



Supporting employer involvement with schools

Working with schools to help students understand work and jobs and develop skills and knowledge that enable them to go on to further training, education or employment provides many benefits - not only for students, but also for employers. Collaborating with schools means employers get the opportunity to have a say in the training and skills students receive, and ultimately influence their future employees.

Engaging with schools

Preparing Secondary Students for Work, which is the new framework that guides the delivery of vocational education in schools, describes vocational activities under the broad categories of:

- **Vocational learning** - which is aimed at helping students explore work, and identify career options and pathways.
- **VET** (Vocational Education and Training) - which enables students to acquire industry and workplace skills through nationally recognised training described within an industry developed training package.

It is important for employers to be aware of the different types of activities they can be involved in, what its purpose is and their role.

VET delivered to secondary students is the same as all other VET and the same standards apply.

What activities can employers do?

Activities that employers can get involved in to support vocational learning include:

- providing work experience placements
- providing hands-on learning opportunities e.g. skills taster programs such as 'Try a Trade'
- providing workplace tours and speaking with young people about possible career opportunities
- collaborating with teachers to design and deliver learning experiences that connect classroom learning with the real-world
- participating in local career expos.

Supporting the delivery of VET requires more formal arrangements to be in place in line with national training package requirements. These include:

- working with schools and Registered Training Organisations (RTO) to provide access to suitable education and training equipment, facilities and qualified staff
- supporting schools and RTOs to undertake appropriate assessment processes, particularly on-the-job components
- providing structured work placements
- employing a school-based apprentice or trainee or acting as a host employer for an apprentice or trainee employed through a group training organisation
- contributing to the development of training package materials
- assisting in planning VET activities to ensure VET programs are informed by employer need.



Getting involved

Involvement can vary from providing advice, offering work experience placements through to employing school-based apprentices and trainees. An employer can choose the level of involvement that is right for them.

What's next?

Before becoming involved with schools and students, the following should be considered:

- ensure all staff who interact with students under 18 years of age understand and adhere to their child protection responsibilities
- complete paperwork for the school for any students attending your work place
- establish appropriate supervision, support and induction procedures (the people who supervise students must be suitably prepared and qualified)
- negotiate with the school to arrange time for students to attend work and training.

Given the formal nature of VET activities, employers will need to:

- ensure a student's work place learning matches with the competencies outlined in the course documentation
- adhere to state and territory requirements associated with the provision of structured work placements or when employing a student to undertake a school-based apprentice or trainee (e.g. duty of care, workplace health and safety requirements, obtaining a student's medical information etc.)
- in the case of hiring an apprentice or trainee, work with the local apprenticeship network provider to identify the right training, support and remuneration for students.

Want to know more?

For more information about about school and employer engagement to support vocational learning and VET delivered to secondary students, visit the:

www.preparingsecondarystudentsforwork.myskills.gov.au website.

