

# Skills for Queensland discussion paper consultation summary

## Consultation overview

On 17 September 2018, the Queensland Government released Skills for Queensland (the discussion paper) for public consultation, which concluded on 19 October 2018. The consultation process included an online survey, written submissions and seven regional consultation forums across the state held between 8 and 19 October 2018.

Responses were sought across three key themes:

- meeting the need for skills through industry advice and market settings
- the role of providers in delivering vocational education and training (VET) services
- encouraging all Queenslanders to participate in VET.

The discussion paper and consultation provided the opportunity to re-examine how the state's VET investment can better target critical skill needs, and emerging opportunities as well as regional and whole-of-economy priorities.

A total of 45 responses were received via the Get involved online survey and 43 written submissions were received from a range of stakeholders including:

- Employers
- Research institutes
- Registered training organisations (RTOs)
- Group training organisations (GTOs)
- Community sector
- School sector
- VET Industry Advisory Organisations (VETIAOs)
- Industry peaks
- Business peaks
- Employee representatives and unions
- Consultants
- Dual sector university/TAFE
- Statutory bodies
- Apprenticeship network
- Individuals.

The consultation forums were well attended, highly interactive and participants were positive about the VET sector in Queensland.

There were 158 attendees from across the following locations: Central Queensland, North Queensland, Brisbane Metropolitan, Darling Downs South West, North Coast, South East Queensland, and Far North Queensland.

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## Summary of feedback

The consultation process revealed strong and broadly consistent stakeholder views on the value of the VET sector and its critical importance as the labour market continues to re-shape due to the changing nature of jobs.

There was general acknowledgement of the stability and consistency of Queensland's VET system over time, and that its general performance is better than average when compared to other jurisdictions.

Key messages included:

- Skills and training will be fundamental in delivering the qualified people needed for the jobs of the future.
- There is a need to act now to 'future-proof' the VET sector so that it remains relevant, and can continue to deliver benefits for industry, business and individuals as the labour market landscape changes.
- Industry and government at all levels must work together to create a longer-term plan to prioritise workforce development and investment in VET.
- Industry engagement must facilitate accurate and impartial advice, the opportunity for more innovative skills development approaches, and solutions to emerging industry sector challenges, including targeted placed-based responses.
- Industry engagement in the future should be broader than its current scope, reduce duplication of effort, capture input at the 'grass-roots', and include advice from a broader range of stakeholders at local, regional and state levels.
- Industry and employers are increasingly looking for a breadth of capabilities in their employees – enterprise skills such as problem solving, critical analysis, social interaction, along with technology specialisations. Flexible market settings to support training pathways that meet business and industry needs, particularly better supporting lifelong learning, will be increasingly important.
- Businesses would benefit from greater support to plan and invest in their workforce, and be able to access region specific advice and support.
- The importance of quality delivery, underpinned by quality teaching and assessment practices, and the need for VET practitioners to be supported to gain additional education expertise and industry currency.
- Training arrangements need to continue to provide valuable traditional pathways, such as apprenticeships and traineeships, and to also help foster innovation and new ways of acquiring skills.
- The need to make the system easier to navigate so that Queenslanders are able to take advantage of the programs and support that are available.
- Strong support for a VET system that provides choice for individuals and employers and that values the role that both public and private training providers perform in the system.
- Suggestions for improved data provision so stakeholders have a more complete picture of the sector, particularly for apprenticeships and traineeships, and VET delivered to school students.
- Better informing and engaging current and future participants to understand the value VET can bring to career pathways so they can make informed choices about skills and training options. This is particularly important for young people and school students.

## Next steps

Feedback from the Skills for Queensland discussion paper process and the *Future of Work – Industry and Skills Summit* is being incorporated into the development of a Skills Strategy that is anticipated to be publicly released in mid-2019.