

Building the NDIS workforce through traineeships

August 2018



This research project was undertaken for Jobs Queensland by the Community Services Industry Alliance (CSIA), on behalf of the WorkAbility Consortium. Outpost Consulting provided assistance with the research and writing for this report. This document represents the final report provided to Jobs Queensland by CSIA on behalf of the WorkAbility Consortium.

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*Front cover image: Taylah, working in the disability sector with YellowBridge in Toowoomba.
Photo courtesy of Health and Community Services Workforce Council on behalf of WorkAbility Qld.*

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Message from the Jobs Queensland Interim Chair

Jobs Queensland has a role in conducting and supporting future workforce development and planning for priority government initiatives, including the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The implementation of the NDIS represents the most significant social policy reform in a generation and is anticipated to create a significant number of new jobs, spread across all regions of Queensland. To meet this unprecedented growth in jobs it is imperative the sector, with the support of government, is able to access quality, relevant training. This includes traineeships.

Traineeships have traditionally provided an entry-level pathway for workers entering the disability sector, however the uptake in disability-services related traineeships in Queensland has declined over recent years.

Jobs Queensland engaged with WorkAbility Qld – a consortium of peak industry bodies – to deliver a research project investigating the role of traineeships in supporting skills growth for the NDIS workforce. The research report draws on literature reviews, employment and training data and stakeholder interviews, to develop strategies that help meet labour demand and ensure the workforce has the requisite skills.

The research investigated the uptake of traineeships relevant to the NDIS workforce, in particular the Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability). This included attraction and retention of trainees, and factors that impact the uptake, retention and completion of traineeships, including in regional and remote locations.

The research also examined other relevant structured training pathways, and the circumstances in which one particular pathway may be preferred over another. A key area of focus was how traineeships are currently used in the workforce planning undertaken by employers in the disability sector and how they can be best used into the future.

This report identifies 11 recommended strategies for building the disability sector workforce in Queensland through relevant training pathways – with particular emphasis on increasing the value of the traineeship-pathway in the sector. These strategies aim to challenge the training culture within the sector, deliver the right training product to the right cohort, and overcome barriers to effective training and workforce development.

Ensuring that the rollout of the NDIS in Queensland is underpinned by an appropriately skilled workforce is not the responsibility of government or the disability sector in isolation. This report lays out a framework for government and the sector to collectively build the NDIS workforce in Queensland through traineeships that have been developed by the sector. The Jobs Queensland Board acknowledges in particular the role of the Community Services Industry Alliance in managing this project and delivering this report on behalf of WorkAbility Qld.

Over the coming years, Jobs Queensland will continue to undertake research and provide advice to the Queensland Government in relation to NDIS workforce issues to leverage these opportunities.

Peter Henneken AM
Interim Chair, Jobs Queensland



Introduction

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is bringing unprecedented demand for disability workers along with a shift in the kinds of knowledge, skills and attitudes required to support people with disability to live a 'good life'.

New workers will need hands-on experience with participants to develop excellent interpersonal skills and cultural competency, to implement a person-centred and strengths-based approach. They also need learning time 'off-the-job' to develop a solid understanding of issues such as the purposes and processes of the NDIS and safety and risk factors to consider. Traineeships lend themselves well to this complementary approach.

Traineeships enable people to gain a nationally recognised qualification by combining employment and training and to get paid while learning new skills. Job outcomes from traineeships and apprenticeships across all industries are strong, with 83 per cent of apprentices and trainees employed six months after training (compared to 77 per cent for other VET graduates).¹ Employers also benefit by having an opportunity to train a person within the work environment where their skills will be put to use. Employers may also be eligible for subsidies, which makes employing a trainee more attractive.

Despite the value of the pathway amongst industries more broadly, there is little utilisation of traineeships within the disability sector and there is little industry-specific research on the reasons for this.

About the project

This project set out to explore barriers and opportunities to support uptake of traineeships in the disability sector, primarily the Certificate III in Individual Support. It also examined other structured training pathways (including both accredited and non-accredited training) that promote skills development to support the implementation of the NDIS, and explored why these pathways might be selected in favour of the traineeship option.

In particular, we sought to gather insights into the following issues:

- The role of traineeships and other relevant structured training pathways in supporting the skills growth of the NDIS workforce, and the circumstances in which one particular pathway may be preferred over another.
- Barriers to the uptake of traineeships in the disability sector in Queensland, factors impacting employers' attraction and retention of trainees, and factors that impact the uptake, retention and completion of traineeships in regional and remote locations.
- Demand and barriers to demand for traineeships in the disability sector in the short, medium and longer term and what is driving these.
- The experience of non-government employers that have ceased using traineeships and those who have never used traineeships in their employment mix, and the reasons behind this.
- Good practice in the use of traineeships in the disability sector in Queensland and other jurisdictions including examining approaches to overcome barriers.

¹ Department of Employment (2018) Australian Jobs 2018.

- Information gaps for employers and employees in the disability sector in relation to traineeships.
- How traineeships are currently used in the workforce planning undertaken by employers in the disability sector and how they can be best used into the future.
- How other relevant structured training pathways are used in the workforce planning undertaken by employers in the disability sector, and the circumstances in which these training options may be preferred by employers over traineeships.

The project commenced with a background research phase, in which we examined relevant data and literature for insights into these issues. We also conducted key informant interviews with 11 representatives of the disability sector and vocational education and training (VET) sector who could provide us with a high-level overview of the issues.

The findings of the background research phase were documented in an interim report (refer Attachment C) and were used to inform the focus of questioning and identification of interviewees for the subsequent phase of the project.

The second phase of the project focused on field work consultations with 70 interviewees representing the range of interests in workforce development for the disability sector, as well as regional and metropolitan perspectives. These consultations included conversations (primarily face-to-face) with:

- 30 individuals who were either trainees in the sector, students studying qualifications related to the sector or unqualified workers employed in the sector
- 19 representatives of service providers working in different areas of disability support, including two that also provided training and employment services
- three parents of children with a disability, providing a service user perspective
- nine representatives of public and private registered training organisations (RTOs)
- two representatives of group training organisations (GTOs), including one that works exclusively with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- one representative of school-based VET programs
- two representatives of Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) providers
- five representatives of policy and program interests in the sector.

A full list of those consulted can be found in Attachment D.

The project was overseen by a Disability Traineeships Advisory Group comprised of representatives of the disability sector and the VET sector.

Key findings from the project

The project findings highlight a cascading series of factors impacting on the use of traineeships and other nationally recognised training pathways in the disability sector.



A series of case studies has been developed as part of the project, which illustrate different aspects of these findings. The case studies can be found in Attachment A.

Detailed findings

The disability sector workforce

Projections suggest that with the implementation of the NDIS across Queensland, an additional 43,000 participants would be registering for disability services by 2019, on top of the existing 48,000 people receiving services in 2016.² This has significant implications for the disability sector workforce, with demand for workers expected to grow from 13,550–16,550 full-time equivalent jobs in 2016, to 29,450–35,950 full-time equivalent jobs in 2019.³ Given that very little employment in the sector is on a full-time basis, the actual job numbers are likely to be even higher than this.

Work in the disability sector is highly casualised. In 2017, the national disability workforce comprised 43 per cent permanent part-time, 41 per cent casual and only 12 per cent permanent full-time employees.⁴ By comparison, Queensland has a slightly higher proportion of casual workers (46 per cent), with the proportions even higher in parts of regional Queensland.⁵

The disability sector workforce is also an ageing one. Half of disability support workers in Queensland (50 per cent) and 46 per cent of all-Australian disability workers were aged 45 years and older in 2017, compared with around 40 per cent for the Australian all-industry employed workforce.⁶ There are also more than triple the number of women (77 per cent) as men (23 per cent) among disability support workers in Queensland, which is even higher than the gender ratio of 70 per cent women and 30 per cent men across the national disability workforce.⁷

The largely casual nature of the sector and the age profile of the workforce are factors that have an effect on the uptake of traineeships and are discussed in more detail later in this report.

How the sector currently trains

Nationally recognised training pathways in the disability sector

Qualifications

There are three vocational education and training (VET) qualifications that can be used to skill workers for the disability sector in Queensland. They are:

- Certificate III in Individual Support – in which ‘disability’ is one of three streams sharing a common set of core units (the other two streams are ‘ageing’ and ‘home and community’)
- Certificate IV in Disability
- Certificate IV in Mental Health.

There are also some Certificate II qualifications that are being used as a pathway into higher level qualifications (such as the Certificate II in Health Support Services), as well as some skill sets that are increasing in use (specifically the ‘Induction to Disability’ skill set, and the ‘Disability Work – Behaviour Support’ skill set).

A list of these qualifications and skill sets and the current Queensland Government funding amounts for each can be found in Attachment B.

2 National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) (2016) Market Position Statement – Queensland.

3 National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) (2016) Market Position Statement – Queensland.

4 National Disability Services (NDS) (2017) Australian Disability Workforce Report. Deakin West, ACT, Australia: NDS.

5 National Disability Services (NDS) (2017) Queensland Disability Workforce Report. WorkAbility Queensland.

6 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly, May 2017, Cat no. 6291.0.55.003.

7 National Disability Services (NDS) (2017) Queensland Disability Workforce Report. WorkAbility Queensland.

With the NDIS broadening the range of services provided to people with a disability, other qualifications in community services, allied health and leisure and health are starting to be used for skill development. However, they have not been included in the scope of the data review for this research.

Funding and incentives

The Certificate III and IV qualifications listed above are funded by the Queensland Government under Certificate III Guarantee and Higher Level Skills programs (for those who do not already have qualifications at this level), although to gain funding for the Certificate IV qualifications, students need to be an existing employee in the sector.

Currently, only the Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability) is funded as a traineeship by the Queensland Government through its User Choice scheme.

The traineeship in Certificate III in Individual Support has a nominal duration of 12 months, through full-time employment. It can also be undertaken on a part-time basis with a minimum of 15 hours a week employment (averaged over a four-week period), or as a school-based traineeship with 7.5 hours paid employment a week (averaged over a three-month period).

Given the nature of the work in the sector, traineeships are usually undertaken on a part-time or school-based basis. This has an effect on the Commonwealth Government subsidies for employers of trainees, which are lower for part-time trainees. This places the disability sector at a slight disadvantage as part time traineeships only attract a completion payment of \$1500 for employers, whereas school-based and full-time traineeships for new workers (i.e. those employed less than three months) attract combined commencement and completion payments of \$4000 and full-time traineeships for existing workers attract a completion payment of \$3000.

With the Certificate III in Individual Support also funded by the Queensland Government under its Certificate 3 Guarantee and Year 12 Fee Free schemes (i.e. non-traineeship pathways), Commonwealth Government subsidies and payroll tax exemptions are the only financial incentives for an employer to employ someone through a traineeship pathway rather than hiring someone who is completing or has completed a non-traineeship pathway.

Pathways into traineeships or other nationally accredited training

Consultations identified a number of different programs that are being used as a pathway into traineeships and other nationally accredited training. These include:

- Completion of Certificate II in Health Support Services or Certificate II in Community Services through VET in Schools programs, which can provide a pathway into the Certificate III in Individual Support.
- The Commonwealth Government funded PaTH program that supports young job seekers to build employability skills and gain work experience in an industry through a four to 12 week internship. The employer receives an incentive payment of \$1000 and the job seeker receives a boost of \$200 per fortnight to their unemployment benefits for the internship period. It provides an opportunity for the employer to trial a young person for suitability for their organisation.
- Employers may also be able to access \$10,000 in incentives for employing eligible young job seekers aged 15-24 years (including those who have done internships through the PaTH program). This can be packaged up with traineeship incentives.

- Similar incentives are available for employers to take on eligible job seekers who are Indigenous, are aged 50 years and over, are aged between 25 and 29 years of age, are parents or are registered with an employment services provider for 12 months or more. These can also be packaged with traineeship incentives.
- The Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) programs fund community organisations to deliver training and employability support to eligible participants (people disadvantaged in the labour market), in collaboration with pre-qualified training organisations. Many of the current funded projects are delivering the Certificate II in Community Services or Certificate II in Health Support Services, which can then be used as a stepping stone into a traineeship or other nationally accredited training at Certificate III level. Incentives are available to employers who employ a new worker under a traineeship after completing a SQW program.
- The Queensland Government-funded AllevE8 program that supports school students to complete the Certificate II in Health Support Services, along with 20 weeks (one day per week) unpaid work experience placement. Participants receive credit towards their Queensland Certificate of Education, as well as the potential for ongoing employment and entry into a traineeship or further study.

Uptake of traineeships and other structured training

Nationally recognised qualifications

As illustrated in Table 1, Queensland Government-funded commencements in Certificate III disability-related qualifications rose dramatically in 2016/17, as did completions. However, much of this growth can likely be attributed to the replacement of the Certificate III in Disability with the Certificate III in Individual Support, which also includes those studying under the ageing and home and community streams. It was not possible to access data for the disability stream only.

Certificate IV disability-related qualification commencements have been in decline, but commencements in Certificate IV mental health-related qualifications have risen slightly.

Many students also complete these Certificate III and IV qualifications on a fee-for-service basis. However, these enrolments are not captured in the data below.

Table 1. Commencements and completions in Queensland Government funded disability related qualifications (non-traineeship pathways) 2015/16 – 2017/18

Qualification	Commencements			Completions		
	2015/16 Total	2016/17 Total	2017/18 YTD	2015/16 Cohort	2016/17 Cohort	2017/18 Cohort YTD
Certificate III in Disability and Certificate III in Individual Support	2,626	6,959	4,888	1,534	4,125	1,392
Certificate IV in Disability	450	229	208	228	108	18
Certificate IV in Mental Health and Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work	113	361	272	68	145	14

Source: Data supplied by Queensland DET as at 14/5/2018.

Traineeships

By comparison to the numbers of enrolments in the same qualifications through the non-traineeship pathways described above, traineeships are a little utilised pathway for skill development in the disability sector.

