexible and innovative training solutions** to empower industry and employers across Queensland's diverse regions. Industry-led training solutions, such as micro-credentials and non-accredited training, respond quickly to changing and emerging skill needs.
- **Invest in the skills for critical and emerging industries and sectors**, such as health, construction and the workforce for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Targeted investment in training aligned to workforce and industry priorities will ensure that the training system addresses the skill needs for Queensland's high demand sectors.
- **Expand access to higher-level skills and lifelong learning** that improves competitiveness. Investment in higher-level training and enabling pathways to university will lift the overall skill profile of Queenslanders and respond to the higher-level skill needs of the economy.
- **Promote and elevate the status of skilled careers** to secure a pipeline of highly skilled workers. Improving the perception of careers enabled by vocational education and training will make sure that the training system is attractive to prospective students and delivers high-quality and industry-relevant training.
- **Partner with industry and employers to develop, attract and retain a skilled workforce.** Effective employer and industry-led initiatives to increase workforce attraction, retention and capability will help ensure that we can maximise outcomes from our significant investment in skills and training.

Measures of success:

- ✓ Productivity growth is improved by a more skilled workforce, matched to labour demand.
- ✓ Industries — including in critical and emerging areas — can access and develop the skilled workforce they need.
- ✓ Skills and training activity is aligned to workforce demand.

FOCUS AREA

The Right Skills for QUEENSLANDERS



High-quality training has a transformative power, with skilled workers more likely to be employed and earn a higher income.

To be effective, Queenslanders need a student-focused training system and clear pathways that provide opportunities for everyone. Employers and students have told us about the need for more information and support to navigate career pathways and make informed decisions about training options, including pathways funded and supported by government. Students, existing workers and career changers also need more opportunities to access training pathways at all stages of their careers.

Training also provides an important pathway for under-represented groups to develop skills to enter and remain in the workforce – including women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and people with disability. For young people, training plays an important role in setting the foundation for future employment, economic security and prosperity.

Providing better navigation and support for students to choose the right course, complete training and go on to employment, will improve workforce participation and unlock broader socio-economic benefits for all Queenslanders.



Queenslanders have the **RIGHT SKILLS** to secure a job and their economic security

Over the next four years we will:

- **Deliver the right skills for Queenslanders to get their first job.** Strengthening foundation and employability skills and providing access to a first qualification will ensure that Queenslanders are better supported to enter employment.
- Create clear pathways to employment success by **placing students at the centre of the training system.** Our student-focused training system will make information about training easier to access and provide more support for students to complete their training and effectively transition to employment.
- **Provide lifelong training opportunities** for Queenslanders to upskill or reskill. Queenslanders will be empowered to keep pace with rapid change and update their knowledge or reskill in areas of high job demand.
- **Set young Queenslanders up for success by strengthening the pathways from school to employment.** Engaging young people in training and employment will lower their risk of getting off track by providing pathways that lead to meaningful skills and job opportunities.
- **Support skills for a more diverse and resilient workforce.** Investment in supported pathways and targeted training solutions for priority cohorts will ensure that all Queenslanders can participate in the workforce.

Measures of success:

- ✓ Queenslanders, including priority groups, are able to build the skills needed for well-paid, secure work aligned to their interests.
- ✓ Queenslanders have the skills that allow them to adapt in their work and life now and in the future.
- ✓ Learning supports and pathways are accessible and effective, and meet the diversity of learner needs and objectives, including for priority groups.

FOCUS AREA

The Right Skills delivered by a robust TRAINING SYSTEM



A high-performing and high-quality training system – driven by TAFE, private and not-for-profit training providers – delivers the training that underpins employment and a skilled workforce that drives economic growth and boosts productivity. Trainers and training providers are critical in delivering future-ready skills. Queensland's training sector is a complex system with many stakeholders, benefiting from coordination across the system to ensure that high-quality training options are provided across the regions.

Ensuring access to training in a geographically-dispersed state is an ongoing challenge. Queenslanders told us that more work is needed to align training on offer with local industries and employment opportunities.

In an environment where more skills are required, stakeholders told us about the importance of lifelong training that can lead to higher-education, addresses priority skill needs and provides further career pathways.

Strengthening the Queensland training system through strategic investment, effective coordination and system stewardship will assist with making high-quality training available beyond metropolitan centres that is responsive to the evolving needs of Queenslanders and the Queensland economy.



Queensland has a healthy, diverse and high-quality training system that delivers the **RIGHT SKILLS** for the workforce

Over the next four years we will:

- **Invest in world-class training facilities and the next generation of trainers**, fostering a responsive and diverse training sector for Queensland's economy. A secure training sector and sustainable vocational education and training workforce is key to addressing skills shortages across Queensland's economy.
- **Ensure access to training for Queensland's regions and niche industries**. Strengthening training access and outcomes in regional Queensland is critical to boost economic growth and productivity in regional economies and will support emerging industries.
- **Build a world-class network of local training providers**, delivering high quality government-funded training. Improving the coordination, delivery and quality assurance of government-funded training programs – delivered by TAFE, private and not-for-profit registered training providers – will provide Queenslanders with confidence that the skills acquired are valued by employers and industries, and lead to employment.
- Enhance our use of data to strengthen training delivery and **improve quality and performance**. Improved use of data and measurement of performance through an outcomes-based investment and performance framework will establish a strong evidence-base and transparent methodology to target investment in skills and training programs.
- **Strengthen pathways from training to higher education**. Strengthening pathways between training and higher education through improved system harmonisation will create a more integrated, flexible and responsive training system that responds to higher skills needs of students and industry, and supports a more complex and dynamic economy.

Measures of success:

- ✓ Training courses are trusted, relevant and available at the right time.
- ✓ Training delivery is of a consistently high-quality and provides a positive learner experience, including for priority groups.
- ✓ System governance advances stewardship of an effective and efficient Queensland vocational education and training system, which strengthens partner participation and ensures system sustainability.

DELIVERING
FOR QUEENSLAND



Queensland
Government