

**MEDIA RELEASE – For immediate release**

 **NON-TRADITIONAL INDUSTRIES OFFER EXCITING CAREER OPTIONS POSSIBLE THROUGH VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

**Explore All The Options and consider Vocational Education and Training (VET)**

***National Skills Week: 25–31 August 2025***

**Sydney, 12 August 2025** – Vocational education and training (VET) is giving Australians the practical, hands-on experience and training they crave to discover their true passions and buck the trends to pursue non-traditional careers.

National Skills Week promotes the wide range of educational and career pathways available through vocational training, including the options to get the qualifications required for roles in skills shortage.

While Workplace Gender Equality Agency data shows women (51 per cent) and men (49 per cent) have close to equal participation in the total workforce, there are significant gender imbalances in many industries[[1]](#footnote-1).

Many of these same industries also are facing serious workforce shortage pressures, as revealed in Jobs and Skills Australia data[[2]](#footnote-2).

The industries that traditionally employed more women are education and training (66 per cent of workers are women) and healthcare and social assistance (78 per cent of workers are women) and both have workforce shortage pressures of more than 50 per cent and 60 per cent respectively.

The industries that traditionally employed more men, construction (79 per cent of workers are men) has a workforce shortage pressure of more than 70 per cent; mining (78 per cent of workers are men) has a shortage pressure of more than 60 per cent; and electricity, gas, water and waste services (74 per cent of workers are men) has a workforce pressure of more than 40 per cent.

Through vocational education and training, jobseekers can follow their interests and trial their careers, including during school through VET in School subjects or School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships.

Post-school, traineeships and apprenticeships give jobseekers a real-life, practical chance to learn the skills, while working on site to fill skills gaps while they are training.

**National Skills Week Chair Brian Wexham says:**

“By providing all individuals with targeted training in areas of skills shortages, such as trades, technology and healthcare, we are not just preparing them for jobs - we are empowering them to thrive in dynamic industries that provide a rewarding career, which also helps to drive the Australian economy.”

**From Industry Providers:**

**Attribute to:**

**Trevor Fairweather, Executive General Manager, Education at ReadyTech**

*“National Skills Week is about shining a light on the people behind the qualifications –*

*learners, trainers and providers who are driving change in their communities. Their*

*stories are why we do what we do.”*

*“We believe every skill tells a story. Supporting National Skills Week lets us celebrate*

*the journeys of learners and the role skills education plays in building stronger futures.”*

**Attribute to:**

**Holly Willcox, CEO CITB**

*“The building and construction industry is evolving, and we want to empower women to be at*

*the forefront of this change by taking on a career that is both rewarding and energising, and*

*offers endless potential for growth and impact.*

*Building and construction pathways are incredibly diverse and extend far beyond traditional*

*roles, ensuring there is something to inspire everyone.*

*At CITB, we’re committed to providing the support, training, and pathways women need to*

*trade up and thrive. It’s about building a future where every woman can see herself making a*

*powerful contribution to our state and its development.”*

**Attributed to:**

**Mathew Hicks, CEO- MEGT**

*“MEGT is proud to support National Skills Week because we understand that sustainable employment pathways can only be unlocked by those who are best prepared to embrace them”.*

**Attributed to:**

**Luke Radford, CEO, Brick & Block**

*It's no secret that the representation of women in trades within our sector is significantly low, with less than 1% of our workforce being female.*

*This is a disparity we are actively working to change, especially when women make up 50% of the population!*

*National Skills Week highlights the immense opportunity for young and inspiring women to join the brick and block sector. Your skills, talent, and perspective are incredibly valuable, and we encourage you to consider a rewarding career in our industry.*

**VET success story available for interview:**

**Early childhood educator Lachlan Carey** initially pursued an electrical apprenticeship after leaving school in Year 10 but losing his job twice during the Covid pandemic led to him reassessing his options.

Lachlan, who was named Trainee of the Year at the 2024 NSW Training Awards, says he was just helping out at a childcare centre when he felt driven to ensure young, disadvantaged people get a fair go and decided to pursue a career in this industry instead.

He completed a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care and a Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care.

He has just started a Bachelor of Education (Early Years) to become an early childhood teacher, and because of his prior VET qualifications, will be able to complete it in two years instead of the usual four years.

He is one of two males who work at his childcare centre and says he believes his role in a female-dominated industry carries extra importance.

“I find it a massive positive and an advantage for the children because many may not have a father figure or a male role model in their life,” he says.

“For me and the other male educator (at the centre), that is something we don't take lightly.

“We're always making sure we're putting our best foot forward to role model for these younger kids; that there are positive male role models in this world.”

**Electrotechnology apprentice Carly Brown**, the 2024 Victorian Vocational Student of the Year, struggled with the academic focus of her high school and knew it was not the type of learning or career that suited her.

A careers counsellor suggested she look at career options related to her hobbies, so she looked into a trade school a friend had started studying at and decided to make the switch too, in her second term of Year 10.