As illustrated in Table 2, traineeship commencements in Certificate III in Disability and Certificate III in Individual Support were between four per cent and 10 per cent of the numbers commencing qualifications through non-traineeship pathways. The numbers of traineeship completions are in similar proportions. Once again, these figures include all those undertaking the ageing and home and community streams, so the numbers completing traineeships in the disability sector specifically will be lower again.

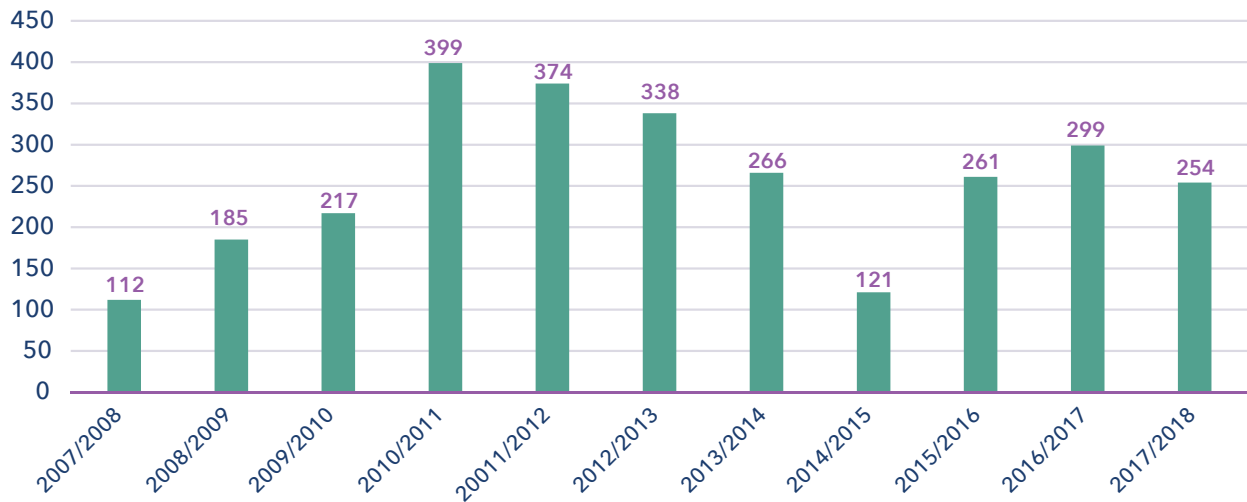
Table 2. Commencements and completions in Certificate III traineeship and non-traineeship pathways 2015/16 – 2017/18

Pathway	Commencements			Completions		
	2015/16 Total	2016/17 Total	2017/18 YTD	2015/16 Cohort	2016/17 Cohort	2017/18 Cohort YTD
Certificate III in Disability and Certificate III in Individual Support - Traineeship Pathway	261	299	254	91	158	127
Certificate III in Disability and Certificate III in Individual Support - Non-traineeship Pathway	2,626	6,959	4,888	1,534	4,125	1,392

Source: Data supplied by Queensland DET as at 14/5/2018.

As with traineeships across all industry sectors, the uptake of traineeships in the disability sector has been decreasing since 2012, when Commonwealth Government funded employer commencement incentives were withdrawn for existing workers. As illustrated in Figure 1, there has been an upsurge in commencement numbers since 2014/15, but as explained above, this may be attributed to the change of qualification to the Certificate III in Individual Support, which also includes commencements in the ageing and home and community sectors. It is not possible to separate out Individual Support traineeship commencements or completions by stream. However, Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT) enrolment data shows that that 42 per cent of students undertaking an Individual Support traineeship had chosen the disability stream.

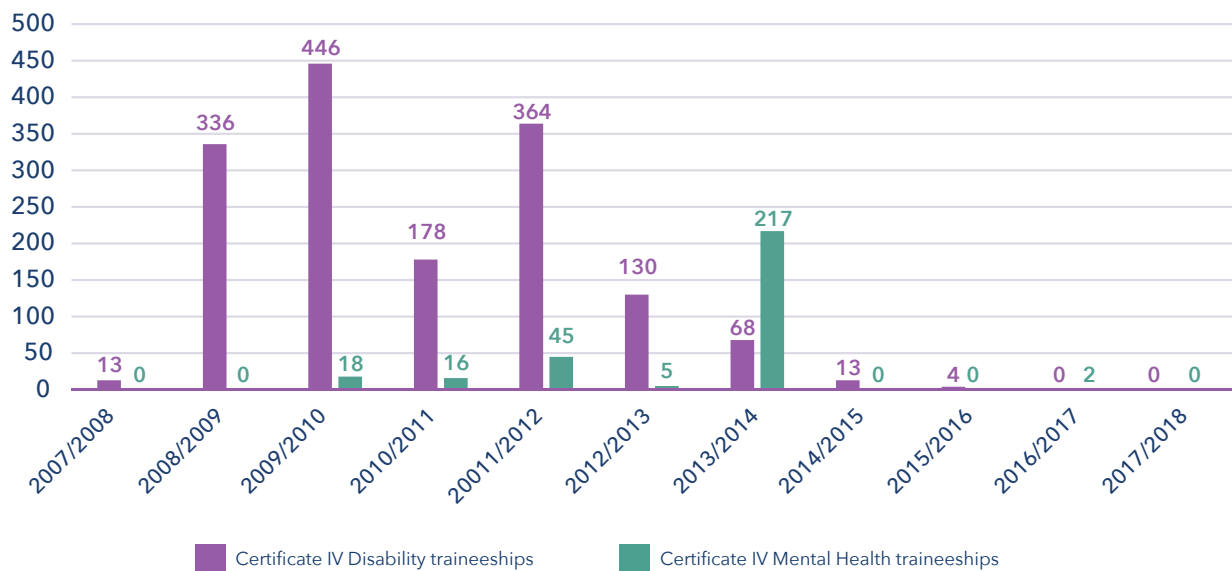
Figure 1. Commencements in Certificate III disability-related traineeships 2007/08 – 2017/18



Source: Data supplied by Queensland DET as at 11/5/2018.

As illustrated in Figure 2, traineeship commencements in Certificate IV disability-related qualifications have declined to the point where there have been no commencements in 2016/17 or 2017/18, while in Certificate IV mental health-related qualifications, there have been only two traineeship commencements in the past four years.

Figure 2. Commencements in Certificate IV disability-related traineeships 2007/08 – 2017/18



Source: Data supplied by Queensland DET as at 11/5/2018.

School-based traineeships

Under a school-based traineeship, students generally spend one day a week at their workplace in paid employment, one day with their training organisation and the other days at school. Case study 1 in Attachment A describes a successful school-based disability traineeship program in the Logan area.

While we did not have precise data for school-based traineeships, our consultations identified that school-based traineeships in the Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability) appear to be increasing from a low base.

Queensland has always embraced school-based apprenticeships and traineeships more than other jurisdictions. In fact, in 2016, more than half of all the 17,000 school-based apprentices and trainees in Australia were in Queensland. However, it should be noted that there was a 21 per cent decrease in use of this pathway between 2015 and 2016 in Queensland and a 14 per cent decrease nationally.⁸

NCVER data from 2016 shows that 720 of Queensland's 8635 school-based trainees were enrolled in the Community Services Training Package. This makes Community Services the fourth (out of 24) most popular choice for school students, up from the sixth most popular choice in 2012. Tourism, Travel and Hospitality is the most frequently used by school students with 1770 trainees, followed by Business Services with 1545 and Retail with 1140 trainees.

While we do not know exactly how many of the 720 students undertook disability-related qualifications, we know that 71 per cent (or 510 Community Services school-based trainees) undertook a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. This means that in 2016 there were only 210 Queensland school students who participated in traineeships in one of the other Community Services qualifications, of which the Certificate III in Individual Support would have been one.⁹

Skill sets

The 'Induction to Disability' and 'Disability Work – Behaviour Support' skill sets (for new and existing workers respectively) are funded by the Queensland Government (refer Attachment B) although the uptake has been quite small to date.¹⁰ In addition, several skill sets, including 'Induction to Disability', 'Disability Work – Behaviour Support' and 'Individual Support – Disability', are being delivered on a fee-for-service basis in Queensland.

Consultations highlighted a strong interest by service providers in the possibility of greater use of skill sets, particularly for the induction of new workers and the upskilling of existing workers.

In the Cairns region, service providers are interested in using the Induction to Disability skill set, along with some optional extra units, as a common baseline for new entrants to the industry across providers in the region. Case study 2 in Attachment A provides details about this initiative.

Once individuals have completed this skill set they have achieved three of the core units and one elective from the Certificate III in Individual Support. This means, even before they have undertaken any optional units specified by the organisation, they are well on the way to completing the off-the-job training requirements of a traineeship. They would still need to complete four core units and six elective units to gain the full qualification.

8 NCVER (2017) National VET in Schools Collection 2006 – 2016.

9 NCVER (2017) National VET in Schools Collection 2006 – 2016.

10 Data supplied by Queensland DET as at 11/5/2018 shows only nine funded commencements and no completions in the Induction to Disability skill set in the past five years.

Non-accredited training provided by employers

While there are currently no legislative requirements for disability support workers to undergo specific training, some providers – particularly those which provide services to NDIS participants with complex needs – require their staff to complete mandatory training as a matter of internal policy. Mandatory training generally prioritises workplace health and safety/safe work practices topics. Workers are also required to complete a police check. Beyond these basic requirements, many NDIS providers are happy to train their staff on-the-job. This generally takes the form of inductions and other structured and unstructured training as needed. Although this training is generally unaccredited, many training organisations and service providers we spoke to suggested that it could be easily mapped to nationally recognised training to give workers the opportunity to gain credit towards a qualification if they should want it.

TAFE representatives also reported a rise in requests from service providers for the provision of fee-for-service unaccredited training, primarily skill sets drawing on units from the Certificate III in Individual Support.

Perceived value of traineeships and other nationally recognised training

The most significant factor affecting the uptake of traineeships and other nationally recognised training described above is the variation in perceptions of value of these training pathways. There are a number of aspects to this issue.

‘The right fit’ is more valuable than nationally recognised training

An overwhelming message from service providers, parents and experienced workers was that having a potential worker who is ‘the right fit’ for the sector, for the organisation and for the specific clients they will work with, is far more important than having a qualification.

Those we interviewed spoke about ‘the right fit’ in terms of values, integrity and ethics, being friendly and open minded, having respect for the client, resilience, passion, common sense and interpersonal skills.

Many interviewees stressed that if a potential worker does not have these attributes, then they are not going to be employed. The introduction of the NDIS is making this issue even more important as participants exercise their choice over who provides them with services.

The General Manager of Carers Qld (the Local Area Coordinator organisation for the NDIS in South East Queensland) summed up the situation very well in a panel discussion on ABC Brisbane radio¹¹ by saying “we recruit for values and train for skills”. Similar sentiments were expressed across our consultations (for example, see Case study 1 in Attachment A).

Although there was fierce agreement amongst employers we spoke to about the need for certain personal attributes and ‘soft’ skills in order to work in the sector, there was significant variation in views about the need for qualifications and other nationally recognised training in addition to this.

Views about the value of nationally recognised training roughly fell into three camps along a continuum.

11 ABC Radio Brisbane, *Focus: How will the NDIS affect you?*, 7 June 2018.



They get in the way:

There are those who think that nationally recognised training is actually a barrier to providing what's really needed.

One interviewee expressed this in terms of observing that those who have a qualification tend to *"put clients in a box"* and *"treat them differently"* compared to those who don't have qualifications who just provide what's wanted or needed by the client.

Another explained that it actually put a particular client at risk to have someone who had learned *"standardised practices"* because of highly complex medical needs that require non-standard care. In this situation, client-specific training has to be done on-the-job.

I don't mind either way:

There are those who don't really mind whether a worker has a qualification or not because 'fit' and 'lived experience' are more important and you can teach everything they need on the job.

Many went on to say that if it became mandatory for workers in the sector to have a qualification, then you would lose many good workers from the sector, because they would not want to complete a qualification or may struggle with completing one.

They're important:

There are those who feel that a qualification, or some type of nationally recognised training, is important from a quality and/or risk management perspective.

One interviewee went as far as to say that *"it's highly discriminatory and insulting for people with a disability that support workers don't have to be well trained"*.

Another suggested that without 'off-the-job' training, things end up just getting done the same way they always have.

Although those who fell into the first group were in a minority in our conversations, it does highlight the huge variation in disability support needs across the sector and therefore the need for a range of training options for the sector.

The paradigm shift of the NDIS, in which participants' rights to exercise choice and control are paramount, represents a new way of thinking and working for some providers of support services – although many have already operated along these principles for some time. The literature highlights that *"in a user-directed environment, support workers 'craft' support to meet a person's needs and wishes."*¹² They support people with disability to fulfil their personal plans and goals, learning how best to do this under guidance from the individuals they support. In this environment *"a support worker's worth is measured more through their achievements, problem solving and trust building with people with disability, their family and allies, than through training and length of service."*¹³

It is not surprising then that amongst those we spoke to, many service providers saw qualifications as a useful 'bonus' for those that were the right fit for the sector, or were happy for their staff to complete qualifications but saw it as something they may wish to do for their own career development.

Others expressed concern about the numbers of individuals completing a qualification and then finding that they cannot get work because they are not considered 'right' for the sector. This highlights the importance of determining 'fit' prior to individuals enrolling in nationally recognised training.

Traineeships are valued by those who use them

Although in key informant interviews it was suggested that there are no visible benefits for learners to undertake a traineeship over 12 months, when they could complete the qualification in six months under the Certificate 3 Guarantee, the trainees we spoke to highly valued the opportunity to undertake a traineeship.

Of particular benefit was having the support of both a workplace supervisor and a trainer, and in the case of the school-based trainee, of the school co-ordinator too. The combination of practical work and theoretical learning was highly valued as well.

The majority of VET students that we spoke to also saw appeal in a traineeship pathway. Of the 26 students we talked to, 12 said that they would take up a traineeship if they were paid more than a trainee wage, while another 10 said they would take up a traineeship if it were available, regardless of the wage. They saw appeal in the opportunity to combine on-the-job and off-the-job learning and to be paid while doing it. Some also felt that it would be an opportunity to access much more structured on-the-job learning than occurred during the 120 hours of unpaid work placement students have to undertake to complete a qualification.

12 Chenoweth, L., Ward, M., Hughes, J. (2015) *"I'm here to help": The role of the support-worker within the NDIS*, Griffith University.

13 Outpost Consulting (2017) *WorkAbility Queensland: NDIS Training Requirements and Products - Report 1: Essential skills and attributes for NDIS workers*, p.3.

The four service providers we spoke to that currently employ trainees spoke about the value of traineeships in terms of:

- a long-term investment in their workforce – while there is a cost in supporting the trainees in the early stages, you end up *“with really great workers”*
- having greater control over the development of their employees, which ensures the trainees are getting the experience the service provider needs
- a means of attracting and retaining workers and building commitment to the organisation and workforce stability for NDIS participants
- having an affordable *“extra body”* to provide support services in low risk settings or where more than one support worker might be preferable but difficult to afford under NDIS prices
- a ‘cost neutral’ means of training employees (in the case of school-based traineeships)
- being able to train employees without carrying all the risk of ongoing employment if the work is not there (in the case of employing trainees through group training).

Consultations also highlighted that in Indigenous communities, traineeships are considered to be a valuable learning pathway for young and mature people alike, producing good job outcomes for those who undertake them.

Traineeships are often perceived as something that young people do

Some interviewees felt that traineeships were much more suited to young people seeking to enter the workforce.

Some of the VET students we spoke to thought that there was some stigma attached to the term ‘traineeship’ in terms of perceptions of trainees as being young and inexperienced. Trainee wages were also considered to be a likely barrier for mature workers.

Service providers who were employing trainees also were mostly employing young people under the age of 23. However, a couple of their trainees were more mature, which indicates that age is not a complete barrier. In fact, one GTO noted that this is one industry where they can market to older people because life experience is so strongly valued.

A GTO pointed out that there was not a stigma attached to traineeships amongst mature Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and that having a mix of mature and young trainees within an organisation provided an opportunity for informal mentoring of the younger ones.

Factors affecting the use of traineeships

In addition to the issues identified above in relation to perceptions of the value of 'qualifications', the field work consultations, literature review and key informant interviews identified a number of factors that create barriers to the uptake of traineeships, as well as several factors that support their use.

Barriers

Lack of awareness of traineeships

Amongst both the service providers and individuals we spoke to, there was a surprising lack of awareness of the possibility of traineeships in the area of disability support work.

Aside from the two trainees we spoke to, none of the other individuals who were studying or working in the sector knew that traineeships were available. Some had previously done traineeships in other industries, such as hospitality or retail, but did not know that traineeships were available in the disability sector and had never seen them advertised.

Similarly, many of the service providers employed trainees in administration roles but had not thought about the possibility of using this pathway to train support workers, or thought that it would be too hard to do so (mainly because of supervision requirements, which are discussed below).

The GTOs, RTOs, AASNs and other organisations we spoke to suggested that the lack of awareness was due to factors such as:

- Lack of understanding and lack of promotion in schools and in the wider community about what disability work looks like and what career paths are available.
- Lack of knowledge about the various opportunities for financial and other support for finding and employing trainees.
- Promotion not taking place in ways and in locations that are relevant to the target groups.
- Frequent changes in management personnel in service providers, which means that previous knowledge or experience of traineeships is lost to the organisation.
- A tendency amongst service providers to stick with the recruitment strategies they are familiar with (which is often "placing an ad on SEEK") even if the success rate is extremely variable.
- A tendency for school leavers and career changers to look for advertised positions (through SEEK etc.) where disability traineeships rarely appear.
- The fact that there is not a strong tradition of the use of traineeships in the sector in the same way that there is in many other industries.

For the two trainees we spoke to, one heard about the traineeship through a local GTO that her jobactive provider referred her to, and the other had the traineeship arranged for her after having done some work experience with a service provider.

Underpinning the issue of lack of awareness of traineeships is the challenge of attracting new workers (who are the right fit) to the sector more broadly. This is particularly an issue for attracting young people, because, as several interviewees pointed out, the disability sector is "not very sexy".

It was also suggested that there is little awareness in the community overall of what disability work involves and of the widening range of work available in the sector as the NDIS rolls out.

Supervision

The third most significant factor affecting the uptake of traineeships (after lack of value of qualifications and lack of awareness of traineeship options) is the issue of supervision.

Under NDIS pricing, service providers are already concerned about how they are going to adequately supervise their support workers. One provider explained that the pricing allows for one supervisor per 18 support workers in usual situations and one supervisor per 15 support workers where they are supporting participants with complex needs. Many felt that the requirements for supervising a trainee would not be viable under those arrangements.

The other issue is that trainee supervisors (or a group of supervisors) must be qualified at least to the level of the competencies contained in the qualification that the trainee is undertaking. Given that many of the experienced workers in the industry are unqualified, this can also pose a significant challenge for providers.

The literature also highlights that across all industries, small and medium businesses often report greater challenges in recruiting and supporting apprentices and trainees, particularly in relation to meeting the supervision and administration requirements, as they do not have the capacity to do so.¹⁴ Several service providers also mentioned that a lack of resources and infrastructure would make it challenging to oversee traineeships from both an administrative and supervisory point of view.

Despite these challenges, however, some service providers are finding ways to address the challenge of supervision – either by employing trainees in centre-based environments, where a supervisor is always on hand, or by being innovative with their rostering so that trainees can shadow or be ‘buddied up’ with experienced support workers during shifts. See Case Study 6 for employer perspectives on creative solutions to employing trainees.

The challenges of supervision of trainees in community settings was recognised by the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training, which worked with the Health and Community Services Workforce Council to develop guidelines for indirect supervision of trainees. These guidelines are outlined in the document “Supervision arrangements for trainees in Community Care Settings.”¹⁵ (N.B. these guidelines do not apply to school-based trainees). However, there does not seem to be much awareness of the existence of these guidelines within the sector (even we had to search for some time to find them on the internet).

In addition, several interviewees told us that there is some apprehension within the sector about trainees and supervision arrangements after a significant number of traineeship contracts were cancelled by a State Training Authority regional officer some years back due to insufficient supervision.

¹⁴ Ithaca Group (2010) *Towards a more seamless apprenticeship system – Final Report*. Unpublished report prepared for DEEWR, p.3.

¹⁵ This can be found at <https://training.qld.gov.au/site/.../adequate-training-arrangements-community-care.doc>.

Casualisation of the workforce

The fact that such a large proportion of the disability sector workforce is employed on a casual basis provides a barrier to traineeship uptake because they are not available to casual workers.

Quite a few of the people we spoke to thought that casualisation of the workforce was a barrier to traineeships. However, when we asked service providers whether they could find a minimum of 15 hours a week for a part-time trainee, most thought that it would not be too difficult. The underlying issue is more about being able to guarantee ongoing employment. With the NDIS in the early days, or yet to roll out, across some parts of Queensland, many providers have adopted a 'wait and see' approach to workforce development until they have a better idea of demand from participants with NDIS plans. Until such time, employing people on a casual basis provides a level of flexibility and risk minimisation. Although, as highlighted in the literature, this can come at a cost of high staff turnover, which in turn increases costs for organisations and can disrupt continuity of support for their clients.¹⁶

We saw evidence of service providers starting to transition support workers to permanent part-time status where they were more confident of demand for their services. This was evident in our consultations with service providers in Bundaberg where the NDIS commenced in October 2017. Some service providers also mentioned that being able to offer permanent part-time status to workers was an important aspect of retaining staff and creating stability in their workforce.

Group training was seen by some as a means of mitigating the risk of uncertain demand for support workers (e.g. a situation where an NDIS participant decided that they no longer wanted services delivered by the organisation, or by the trainee) as it is the GTO that is responsible for ongoing employment for the trainee. See Case Study 3 for an example of a GTO and service provider partnership.

Interestingly though, the GTOs we spoke to said that they had experienced reluctance from many providers to taking up the group training option. Some service providers that we spoke to suggested that this may be a cost issue as NDIS pricing makes margins for wages very tight.

Traineeship wages and the need for a car and driver's licence

Aside from the fact that very few service providers are offering traineeships, there were only two barriers to traineeships identified for individuals who had already decided to work in the health and community services sector.

For many mature age workers, traineeship wages would prevent them from taking up this pathway as they could not afford to support families, pay mortgages etc. One of the trainees we spoke to said that the traineeship wage was not an issue currently as she only had to pay board and not market rent. However, she had previously undertaken a traineeship in another industry at a time when she was paying rent and had to take on a second job to be able to cover her expenses.

Some service providers are overcoming this barrier by paying their trainees above the award wage.

Individuals may not be aware that the traineeship wage increases with age and a trainee who is five or more years out of school will earn 55 per cent more per hour than a school leaver.¹⁷

¹⁶ National Disability Services (NDS) (2017) *Australian Disability Workforce Report*. Sydney, Australia: NDS.

¹⁷ Fair Work Ombudsman (2018) Pay and Conditions Tool. Calculation for part-time trainee under the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010.

The other barrier for some potential workers/trainees is the need to have a driver licence and car for many support worker roles. This can be a particular issue for young people. A Brisbane school offering school-based traineeships in the area said that they tend to offer them to Year 12 students because they are more mature, but also by the time they complete their traineeship they will be old enough to have a driver licence. However, the school-based trainee we spoke to accesses her centre-based workplace and her RTO via her bicycle or public transport – so it is not a barrier in all situations.

For more perspectives from students about traineeships and a career in disability support see Case study 5.

Enablers

Funding and incentives

When we asked service providers about factors that might increase the likelihood of them taking on a trainee, the potential of financial benefits gained through lower wages, incentives and payroll tax rebates ranked the highest out of 10 possibilities (the list of possibilities and their ranking can be found in Attachment E).

Conversations with those that do employ trainees further explained that the financial incentives were not the actual motivator for taking on a trainee, but that these helped to offset the costs of training and supervision.

Possibilities for sharing and collaborating

The idea of greater sharing and collaborating with other providers in order to solve workforce issues struck a chord amongst those we spoke to.

The possibility of using a group training organisation and sharing a single worker across providers was met with interest, as was the possibility of a group of service providers managing the arrangements themselves. It was noted by some that this could make rostering “a nightmare”. However, others thought that there would be ways to make it work. It could also increase the numbers of full-time traineeships. The Queensland Apprenticeship and Traineeship Office stated that temporary or permanent transfer to another employer is an option under the existing policy arrangements which may facilitate ‘sharing’ a trainee.

The idea of collaborating to address the challenge of supervision was also raised as a possibility worth exploring, as were opportunities for collaborating on recruitment.

It was noted that as the NDIS market matures, service providers may become less protective of their patch and more willing to enter into shared staffing arrangements.

Customisation and flexibility of training delivery

When we asked service providers about factors that might increase the likelihood of them taking on a trainee, 'customisation of training content to their organisation' and 'flexibility in how, where and when the training was delivered' rated third and fourth respectively out of a list of 10.

Providers spoke about:

- the importance of face-to-face training, not just online delivery
- having training materials that were culturally appropriate
- the importance of flexible training delivery in being able to manage staff rosters
- wanting integration between work and study, so that theory is being put into practice through their on-the-job learning.

Some service providers spoke about selecting a training organisation specifically because the level of flexibility allows them to have greater control over how the training takes place.

One RTO also mentioned that they do all of their training in this sector on-the-job because that is what the employers want.

Combination of theoretical and hands-on learning

Consultations with both service providers and individuals identified that on-the-job learning is seen as a vitally important part of training new workers for the sector. The literature also highlighted that this was a favoured form of skill development for the sector and that there was value to be gained from training workers, people with disability and their families together.¹⁸

In this respect, traineeships provide an ideal model for training because of the complementary focus on on-the-job and off-the-job learning. However, this highlights a need even for work placements that are undertaken as part of the delivery of nationally recognised training to place a strong focus on high quality on-the-job learning and perhaps some new thinking about effective approaches to on-the-job learning.

Some of the students who were currently studying at TAFE thought that the on-the-job learning they would receive through a traineeship would be much better than what they get on work placement. They reported that many service providers just see them as volunteers and they do not get to do the range of work – particularly hands-on work with clients – that they really need to support their off-the-job learning.

Being paid while learning

Although the idea of a trainee wage was off-putting for some individuals, for most, the concept of being paid while they were learning was extremely appealing.

18 Chenoweth, L., Ward, M., Hughes, J. (2015) *"I'm here to help": The role of the support-worker within the NDIS*, Griffith University.

Mentoring and support for learning

Another factor that made traineeships appealing to individuals was the opportunity for mentoring and learning support – not only from the training organisation, but from a workplace supervisor as well.

Some of the individuals who were doing a traineeship, or had done a traineeship in another industry, said that having that extra support was the only way they got through, or were getting through their qualification. Pre-employment training was also highlighted as being a valuable support in accessing and completing a traineeship. School-based trainees who had previously completed a Certificate II in the broad field, were found to be much more likely to succeed than those who had not (see Case study 1 in Attachment A).

Other consultations also suggested that if the need for support workers from Indigenous or culturally and linguistically diverse communities was to be met, then additional support may need to be provided prior to a traineeship to build the capacity of learners to be successful in both the learning and employment aspect of the traineeship. This may indicate a need for pre-vocational pathways in the sector and for cohort-specific programs such as some of those run through Skilling Queenslanders for Work.

Opportunities to 'try' the sector

Throughout the examples of successful traineeship experiences that we heard about in our conversations, a common factor was that the trainee had first had the opportunity to 'try out' the sector through some kind of work exposure or work experience. This also gave the service provider an opportunity to see the potential trainee in action and to determine whether they might be a good fit for the organisation. See Case study 4 for an example of a service provider offering opportunities to try out the sector.

The importance of this factor is also highlighted in the literature about apprenticeships and traineeships more broadly, with work experience, school-based traineeships and pre-vocational courses being shown to have a positive impact on the success of an apprenticeship/traineeship, because they *"can help candidates understand the realities of the workplace and let employers trial new apprentices."*¹⁹

19 Ithaca Group (2011) *21st Century apprenticeships for Queensland. Report of industry consultations*. Brisbane: Skills Queensland.