There, while completing her high school certificate, she was able to try a range of work experiences and completed the qualifications Certificate II in Engineering, Certificate II in Electrotechnology, Certificate II in Plumbing and Certificate II in Automotive Technology.

The experiences gave her the opportunity to find a trade that she could physically handle as well as had an interest in pursuing.

“The first one was boiler making (engineering/welding) and I really enjoyed that a lot but I found the work was a bit heavy for me,” she says.

“In all the work experiences, I would ask people if they like their job and if they could do anything else, would they change, and in the electrical placement, they all said they wouldn’t change.

“That’s what kept me in electrical – as well as enjoying the work in general and it not being as heavy on the body.”

Now that she has finished school, Carly has an apprenticeship in electrotechnology.

**Dairy worker Almira Dall** knew she wanted to work with animals when she finished school, so enrolled in an animal science degree at university.

She liked horses and horse riding and wanted a career working with animals.

But she decided to defer her studies and take a gap year to gain practical experience with animals and realised she did not need higher education to succeed.

Almira, who was named Trainee of the Year at the 2024 Western Australia Training Awards, studied a Certificate III in Agricultural Dairy Production and then went on to complete a Certificate IV in Agriculture.

“I’m allergic to sheep, so that gets rid of a lot of job opportunities, so I saw there are a lot of jobs available with cattle and saw a job ad for a dairy farm,” she says.

“I fell in love with being hands-on, working so closely with the cows, and just getting the opportunity to work with animals.

“When I started working on farm and I was learning but I wished there was a way I could learn more and learn it slightly differently, to learn the reason why, not just the how.”

Her mother suggested the Certificate III in Agricultural Dairy Production traineeship to gain those extra skills.

“I never actually ended up going to uni because I realised that I got the education I wanted from being able to do this traineeship while working full time as well,” she says.

 **Electrician, Ellie Wotherspoon,** the 2024 Apprentice of the Year, Western Australian Training Awards. Ellie’s brother, father and grandfather are all electricians but she had never seen a female electrician so it was never something that she thought she would do. Initially, she started a teaching degree at university after finishing school but took a break from studies and got practical experience as a nanny for a female electrician. “I remember thinking, ‘Wow if she can do it, maybe I can do it too’. That’s when I pursued an introductory course into what is involved in working in industry, and from there I’ve never looked back,” she says. She pursued a Certificate III in Engineering – Industrial Electrician apprenticeship with a Certificate IV in Instrumentation, giving her a dual trade.

**Who's Behind National Skills Week?**

Supported by the Federal Government (DEWR), State Governments (QLD and NSW), and leading VET organisations, this year’s partners include:

* MEGT
* Apprenticeship Support Australia
* Brick & Block Careers
* Komatsu
* South Australian Skills Commission (SASC)
* Construction Industry Training Board
* TAFE NSW
* Queensland University of Technology
* ReadyTech
* University of Queensland
* Victoria University
* BAE Australia
* Housing Industry Association (HIA)
* Wine Australia
* Adelaide University
* UQ Skills.

**Talent Available for Interview:**

Media outlets can access interviews with:

* Brian Wexham, Chair, National Skills Week
* VET Alumni & Apprentices of the Year from across Australia
* Industry Leaders & CEOs in healthcare, tech, construction, mining, and more
* Members of the 2025 National Skills Week Advisory Committee

National Skills Week offers facilitated media connections to suit specific sector coverage.

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**Notes to editors:**

**About National Skills Week 2025**

National Skills Week is an annual initiative in Australia, scheduled for 25–31 August 2025, aimed at promoting the value and diversity of Vocational Education and Training (VET). Organised by SkillsOne Television and supported by Australian, State, and Territory Governments, it serves as a platform to highlight career pathways through apprenticeships, traineeships, and other VET programs.

National Skills Week is designed to:

* Raise Awareness: Enhance public understanding of the benefits and opportunities within the VET sector.
* Challenge Perceptions: Dispel outdated myths about VET and showcase its relevance in today's economy.
* Highlight Career Pathways: Demonstrate the diverse career options available through VET, including apprenticeships, full qualifications, micro-credentials, and pathways to higher education.
* Address Skills Shortages: Focus on emerging skills needs and industry trends to support workforce development.

The 2025 theme, “Explore ALL the Options,” encourages individuals to consider a wide range of educational and career pathways, emphasizing opportunities in regional and remote areas, as well as various training formats.

Through over 500 events nationwide, National Skills Week aims to inspire participation in VET, contributing to a skilled and adaptable workforce that meets Australia's evolving economic needs.

For more information or to get involved, visit the official website: [nationalskillsweek.com.au](https://www.nationalskillsweek.com.au/).

1. [Workplace Gender Equality Agency Data Explorer](https://www.wgea.gov.au/Data-Explorer/Industry) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Jobs and Skills Australia, 2024 Occupation Shortage List](https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-10/2024_osl_key_findings_and_insights_report_0.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)