Implications for traineeships and structured training

The findings of the consultations and literature and data review have led us to draw the following conclusions and observations about workforce development and the role of traineeships, other nationally recognised training and other structured training in the sector.

Attracting and training strategies for new entrants

It is clear that the disability sector workforce needs to grow and that there is a need to attract not only more, but also a more diverse range of workers to the sector. Younger workers who can support their peers with a disability and workers from Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who can support people in their own communities are three such groups.

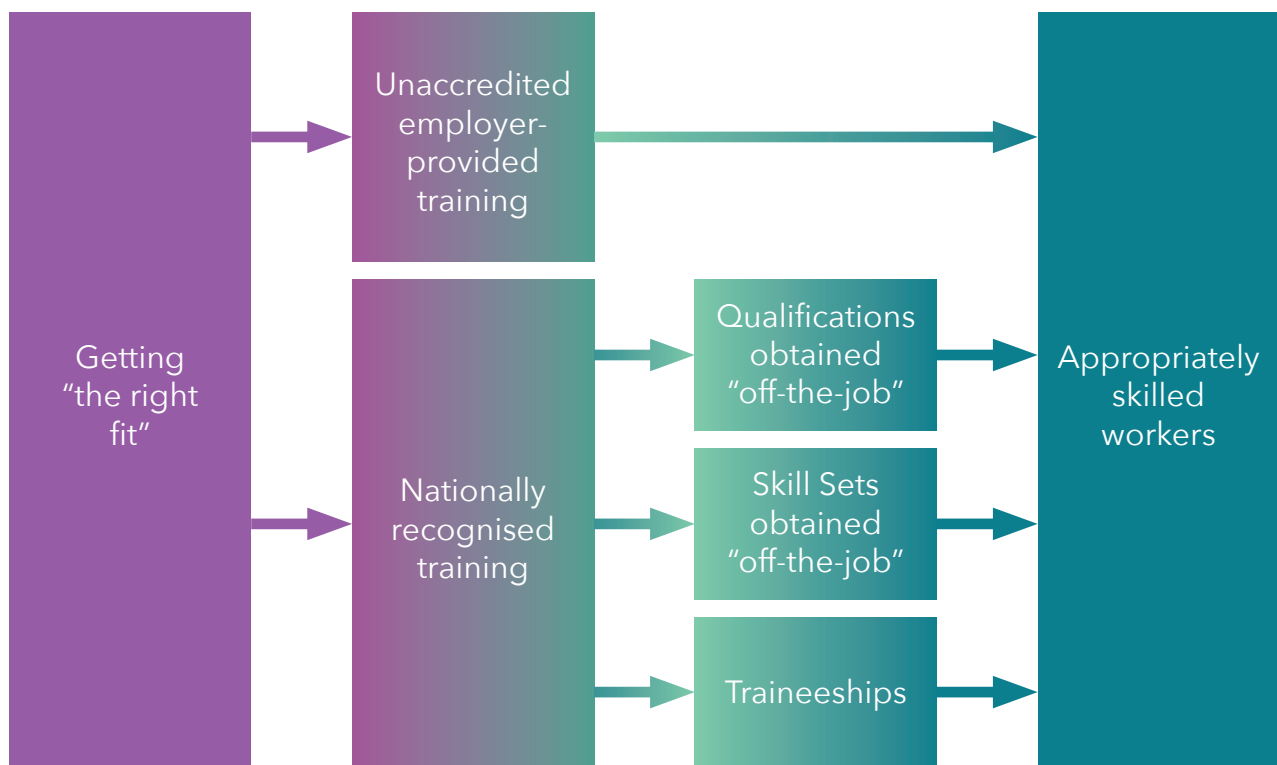
Increasing the uptake of traineeships and other nationally recognised training will first require identifying how new entrants are likely to be attracted to the industry and what kinds of strategies will work for different cohorts. This includes the kinds of efforts that are being made by WorkAbility Qld and projectABLE to debunk some of the myths about what it is like to work in the sector and to highlight the wide range of work that is on offer under the NDIS. These efforts then need to be linked to relevant strategies for promoting training pathways.

Service providers have their own well-tested strategies for recruiting new workers, but experience from regions across Australia where the transition to NDIS has already taken place shows that once the easily accessible pool of potential new recruits is exhausted the challenges begin. This challenge calls for longer term and more strategic approaches to workforce development and traineeships (including school-based traineeships) may make a valuable contribution in this area.

Different pathways to skilling for different times

In the same way that there is incredible diversity in the support needs of people with disability, there is also diversity in what it might mean for the workers who support them to be appropriately skilled. Figure 3 illustrates the main options for skilling the disability workforce, including both nationally recognised training and unaccredited training delivered by employers.

Figure 3: Pathways to developing skilled workers for the disability sector



Getting the right fit

Regardless of the training pathway that is deemed to be the most appropriate for particular circumstances, the threshold criterion of 'the right fit' as an entry to employment in the sector will remain. This means that something needs to be put in place to ensure that people who think they might like to work in the sector have a way of checking their 'fit' before they, or the government, spends money on training.

There are a wide range of options for 'trying out' the sector and determining from both an individual and a service provider perspective whether it is the right fit. They include:

- work experience
- volunteering opportunities (such as the holiday program run by ARC Disability Services – see Case study 4)
- exposure opportunities (such as the Inspiration days run by My Horizons – see Case study 1)
- Certificate II pathways that include work placements (e.g. the AllevE8 program and the Mabel Park Health Hub – Case study 1)
- screening tools
- PaTH program 'Internships'
- work trials on a casual basis.

These opportunities need to be thought of as an integral part of a training pathway for the sector and consideration given to whether additional opportunities might need to be developed.

Unaccredited training

Service providers will continue to provide their own in-house structured or unstructured training where they see it is needed to meet specific client needs – and meeting client needs will be the key driver of services as the NDIS rolls out – or where they see it is more relevant or more financially viable.

However, given the challenges that service providers are facing in skilling their increasing workforces within the narrow margins of NDIS pricing, the prospect of government-subsidised training may grow in its appeal.

Nationally recognised training

Skill sets may provide a timely and financially-viable means of upskilling career changers and suitable job seekers to enter the sector in the short term – but this would need to be carefully managed to ensure that they do not undermine the VET system policy intent of equipping entry level workers with a qualification.

Qualifications obtained ‘off-the-job’ may provide a useful theoretical basis to work in the industry. The content is considered relevant by employers, but the quality of work placement element is critical to producing graduates that are work ready.

Traineeships, in combination with some of the pathways into traineeships described earlier in this report, might provide an avenue for a longer term recruitment ‘pipeline’, by providing a valuable means of building the skills and capabilities of those that otherwise would not readily gain employment in the sector. For example, some job seekers with little work experience may not be considered ‘job ready’, but with the support of a pre-traineeship pathway leading into a traineeship they could become valued workers within the sector.

Such longer term recruitment strategies may even include regional or community-based approaches to workforce development in which service providers and group training organisations collaborate in their efforts to recruit, support and develop trainees.

Partnerships between schools and service providers to provide school-based traineeships would also play an important part of this strategic approach to workforce development.

It is helpful to categorise service providers and potential workers

For the purposes of this research project, the key is to identify which cohorts of potential workers and which types of services providers and service provision settings might be most suited to traineeships and then focus on removing the barriers to accessing them. Therefore, we have attempted to categorise both potential workers and service providers.

Potential workers and service providers

We have identified several distinct cohorts of individuals that are entering or seeking to enter the disability sector workforce – some of which are more suited to traineeships than others.

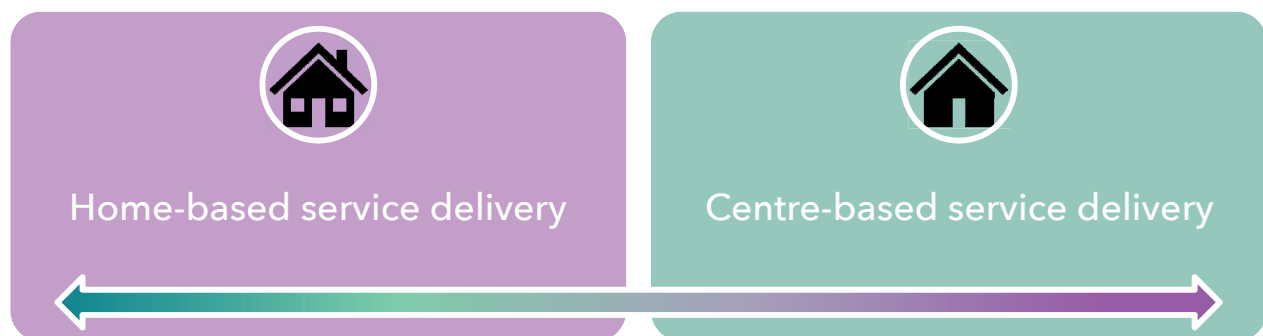
Cohort	Suitability of traineeship pathway
School students – they are entering the sector through school-based traineeships – and from what we have heard, doing it quite successfully, despite reluctance by some service providers to engage with this cohort. There is a growing demand for younger workers in the sector who can support younger people who have a disability.	
People who recently left school – we understand that this is quite a small cohort and that they are doing Certificate III qualifications in the hope of gaining employment. We have been told that they often do not complete.	
Higher education students – these students often undertake casual work in the sector while they complete their degree. These students tend to be studying in areas of allied health and the work helps in their understanding of the sector and improves their job prospects. Although we have been told that some students finish off traineeships that they started at school on a part-time basis while they undertake higher education study, in most cases a VET qualification does not seem to be relevant.	
Career changers and parents – these are more mature people who are looking to move into a career that is more rewarding, less physically demanding or has greater career prospects or are returning to the workforce after raising children. They are a group of potential workers that are in high demand as they come with 'lived experience' and a range of transferrable skills.	
People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds – people from this cohort are often seeking work in the sector and there is also a need for workers from this cohort to support people with disability in their own communities. However, they may need additional support to develop the necessary skills to work in the sector – and in particular to successfully complete nationally accredited training. This may take the form of pre-traineeship pathways, or additional foundation skills development.	
People from Indigenous communities – there is demand for the training of people from Indigenous communities to be able to support people with a disability in their own communities. However, they may also need additional support to develop the skills needed for work in the sector and to complete nationally accredited training. This may also take the form of pre-traineeship pathways, additional foundation skills development or additional mentoring support during a traineeship. Suggestions were also made that the development of a disability sector workforce for Indigenous communities should take place in tandem with economic development activities for these communities.	
Job seekers – many jobactive providers are referring job seekers to the sector and to nationally accredited training courses related to the sector. Others are undertaking training and/or seeking employment because they can see the potential for ongoing work with the introduction of the NDIS. However, we have been told that some are getting to the end of their qualification and finding that they can't gain employment because they are not the right fit for the sector.	

Our assessment is that school students, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities and Indigenous communities are the most valuable candidates for traineeships. However, career changers may also benefit from this pathway if issues around wages and perceptions about traineeships being for young people can be addressed.

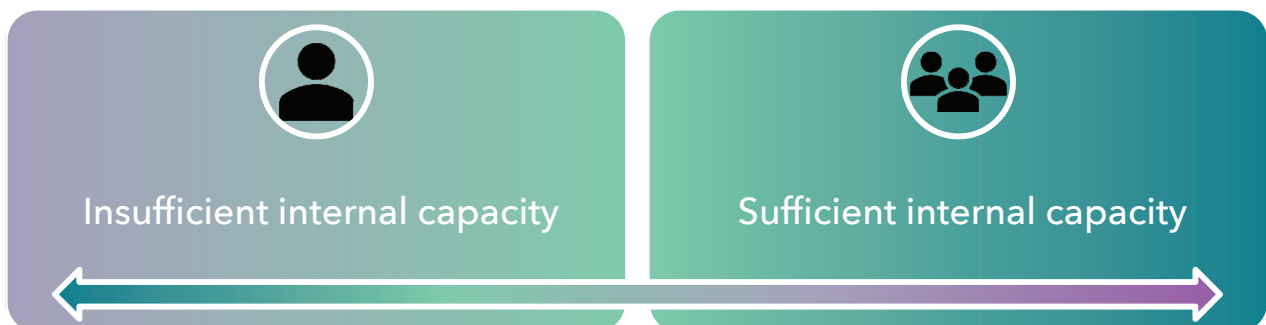
Traineeships could be a useful pathway for some people who have recently left school and other job seekers, but they would need to be assessed for 'fit' first and perhaps additional support provided through pre-traineeship pathways.

Service providers

Service providers do not so much fall into distinct cohorts. It is more useful to think of them along certain dimensions in relation to their suitability for taking on trainees.



- **Location/mode of service provision** – some providers deliver services from a centre (e.g. respite care, activity-based services), others deliver services entirely in people's homes and many provide a combination of both. This affects the ease with which they can provide supervision for trainees, as well as the range of work opportunities.
- **Level of risk** – some types of support services are relatively low risk (e.g. accompanying a person with a disability on a shopping or social outing), while others are high risk (e.g. medical or behaviourally complex needs). This affects the type of training needed and the suitability of that work for less experienced people.



- **Capacity** – the size of the service provider organisation can often be an indicator of their capacity to administer traineeships and provide adequate supervision. Typically, larger organisations have the resources and infrastructure to do so, while smaller organisations may struggle. But this is not always the case. We spoke to self-managed participants/families who would be happy to host a trainee, particularly if the responsibility were shared across a group of families. Group training is another option for those that do not have sufficient internal capacity to manage the administrative aspects of a traineeship.



- Attitudes towards nationally recognised training – as highlighted earlier in the report, providers tend to fall into three camps in relation to valuing of formal training. While efforts are most usefully focused on those that already value training, it may be possible to shift some attitudes within the 'I don't mind either way' group of service providers.

Our assessment is that larger organisations that have at least some centre-based activities and that deliver low risk services are the most suited to the delivery of traineeships, with attention best focused on those that already value training. In other words, organisations that fall towards the right-hand end of each of the continuums listed above.

However, supports can also be put in place to help smaller organisations, including self-managed participants and families, and those delivering services in the community, to be able to take on trainees. And strategies can be put in place to make employing trainees easier and more visibly beneficial for those organisations that are yet to be convinced of the value of nationally recognised training.

Recommended strategies

Based on the conclusions and observations outlined above, we have developed 11 recommended strategies for supporting the development of the disability sector workforce in Queensland through relevant training pathways – with particular emphasis on increasing the value of the traineeship pathway in the sector.

These strategies focus on three broad areas of activity:

1. Challenging the culture.
2. Delivering the right product to the right cohort.
3. Overcoming barriers to effective training and workforce development.

Some of these recommended strategies may require localised responses to meet localised needs in one or more regions.

Challenging the culture

The biggest barrier to the use of traineeships in the disability sector is the general lack of valuing of nationally recognised training.

In the absence of levers to 'push' behaviour change (such as regulatory requirements for training), the only available mechanisms are those that 'pull' by making change appealing and beneficial through factors such as:

- access to new information,
- personal, family and business benefits from change,
- access to new skills,
- return on investment benefits for employers and individuals,
- quick wins either financial or otherwise due to change, or
- opportunities to reduce or eliminate risk.

Previous research we have undertaken in relation to engaging employers with nationally recognised training²⁰ has also highlighted that in terms of messages about the availability and value of training:

- employers are more likely to listen to and trust information and advice from 'people like them', which includes other similar businesses and industry associations in their sector. Messages from government often do not get through
- their focus is on solving business problems and achieving business goals, so messages about training need to be framed in terms of their ability to support this
- employers want information about what kind of return they are going to receive for their investment in skill development and help to navigate the complexities of the VET system.

²⁰ Ithaca Group (2013) *Meeting the information needs of employers in Victoria*, unpublished report for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Victoria.

If messages are to be absorbed, information also needs to be delivered or be available at the time when problems or opportunities that might require a training solution arise. From our consultations, it appears that prior to roll-out of the NDIS in a region and through the first six months, service providers are mostly focused on what to do with their existing workforce and how they can retain flexibility in the early stages of roll-out. However, in Bundaberg, where the roll-out commenced about eight months ago there appeared to be growing interest in traineeships and group training. Those we spoke to across different regions all agreed that after 12–18 months there would be much greater interest in developing a more permanent workforce, even if most workers will be part-time, and greater interest in training options.

The following strategies focus on raising awareness of the available training pathways amongst service providers and potential workers and challenging mindsets amongst service providers that are not yet convinced of the value of nationally recognised training. This requires developing and delivering the right kind of message to the right people at the right time in their stage of workforce development.

Strategy	Roles for government	Roles for the disability industry
<p>1. Develop and implement a behaviour-focused plan (e.g. based upon models of behaviour change processes) for the promotion of nationally accredited training pathways within the disability sector, which takes into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 'readiness' of different groups of providers (e.g. stage of implementation of the NDIS in their region, attitudes towards nationally recognised training, familiarity with the VET system) b. relevance of different messages about the value of training (e.g. characteristics of the organisation in relation to suitability for traineeships or other pathways) c. effectiveness of communication sources (e.g. using 'trusted' sources of information and advice). 		Preparation and implementation of a promotional plan.
<p>2. Bring together materials for service providers that clearly outline the different training pathways available to the sector, the funding and incentives associated with each and the relative cost/benefit of each. Present these in a format that is easily accessed and understood by service providers, make these accessible through sources identified in Strategy 1 above and ensure information is kept up to date.</p>	Provision of relevant information	<p>Presentation of the materials in a format suitable for service providers as part of the plan in Strategy 1.</p> <p>Circulation of materials to 'intermediaries' such as industry bodies, AASNs, jobactive, RTOs and GTOs.</p>
<p>3. Combine information for potential workers about relevant training pathways with information about career opportunities in the sector, ensuring that it is appropriately tailored for different potential worker cohorts.</p> <p>Ensure the message of 'the right fit' is part of this information.</p> <p>Make the information available in an online format so that it can be downloaded and printed as needed and can be easily kept up-to-date.</p>	Provision of relevant information	Customisation of information and promotion through a central point – ideally an existing online career pathway portal (e.g. WorkAbility Qld's 'Be part of something better' and/or NDS 'care careers').

Delivering the right product to the right cohort

As discussed in the previous section, different types of training products are more relevant to different cohorts of workers/potential workers and different kinds of work environments. These recommended strategies are focused on supporting the delivery of nationally recognised training by promoting or adapting the most relevant training product for different cohorts.

Strategy	Roles for government	Roles for the disability industry
4. Work with specifically selected schools and service providers to increase the use of school-based traineeships in the disability sector, including increasing use of pathways into traineeships (such as AllevE8, work experience, VET in Schools programs).	Promotion of successful examples of school and industry partnerships through existing VETiS channels.	Promotion of successful examples of school and industry partnerships. Identification of service providers and schools that are interested in school-based traineeships in regions where there is a significant demand for new workers and facilitation of introductions. Support of strategic projects undertaken through the NDIS Training and Skills Support Strategy.
5. Promote and fund pathways that provide additional learning support for people from Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse communities to enter traineeships in the sector.	Promotion and funding of relevant Certificate II pathways (through SQW or other means) in regions where there are significant workforce development needs for these communities. Consideration of other pre-employment pathways as part of the strategic projects undertaken through the NDIS Training and Skills Support Strategy.	Promotion of availability of these learning pathways as part of Strategy 1, including through 'intermediaries' such as industry bodies, AASNs and jobactive, RTOs and GTOs. Support strategic projects undertaken through the NDIS Training and Skills Support Strategy.
6. Promote 'experienced-worker traineeships' for mature age career changers, which recognise the existing skills and experience this cohort brings to the sector, emphasising the possibilities for above-traineeship award wages and greater scope for working independently.	Promotion of successful examples of mature age traineeships from the sector.	Customisation of traineeship information to encourage service providers to take on mature age trainees and promote as part of Strategy 1, including through 'intermediaries' such as industry bodies, AASNs and jobactive, RTOs and GTOs.

Strategy	Roles for government	Roles for the disability industry
7. Promote the availability of funding for skill sets for new workers for the purposes of induction training ('Induction to Disability' skill set) and for upskilling of existing workers ('Disability Work - Behaviour Support' skill set) and the use of skill sets as a pathway into a full qualification.	<p>Clarification of the definition of 'new worker' and 'existing worker' for the purposes of skill set funding and provide to relevant RTOs.</p> <p>Consideration of the need for funding of any additional skill sets for existing workers.</p>	<p>Documentation and promotion of the progress of the Cairns region in implementing a regional approach to workforce development using skill sets as an entry point. This could be explored through WorkAbility Qld NTSSS project.</p> <p>Inclusion of promotion of skill sets as a learning pathway as part of Strategy 1</p>

Overcoming barriers to effective training and workforce development

When compared with the challenge of challenging mindsets and changing behaviour in relation to nationally recognised training in the sector, overcoming some of the implementation-related barriers to training are much more straightforward.

The following strategies focus on removing barriers to effective use of training pathways and to promoting more strategic use of training.

Strategy	Roles for government	Roles for the disability industry
8. Promote the availability of special supervision arrangements for trainees in community care settings, including use of remote supervision, where appropriate, as well as good practice examples of making supervision work in different settings.	Circulation of the document Supervision Arrangements for Trainees in Community Care Settings to relevant RTOs and AASNs.	Documentation and promotion of successful examples of making supervision work in different settings. This could be done as part of Strategy 1.
9. Promote the possibilities of group training for overcoming risks around continuity of employment and administrative burden for service providers.		Promotion of the availability of group training options as part of Strategy 1, including documenting and promoting successful examples.
10. Investigate opportunities to pilot and evaluate approaches to 'sharing' the employment and supervision of trainees as part of a workforce development approach.	Promote the flexibilities in the traineeship system, including options for temporary transfers.	Consider conducting a pilot of a shared traineeship arrangement and documenting the outcomes, with a particular focus on ease of administration and supervision.
11. Develop good practice guidelines for effective on-the-job training experiences for students on work placements and employees undertaking traineeships.		Development of guidelines for service providers about effective on-the-job training experiences, including the benefits of good practice for providers and for the sector.

Attachment A: Case studies

Case study 1 - example

Pathways into school-based traineeships: Mabel Park State High School / My Horizon

Mabel Park

Mabel Park State High School in Logan is proactive in ensuring its students have job or further education-prospects when they leave school. With the NDIS coming, they saw fantastic employment opportunities for their students in an industry that needs more young workers.

Mabel Park already had a 'Health Hub' – a facility with a skills lab and classrooms designed to deliver health sector training to school students from around the region. The Certificate II in Health Support Services being offered through the Health Hub is a great stepping stone not only to careers in the health industry but in disability as well.

One hundred and ten students from around the region are undertaking the Certificate II in Health Support Services at the Mabel Park Health Hub. Once they complete this qualification, the school guides those who are interested into traineeships with various health and disability organisations in the region.

Students considering a career in disability go on to do Certificate III in Individual Support as a school-based traineeship with one of the school's disability service provider partners, such as My Horizon. By this time, most students are in Year 12 so, although they start their employment under a school-based traineeship arrangement, once they have graduated from school the employer converts the employment contract into a part-time traineeship until they gain their qualification.

The Head of Department of Senior Schooling, Judith Fewtrell says *"it's good to start the traineeship at school because they have support...they don't give up if they have a problem, they come to us and we help them work out a solution."*

Trainers report that there is a much better completion rate of the Certificate III when students complete the Certificate II first because the student has the foundation skills and knows about the industry.

Judith said most importantly, the program has opened the students' eyes to opportunities in the industry. *"They love the diversity of the work, it pays better than a job at Maccas, and it's more fun. They enjoy it, as they are following their dreams."*

My Horizon

My Horizon Assistant Manager, Janine Lillico, worked in NDIS trial sites in Victoria and saw first-hand the workforce challenges that arose when the scheme was introduced. There were so many young people registering for the NDIS, wanting young support workers, but the workforce was predominantly made up of middle-age women.

Janine and her colleague Jake heard about the Mabel Park Health Hub at a local NDIS event and decided that the school-based traineeship model could work well for their organisation. Judith invited them to talk to Mabel Park students about careers in disability. Jake, being a young man who started work as a trainee himself, was able to offer students a realistic and relatable portrayal of disability work drawing on his own experiences.

Jake's presentations got a great response. The students at the Health Hub had already decided to pursue a qualification in the health and community services industry so were open to hearing more about where their studies could lead them.

My Horizon held an 'Inspiration Day' where interested students came to the service, interacted with the NDIS participants and learnt about the work. Seventy Health Hub students subsequently applied for a school-based traineeship at My Horizon.

Group interviews were held and students were shortlisted before final interviews for select trainees. Janine said they were looking for *"common sense and the right attitudes and values. If they come with the right attitude, we can teach the skills"*.

They were also looking for diversity amongst the applicants. *"We are more flexible than other industries because it's all about the match with participants. One student did a vocational placement in aged care but they didn't want him back because he had a mohawk and piercings and just didn't fit in. But we've employed him as a trainee. We don't care what he looks like. He's got great skills and the participants love him."*

Janine said My Horizon employed 12 school-based trainees from this first round and they plan to continue to recruit this way.

"Young people may not have the life experience but they bring different things – they are a similar age to participants, they have similar interests and relate on the same level. In the first six months, you've got to carry them a bit and it does take a bit to roster and coordinate but it's an investment. At the end you've got these great workers. You can't get a better worker than someone who loves their job. They pay for themselves in so many ways."

Case study 2 - example

Skill sets as a pathway to qualifications: Induction to Disability Skill Set

The need

Service providers in the Cairns region have identified their ideal baseline level of training for new direct care workers entering the disability industry. Most service providers in the region do not think that a full qualification is always necessary for workers in the industry. It is more important to have people with the right values and attitudes.

However, there are some skills that the disability sector in the Cairns region considers important for new direct care workers, to ensure safe and effective work in an NDIS environment.

The initiative

An interagency sub-committee of COFS (Coordinators of Disability Funded Services) together with WorkAbility Qld, reviewed the Community Services and Health Training Package 'Induction to Disability' Skill Set ²¹ and mapped it against their entry level requirements. This four-unit skill set, along with some optional specialised units that can be undertaken as needed, were accepted by the sub-committee as a recommended skill set for new direct care workers in the region.

The skill set includes:

- one x unit to be completed prior to employment – *Follow safe work practices for direct client care*
- three x units to be completed once the candidate has gained employment as a direct care worker – *Provide individualised support, Communicate and work in health or community services, Facilitate the empowerment of people with disability.* ²²

Cairns service providers have also identified:

- an additional four x specialised units to be offered to newly employed direct care workers at the discretion of the employer, depending on the work role – *Assist clients with medication, Facilitate responsible behaviour, Work with diverse people and Promote Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural safety.* ²³

21 The Induction to Disability Skill Set code is CHCSS00081.

22 The codes for the skill set units are HLTWHS002 Follow safe work practices for direct client care; CHCCCS015 Provide individualised support; CHCCOM005 Communicate and work in health or community services; CHCDIS007 Facilitate the empowerment of people with disability.

23 The codes for the optional units are HLTHPS006 Assist clients with medication; CHCCCS009 Facilitate responsible behaviour; CHCDIV001 Work with diverse people; CHCDIV002 Promote Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural safety.

These units also cover the foundation skills needed by the sector, including learning, reading, writing, oral communication, numeracy, problem solving, planning and organising, self-management and technology skills.

The intention is for new direct care workers to commit to completing the skill set units in their own time, with funding for the training to be sought through existing Queensland Government funding pools.

The units all provide potential credit towards a Certificate III in Individual Support. This ensures that should a qualification become mandatory in the industry in the future, or should a worker wish to continue their own learning to gain a qualification through a traineeship or non-traineeship pathway, they will have already completed a good portion of the fourteen units in the qualification.

The benefits

Apart from providing a consistent minimum skills basis across the region, a key advantage for service providers is that they can focus their induction processes on organisation-specific training, rather than just the basics.

WorkAbility Qld local coordinator, Deb Selway, also points out that *“it’s an easy entry, particularly for people who’ve never studied before... it’s a place to begin the training journey”*.

Case study 3 - example

Group training partnerships for disability traineeships: YMCA/East Coast Apprenticeships

The need

The YMCA's Community Inclusion Services in Bundaberg has been experiencing significant demand for services since the NDIS rolled out in October 2017. The introduction of the NDIS has meant all providers need to have access to a regular supply of skilled staff to meet the varied requirements of NDIS participants.

In updating its workforce development strategy to respond to the NDIS, YMCA made a decision to include traineeships for young and mature age people. However, they were aware that when a trainee commences employment, it is not always possible to provide 15 hours a week work, particularly if they have not yet acquired the experience or skills a particular participant requires. Working with a local group training organisation seemed to be a logical way for the YMCA to reduce some of the early risks that come with managing new entries into its workforce.

The initiative

The YMCA partnered with East Coast Apprenticeships, an organisation that was well-known in the local community. East Coast set up the recruitment process for the first three trainees. Bundaberg Branch Manager, Mark Vincent, said that when they first advertised, the demand from jobseekers was not as strong as say a carpentry apprenticeship, but they received about 20 to 30 responses of which several were suitable.

Mark said, *"We recruited a mixed bag, older and younger people, because NDIS participants have different requirements. The role required a driver's licence and vehicle."*

The YMCA interviewed the applicants and those that seemed promising were put on a traineeship probation period. Its Workforce Operations Coordinator, Kia Stibbards, said this probation period is important because *"when it comes to recruiting it's all about ensuring we achieve a partnership between our staff and each participant that is built around matching core competencies and personality."*

"The YMCA is a safe workspace with core values that place teamwork and the ability to complete scheduled tasks as essential to a good fit for ongoing employment. The YMCA facilitates this by linking trainees with competent senior staff while they're working so they have supervision and support," Kia said.

The YMCA hopes to recruit eight trainees by the end of the year. East Coast said they would like to get the model going with other service providers.

The benefits

According to Mark, *"there's a massive need for workers. The industry isn't going anywhere. And the thing about this industry is that older workers are valued. We can attract career changes who are looking for something more meaningful, while being paid to undertake transition training. Plus there's flexibility within the traineeship to accommodate other interests in life."*

The model works for YMCA because as Kia says *"with traineeships, workers can be trained to the organisation's requirements, and the trainees benefit from gaining a qualification."*

Case study 4 - example

Trying out the sector: ARC Disability Services

The need

ARC Disability Services is a well-established service provider in the Cairns region. ARC is anticipating strong business growth with the NDIS about to roll out and wants to increase the pool of disability workers available.

ARC's CEO, Ben Keast, knows that the disability industry is not traditionally seen as a 'sexy' career, but people do not understand the range of work available. Ben also knows that not everyone is cut out for disability work. *"People need to be exposed to the industry to have opportunities to understand what disability work is really about, and whether it suits them, before embarking on a career in the sector."*

The initiative

One way that ARC is exposing people to the sector is by encouraging potential employees to spend a week or two volunteering. ARC runs a holiday program for young people with disability and this program is enhanced by the support of volunteers. ARC is always looking for young volunteers from local schools to support the students with disability who use the program.

Year 10 student, Anna, heard about this program through her school and decided to put her hand up. Anna had some experience with supporting people with disability through a previous school program and liked supporting people her age and did not feel any hesitation to get involved.

Anna enjoyed the week of volunteering at ARC and when she met her Year 11 Coordinator about future career plans, she suggested she would like to work at ARC. Anna's school contacted ARC to enquire about the possibility of a school-based traineeship for Anna.

The ARC manager remembered Anna from the holiday program and knew she had the right values and attitude for the job. ARC was happy to employ Anna under these arrangements. Anna's traineeship will run for 18 months and she works one day a week at ARC and spends Fridays at TAFE. She has started by working at the centre where there is close supervision but says she will feel confident supporting people in the community independently when she completes her training.

The benefits

Anna is the first person from her school to do a school-based traineeship in disability. She says nobody at school knows about the opportunities in the sector. *"People at school think it's difficult working with people with disability, but it's not... I like the traineeship because I get out of the classroom and it will be handy to have a qualification. The TAFE training gives me more confidence with specific parts of the job".*

ARC is happy with the arrangement too. They have a motivated and skilled worker who has a great connection with their young participants, and she plans to be there for the long-term.

Case study 5 - perspectives

What students think:

Discussions with TAFE students on disability traineeships

We asked students who were studying to work in the disability industry what attracted them to the industry and if they had ever considered doing a traineeship... the answers were often surprising.

On choosing a career in disability support ...

Most students were wanting to work in the industry because they had a personal experience of disability or they were career changers, wanting to do something more meaningful through their work. Many were looking to combine their skills in other areas to carve out a niche career path in disability services.

- *"I used to work in hospitality, but now I want to give back and make a difference."*
- *"I come from horticulture but I can't keep doing physical work. I want to use my people skills to work with people who need help."*
- *"I was looking for a career change. There's job satisfaction in helping others."*
- *"I have a background in leisure and health. My sister has a disability. I want to use my skills to do fun stuff with people with a disability."*
- *"I acquired a disability a few years ago. It's not obvious but I want to help others with disability. I am going to try to work my way up."*
- *"I want to start up a dance school for people with a disability."*
- *"I have worked a lot with horses and I am interested in equine therapy for people with a disability."*

On disability traineeships ...

Of the 26 students we spoke to, none were aware that it was possible to do a traineeship in disability and none had ever seen traineeships in the sector advertised. Eighty per cent said they would have taken up a traineeship if they knew about it, but many said they would need to earn more than the traineeship wage.

- *"I would love to do a traineeship if it was available because I prefer on-the-job learning."*
- *"I would have considered a traineeship but I have a family and would need to look at my finances to see if it was viable."*
- *"Traineeships might need a new name. It sounds like something for young people."*
- *"If there were traineeships for older people, life experience should be recognised and compensated."*
- *"Traineeships in schools would be a good way to address the ageing workforce, but young people are vulnerable so you would need to be careful about their safety. Also, I would be worried that they are entering an industry that will not have much permanent work."*
- *"It would be a daunting experience to try and find a traineeship with an employer, especially when you haven't been in the workforce for a while. If there was someone who could help you find one, that would be great."*

Case study 6 – perspectives

Making it happen: creative solutions to employing trainees

Traineeships are not well-used in the disability sector and at first glance, this pathway may not seem like a natural fit for skill development of disability workers. It is a casualised industry, supervision is hard to organise, and many of the workers are mature age.

Nevertheless, many providers are beginning to see the value. They say many of these ‘barriers’ are myths, that need to be busted.

Myth 1: I can’t commit to a permanent employment contract under the NDIS

It is true, the industry is becoming more casualised under the NDIS but many service providers are choosing to focus on retaining their staff and offering their participants consistency of service by offering staff permanent part-time contracts.

“We’re going the other way by offering permanent contracts. We want to become an employer of choice.”

Myth 2: I can’t guarantee trainees enough hours of work

Providers offering traineeships say that while they thought they might struggle to provide 15 hours a week, it has not been a problem. There is so much work under the NDIS that 15 hours (or 7.5 for a school-based trainee) is very doable. In fact, some providers think that any less would be detrimental to their learning.

“It’s easy to provide 15 hours a week. Most get more.”

Myth 3: It’s too hard to supervise trainees when they’re not doing a 9-5 job in a centre

There is no doubt that trainees require structured supervision and this is easier when they are working regular hours in a facility where there are plenty of qualified staff. Some service providers have found some creative solutions to ensure effective supervision. If they provide centre-based activities, some will start their trainee there and gradually give them more independent shifts as their skills increase. Others match them up with other support workers working with participants in the community. Queensland’s flexible supervision arrangements for trainees in community care settings reduces the burden for direct supervision.

“The induction period is most important for making sure they get to the point of being able to work with remote supervision.”

“We buddy them up. That’s how we work.”

Myth 4: Traineeships are only attractive to young workers and we want experienced workers

The lower traineeship wage is a disincentive for many adult workers to take on this pathway, particularly when there is no mandatory qualification to work in the industry. But service providers have the prerogative to pay anything above the traineeship wage, and some do.

On the other hand, some workers, particularly young workers who have no experience in the industry, are happy to accept a lower wage while they are learning and know that at least they are assured of work while they are completing their traineeship. In this industry, everyone is different.

“Our trainees don’t get the traineeship wage. We pay them 50c an hour less than the regular wage.”

Attachment B: Nationally recognised qualifications and skill sets examined in this review

Funded skill sets and qualifications	Qualification ID	Funding for non-concessional students	Funding for concessional students	Funding for Year 12 Fee Free students	Maximum number of competencies paid	Student eligibility restrictions and/or exemptions
Disability Work – Behaviour Support skill set	CHCSS00096	\$275	\$358	Nil	2	Student must be an existing worker in the disability industry sector
Induction to Disability skill set	CHCSS00081	\$555	\$722	Nil	4	Student must be a new worker in the disability industry sector
Certificate III in Individual Support	CHC33015	\$2,716	\$3,298	\$3,880	13	Nil
Certificate IV in Disability	CHC43115	\$3,101	\$3,766	Nil	14	Student must be an existing worker in the community services and health industry
Certificate IV in Mental Health	CHC43315	\$3,647	\$4,429	Nil	15	Student must be an existing worker in the community services and health industry

Attachment C: Findings of literature and data review and key informant interviews

About traineeships

Under current arrangements in Australia, a traineeship can be described as:

“...an arrangement by which a person learns the skills necessary for a particular occupation or trade through a combination of productive work and structured learning. It is supported by a Training Contract, underpinned by an employment agreement between the employee and employer, and results in a portable, industry-recognised qualification.”²⁴

Their apprenticeship counterparts generally occur in trade-based occupations and qualifications, while traineeships occur in a wide range of usually non-trade-based occupational and qualifications. Some traineeships attract incentives for employers from the Commonwealth Government and/or funding for training delivery from the relevant state or territory government, while in others, the training occurs on a fee-for-service basis.

Traineeships in disability-related qualifications

Certain Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications in some industries can only be completed via an apprenticeship or traineeship (these tend to be trade qualifications).

However, in the disability sector relevant qualifications can be completed via direct study (either face to face or online, or a combination of both) or through a traineeship if available.

Three disability-related qualifications are currently available as traineeships in Queensland:

- Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability)
- Certificate IV in Disability
- Certificate IV in Mental Health.

Whilst all three of these qualifications are funded by the Queensland Government under the Certificate III Guarantee program²⁵ or Higher Level Skills Program,²⁶ only the Certificate III in Individual Support is currently funded through the User Choice program.²⁷

The traineeship in Certificate III in Individual Support has a nominal duration of 12 months, through full-time employment. It can also be undertaken on a part-time basis with a minimum of 15 hours a week employment (averaged over a four-week period), or as a school-based traineeship with 7.5 hours paid employment a week (averaged over a three-month period) that provides a minimum of 375 hours paid employment over the period of a year.

For those completing the Certificate III in Individual Support through a non-traineeship pathway (i.e. direct study), there is a requirement to complete 120 hours of on-the-job learning through a work placement (which is generally unpaid). This highlights the importance placed on practical work experience by the sector.

24 Ithaca Group (2010) *Towards a more seamless apprenticeship system – Final Report*. Unpublished report prepared for DEEWR, p.3.

25 Available to learners who have not previously enrolled in a Certificate III or higher qualification.

26 Available to learners who have not previously enrolled in a Certificate IV or higher qualification.

27 Available to both new and existing workers undertaking a traineeship.

At the Commonwealth Government level, Disability Care Workers are included under priority occupations and employers are able to access commencement, recommencement and completion incentives for new employees undertaking a traineeship at Certificate III or IV on a full-time basis, or as a school-based trainee. Employers can access a completion incentive only for new employees undertaking a traineeship on a part time basis or existing workers undertaking a traineeship on a full-time or part-time basis.

For more information see: www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/sites/ausapps/files/publication-documents/summary_aaip_table_1_july_2018.pdf.

Certificate III disability-related qualifications are designed for employees working “in the community and/or residential facilities under direct supervision within clearly defined organisation guidelines and service plans”, while Certificate IV disability-related qualifications are designed for employees working “in residential group homes, training resource centres, day respite centres and open employment services, other community settings and clients’ homes.”²⁸

The roles that different aspects of these arrangements play in affecting the uptake of traineeships in the disability sector are discussed later in this report.

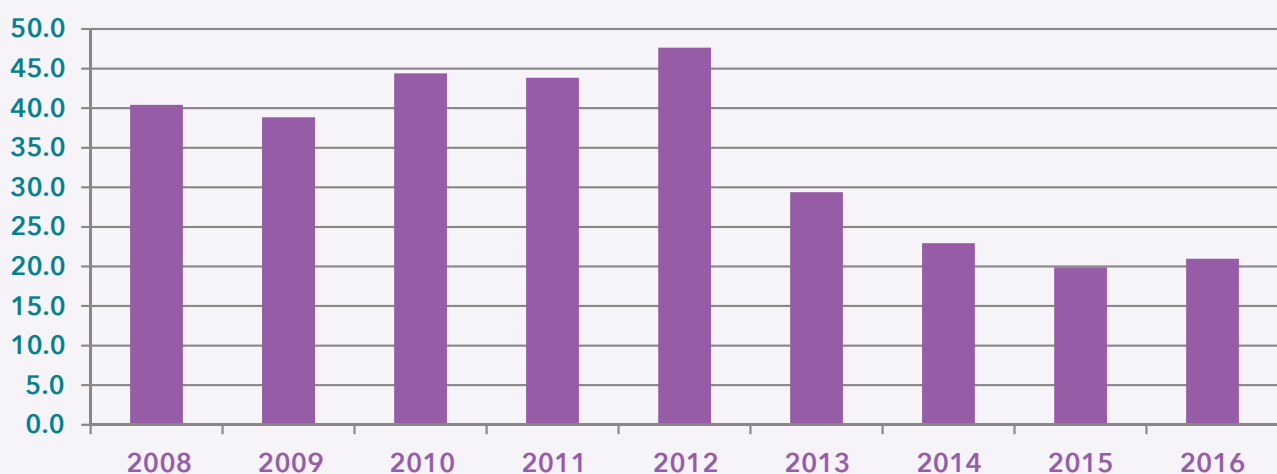
Traineeship commencements

Overall, the uptake of traineeships in the Queensland disability sector has been declining for many years. This is partly a reflection of the drop in traineeship commencements in all industry sectors across Australia, which occurred when Commonwealth-funded employer incentives were withdrawn for occupations not on the National Skills Needs List in 2012.

This decline is evident in Figure 4, which illustrates apprenticeships and traineeships commencements across all non-trade related qualifications and industry sectors in Queensland from 2008 to 2016.

However, as illustrated in Figure 5, the decline started to occur earlier than this for Certificate III disability-related traineeships. Consultation feedback suggested that this may have been a result of issues relating to supervision of trainees, which resulted in the cancellation of significant numbers of training contracts at the time.

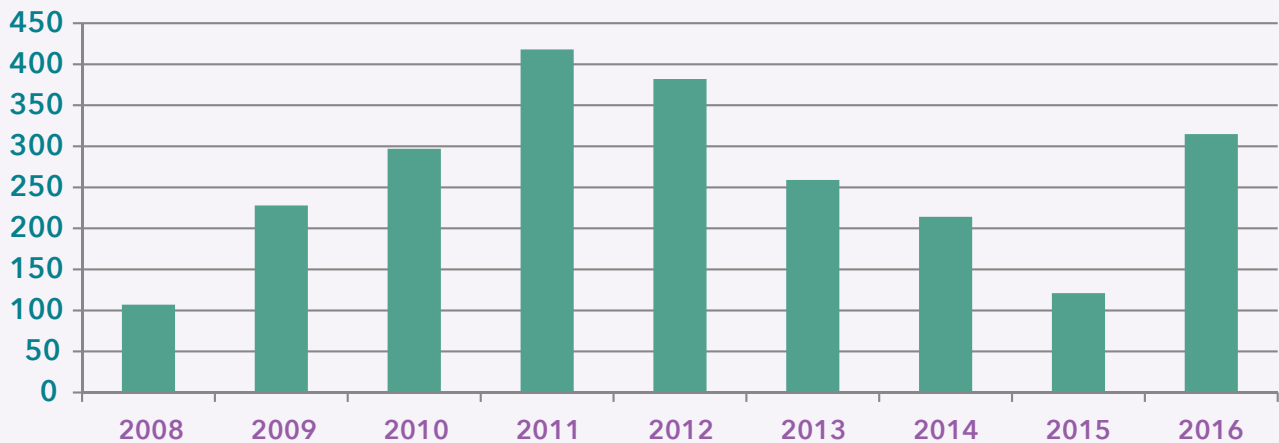
Figure 4. Commencements in all non-trade related apprenticeships and traineeships in Queensland 2008–2016 ('000)



Source: NCVET Apprentices and trainees 2016 – Annual.

²⁸ WorkAbility Qld (2017) Ipswich, Lockyer, Scenic Rim and Somerset NDIS Region Workforce Profile, p.16.

Figure 5. Commencements in Certificate III disability-related traineeships in Queensland 2008–2016



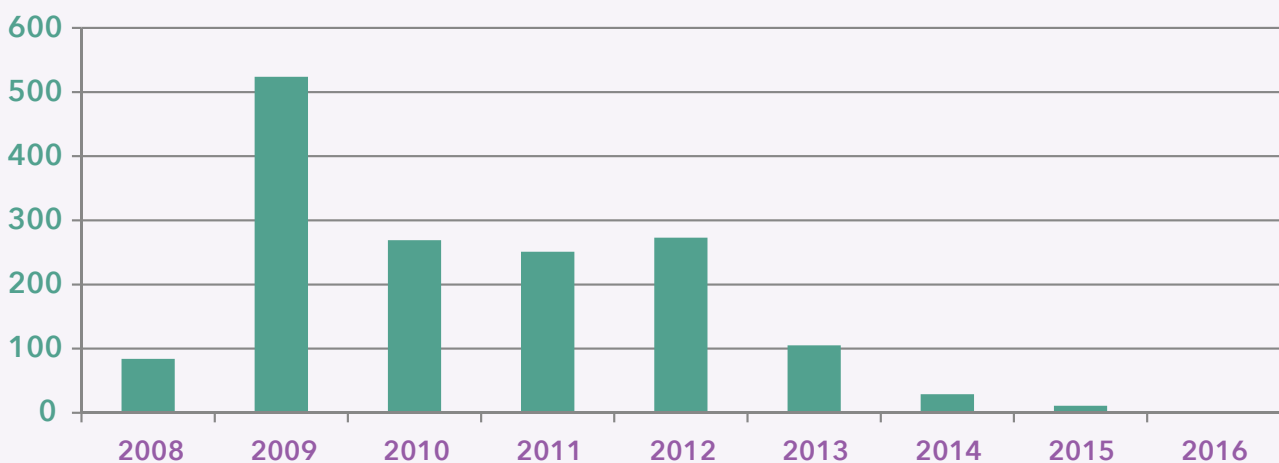
Source: NCVER VOCSTATS, Apprentices and trainees - September 2017, accessed 5/4/18.

N.B. The figures for 2015, 2016 and 2017 include commencements for the Certificate III in Individual Support, which also covers ageing, and home and community support streams.

The figures for Certificate III traineeships illustrated in Figure 5, also show a marked increase in commencements in 2016, but these are skewed by the introduction of the Certificate III in Individual Support in late 2015, in which the disability competencies are now one of three streams within the qualification (with the other two streams being ageing, and home and community). The commencements in 2016 represent enrolments in all three streams.

This makes it very challenging to make accurate observations about the level of interest in disability-related traineeships in the most recent years. However, we are informed that the state's biggest training provider – TAFE Queensland – has only enrolled 10 trainees in Certificate III disability traineeships this year.

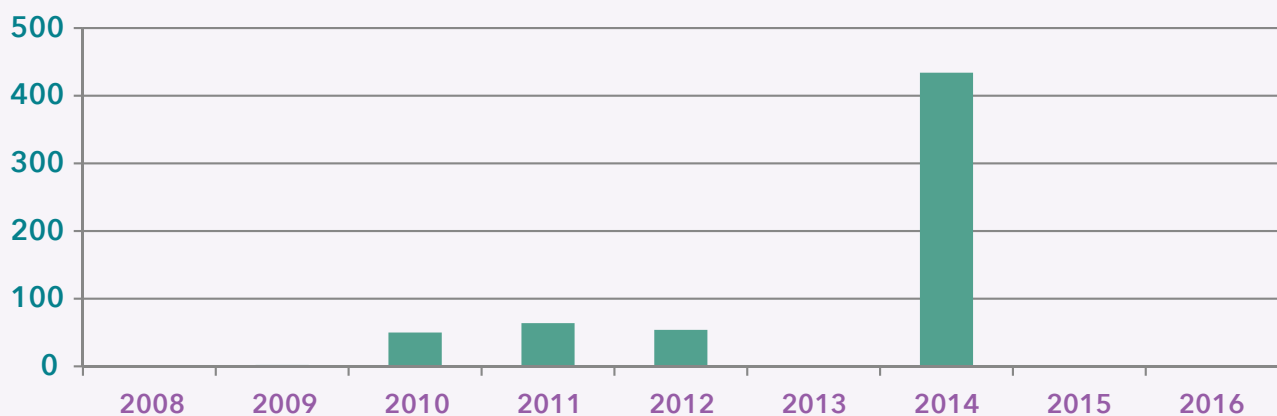
Figure 6. Commencements in Certificate IV disability-related traineeships in Queensland 2008–2016



Source: NCVER VOCSTATS, Apprentices and trainees - September 2017, accessed 5/4/18.

Commencements in Certificate IV disability-related traineeships, illustrated in Figure 6, have declined to the point where there have been no commencements in 2016 or 2017. It is likely that this is also influenced by the lack of state government user-choice funding for training at the Certificate IV level, as well as the fact that there is no financial benefit under current industrial relations arrangements for employees to have a Certificate IV over a Certificate III qualification.

Figure 7. Commencements in Certificate IV mental health-related traineeships in Queensland 2008–2016



Source: NCVER VOCSTATS, *Apprentices and trainees - September 2017*, accessed 5/4/18.

As illustrated in Figure 7, apart from a spike of more than 400 commencements in 2014, commencements in traineeships in the Certificate IV in Mental Health have been very low, with no commencements in 2015 and 2016. Conversations with TAFE Queensland identified that they have had one new commencement in this traineeship this year.

Completions of disability-related qualifications

While numbers of learners completing disability-related and mental health-related qualifications overall (i.e. through both traineeships and non-traineeships) generally increased over the period of 2014–2016, the numbers completing their qualification through a traineeship pathway has been decreasing. The numbers of traineeship completions are also very small when compared to completions of the same qualifications through any pathway, highlighting the lack of popularity of traineeship pathways within the sector.

Table 3 shows the numbers of qualifications completed in total, as well as those completed through a traineeship.

Table 3. Completions in disability-related and mental health-related qualifications in Queensland (traineeships and non-traineeships)

	2014	2015	2016
Certificate III Disability Traineeships*	162	112	92
Certificate III Disability Qualifications (both traineeship and non-traineeship)**	811	1358	2843
Certificate IV Disability Traineeships*	84	22	16
Certificate IV Disability Qualifications (both traineeship and non-traineeship)**	446	459	460
Certificate IV Mental Health Traineeships*	6	136	0
Certificate IV Mental Health Qualifications (both traineeship and non-traineeship)**	135	474	402

*Source: NCVER VOCSTATS, Apprentices and trainees – September 2017, accessed 5/4/18.

**Source: NCVER VOCSTATS, TVA program completions 2014–2016, accessed 6/4/18.

Uptake of traineeships across different jurisdictions

Analysis of commencements in Certificate III disability-related traineeships across the different jurisdictions did not highlight any useful patterns. However, a comparison of the relative proportions of traineeship commencements with the relative proportions of the estimated disability support workforce is of some use. As illustrated in Table 4, Queensland's share of commencements in Certificate III disability-related traineeships is similar to that of its share of the estimated disability support workforce. However, as mentioned earlier, the fact that disability support is now only one stream within the Certificate III in Individual Support qualification makes it difficult to make conclusive comments about the data.

Table 4. Relative proportions of disability support workforce and traineeship commencements across jurisdictions

Jurisdiction	*Proportion of 2016 disability support workforce estimates (%)	**Proportion of 2016 traineeship commencements in Cert III disability-related qualifications (%)	**Proportion of 2017 (first three quarters only) traineeship commencements in Cert III disability-related qualifications (%)
ACT	1	1	2
NSW	32	28	37
NT	1	1	1
QLD	18	19	19
SA	9	3	1
TAS	4	8	4
VIC	25	20	11
WA	10	21	26

*Source: NCVER VOCSTATS, Apprentices and trainees – September 2017, accessed 5/4/18.

**Source: NCVER VOCSTATS, TVA program completions 2014–2016, accessed 6/4/18.

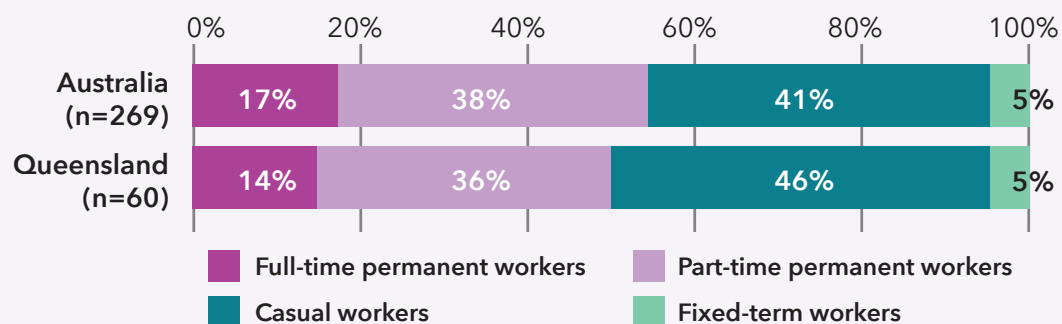
The disability sector workforce

In 2017, the national disability workforce comprised 43 per cent permanent part-time, 41 per cent casual and only 12 per cent permanent full-time employees (NDS 2017a).²⁹

Compared to these national figures, Queensland has a higher proportion of casual workers (46 per cent) – see Figure 8. Casual employment is particularly common in regional Queensland, where nearly half of the workers are casually employed in Central and South-West Queensland (47 per cent) and more than half in Northern Queensland (52 per cent) (NDS 2017b) – see Figure 9.³⁰

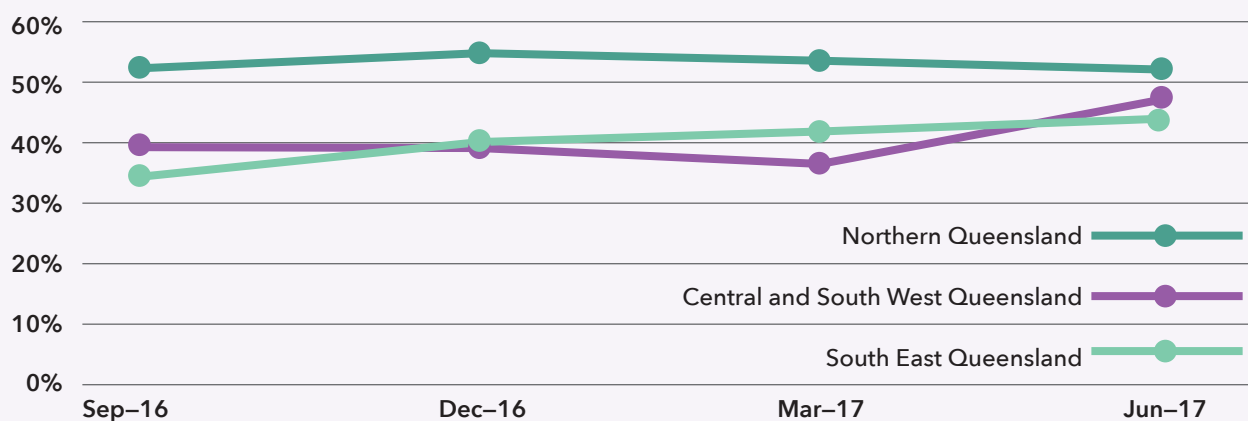
These figures should be considered as indicative only, as they are taken from data submitted by organisations choosing to contribute to the national Workforce Wizard tool. However, they do highlight a factor that is likely to have a significant effect on the uptake of traineeships: traineeships cannot be undertaken by employees who are employed on a casual basis; therefore almost half of the employees in Queensland are automatically ineligible for a traineeship.

Figure 8. Type of employment (as a percentage of all workers), June 2017 quarter, Australia and Queensland



Source: National Disability Service (2017) Workforce Wizard report, Queensland edition, September 2017.

Figure 9. Casual employment as a percentage of all workers, Queensland regions, September 16 to June 2017 quarters



Source: National Disability Service (2017) Workforce Wizard report, Queensland edition, September 2017.

²⁹ National Disability Services (NDS) (2017) *Australian Disability Workforce Report*. Sydney, Australia: NDS.

³⁰ National Disability Services (NDS) (2017) *Queensland Disability Workforce Report*. WorkAbility Queensland.

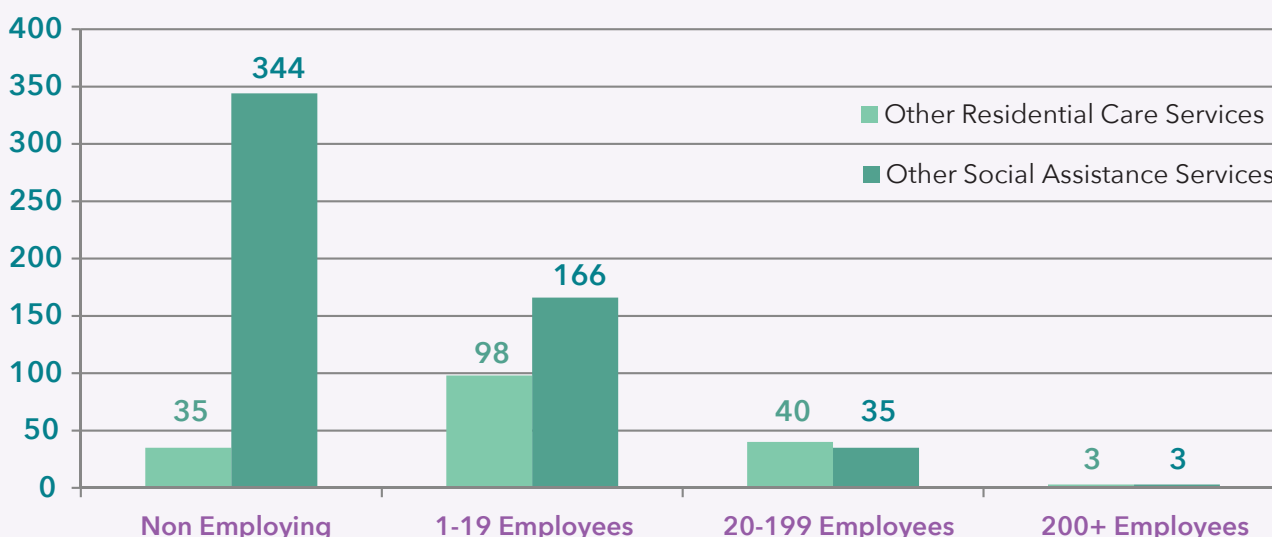
The disability sector has a relatively ageing workforce. Half of disability support workers in Queensland (50 per cent) and 46 per cent of all Australian disability workers were aged 45 years and older, compared with around 40 per cent for the Australian all-industry employed workforce.³¹ Given that people aged 45 years and older traditionally account for the smallest proportions of apprentices and trainees (around six to eight per cent of commencing apprentices and trainees were in this age group in Queensland each year from 2014-2017³²), this age profile will also have an impact on the likely uptake of traineeships.

While fewer organisations in the Queensland disability sector experienced recruitment difficulties in the March 2017 quarter than the Australian average, the reasons for the difficulties were similar to those experienced across the country, which are the lack of suitable or qualified candidates and the candidates being unable or unwilling to meet specific job requirements. The data suggests that these difficulties are being influenced by the increasing specificity of job requirements for disability support workers in order to tailor the roles to client needs under the NDIS.³³ This increasing level of job specificity also poses challenges to the training of support workers.

Another feature of the disability sector workforce that is likely to impact upon the uptake of traineeships is that there are very few organisations in the sector employing more than 20 employees – as it is typically these medium to large employers that have the infrastructure to support traineeships.

Across all industries, small businesses generally report greater challenges in recruiting and supporting apprentices and trainees, particularly in relation to meeting the supervision and administration requirements.³⁴ As illustrated in Figure 10, the large majority of Queensland-based organisations in the 'other residential care services' and 'other social assistance services' industry classifications (which cover respite care and disability service providers) are small or non-employing.

Figure 10. Numbers of Queensland 'other residential care services' and 'other social assistance services' by employment size at June 2017



Source: ABS 8165.0 Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, Jun 2013 to Jun 2017 – Businesses by Main State by Industry Class by Employment Size Ranges, June 2017.

N.B. Figures for organisations that are non-employing are likely to be under-reported here as the ABS figures only include businesses that report on GST). Large service providers that operate across multiple industry sub-sectors and multiple jurisdictions (e.g. Red Cross, Uniting Care) may not be included in these figures, so they should be considered as indicative only.

31 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly, May 2017, Cat no. 6291.0.55.003.

32 NCVET (2018) *Apprentices and trainees 2017: September quarter - Queensland*, available online at www.ncvet.edu.au/publications/publications/all-publications/apprentices-and-trainees-2017-september-quarter-australia/queensland.

33 National Disability Service (2017) *Workforce Wizard report*, Queensland edition, September 2017.

34 Ithaca Group (2010) *Towards a more seamless apprenticeship system - Final Report*. Unpublished report prepared for DEEWR, p.3.

Barriers and enablers for traineeships more broadly

Within the broader apprenticeship and traineeship arena, the uptake of traineeships is affected by a number of factors.

Barriers

The key barriers to the uptake of traineeships more broadly include the following:

Funding and incentives – non-trade related traineeships tend to be more influenced by incentive payments, economic conditions, and labour market fluctuations than trade related apprenticeships. For example, commencements in traineeships have dropped dramatically since 2012, when incentives were withdrawn for occupations not on the National Skills Needs List (NSNL), which typically includes predominantly trade skills.³⁵

Pay rates for trainees – trainees and apprentices are paid a lower wage than other employees to compensate for their lower levels of productivity and the contribution of the employer to their training (although the employer may choose to pay above the trainee/apprentice wage rate). This can be a disincentive, particularly for older workers.

Provision of adequate scope of learning and supervision – many employers (particularly those that are small and medium) are unable to provide the range of on-the-job learning opportunities needed to develop the full set of competencies required to complete a traineeship qualification, or to provide adequate levels of supervision.³⁶ The ability to meet supervision requirements is a particular challenge in areas such as the disability sector, where trainees are working in clients' homes and not in a central workplace.

Lack of flexibility of training providers – while large employers often have sufficient numbers of trainees to be able to negotiate suitable arrangements with a training provider, the majority of employers, especially those with small numbers of trainees and those in regional and remote areas, are restricted to the form and timing of training and assessment provision determined by their local provider because there are no alternatives and/or they have no negotiating power.³⁷

Lack of understanding of the system – the complexity of the apprenticeship/traineeship system and the vocational education and training (VET) systems more broadly make them very difficult for employers to understand. The challenge is not the availability of information, but a lack of coherence of the available information and difficulties in getting the right information through to the right people early enough in the decision-making process. It's also about a lack of sound and trusted advice to support the information.³⁸ Arrangements, including incentives and flexibilities available, change frequently, making it hard for any employer to keep up.

35 Atkinson, G. and Stanwick, J. (2016) *Trends in VET: policy and participation*, NCVER.

36 Ithaca Group (2014) *Analysis of the Australian Apprenticeship System Construct*, Unpublished report for the Commonwealth Department of Industry.

37 Ibid.

38 Ithaca Group (2010) *Towards a More Seamless Apprenticeship System*, Unpublished report for the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Enablers

Enablers for better uptake of, and better outcomes from, traineeships include the following.

Critical success factors – in successful apprenticeships and traineeships the following success factors are evident:

- clear expectations that are met for both the trainee and the employer
- a good fit between the trainee and the occupation and workplace
- mentoring and support for both the trainee and the employer
- good quality training provided by the training provider and the employer
- healthy relationships and positive workplace experiences for the trainee
- sustained motivation for the trainee by providing the right level of support and challenge as the traineeship progresses.³⁹

Good recruitment practices – a recurring theme across research into successful apprenticeships and traineeships in recent years is that spending more time ‘up-front’ in the recruitment of potential apprentices/trainees improves the chances of successful completion training and transitions into ongoing employment. However, good recruitment practices can be challenging and expensive to implement, particularly for small employers.⁴⁰

Pre-traineeship experience – work experience, school-based traineeships and pre-vocational courses have also been shown to have a positive impact on the success of an apprenticeship/traineeship, because they “*can help candidates understand the realities of the workplace and let employers trial new apprentices.*”⁴¹

Flexible delivery models – the current apprenticeship/traineeship model contains a considerable level of flexibility in the way in which the training is implemented. Various training organisations are taking advantage of these flexibilities and offering employers and apprentices/trainees alternatives to the traditional forms of delivery, which better meet their needs. These include reconfiguring the balance between on-the-job and off-the-job training, implementing different employment arrangements and using digital technology to deliver components of training. However, lack of awareness of the available flexibilities amongst employers, entrenched cultural perceptions and lack of flexibility of training providers prevent greater use of these flexibilities.⁴²

Incentives and support – the fluctuations in the uptake of traineeships that align with changes in government funding arrangements highlight the influence that incentives can have on the attractiveness of traineeships. However, research has shown that incentives alone will not necessarily increase uptake (and in fact, may simply increase poor training organisation practices). Research carried out in New Zealand showed that employers were more likely to take on an apprentice if they received a combination of incentives and support services in areas such as recruitment, mentoring, administration and supervision’.⁴³

39 Ithaca Group (2017) Confidential Research Report to Jobs Queensland.

40 Ithaca Group (2013), *Better Matching of Employers and Apprentices: A scan of current thinking and practice*, Unpublished report for Group Training Australia.

41 Ithaca Group (2011) *21st Century apprenticeships for Queensland. Report of industry consultations*. Brisbane: Skills Queensland.

42 Ithaca Group (2014) *Analysis of the Australian Apprenticeship System Construct*, Unpublished report for the Commonwealth Department of Industry.

43 Competenz (2012) *Converting the unconverted: What would it take for companies to take on an apprentice?*

Barriers and enablers for traineeships in the disability sector

As well as the barriers and enablers to traineeships experienced across industries more broadly, there are some additional factors that are specific to the disability sector that are impacting on the uptake of traineeships.

Barriers

Factors that create barriers to the uptake of traineeships and formal training in the disability sector include the following.

Time available for training under the NDIS

A recent study found that the NDIS pricing model did not reflect existing employees' classification levels and provided inadequate allowance for training, workers' time spent on activities other than face-to-face support, travel between different workplaces, and supervision.⁴⁴ A review into prices paid under the NDIS found that for 'complex' patients a loading should be added to account for the higher level of training required (McKinsey 2018).⁴⁵

The pricing review also found that the level of staff qualification, training, experience, and supervision, and therefore the labour costs involved in delivering safe and high quality care varies significantly between participants at different points on the complexity spectrum.

At the lowest end of the spectrum, soft skills rather than formal certifications are more important to delivering a high-quality service. At the highest end of the spectrum, formal qualifications and experience are needed to deliver supports safely to medically and behaviourally complex participants. It suggests that providers should identify participant segments and ensure staff skills and supervision structures are commensurate with participant needs.⁴⁶

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), which sets pricing for service delivery, assumes an overhead level of 10 per cent, which equates to 15 per cent if a provider is not subject to payroll tax. Some providers are finding it difficult to achieve this level of overheads, particularly those with higher expenditure on training. The review recommended a temporary overhead assistance loading (of two to three per cent) for providers delivering attendant care.⁴⁷

Supervision

The NDIA assumes a 1:15 supervision ratio, and a utilisation level of 95 per cent for supervisors. Some providers believe this level of supervision is difficult to achieve, and that it does not allow sufficient time to undertake quality/compliance requirements and support worker management. Others are finding that they do not require the level of supervision of 1/15 to offer quality support to the NDIS participants they serve.⁴⁸

Regardless, trainees require a high level of supervision, particularly in the first few months, and particularly when working with vulnerable clients, often in private homes. Even with the flexible supervision guidelines that have been introduced for disability qualifications, many service providers are not confident in allowing trainees to work with participants independently and struggle to find sufficient supervisor time to support them.

44 Cortis N, Macdonald F, Davidson B, et al. (2017) *Reasonable, Necessary and Valued: Pricing Disability Services for Quality Support and Decent Jobs*. Sydney, NSW, Australia: Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC), UNSW.

45 McKinsey and Co (2018) *Independent pricing review. National Disability Insurance Agency. Final Report*. February 2018.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

No mandate for formal training

While there are currently no legislative requirements for disability support workers to undergo specific training, some providers, particularly those with complex participants in their client mix, require their staff to complete mandatory training as a matter of internal policy. Mandatory training generally prioritises workplace health and safety/safe work practices modules. Workers are also required to complete a police check. Beyond these basic requirements, many NDIS providers are happy to train their staff informally, on-the-job.

That said, the workforce at the moment, is reasonably well-qualified. An online survey of 300 respondents undertaken by the Australian College of Community and Disability practitioners between November 2016 and March 2017 found that 85 per cent have a relevant qualification: 40 per cent held a Bachelor or Master Degree or Graduate Diploma, 26 per cent held a Diploma-level qualification, and 28 per cent had Certificate III or IV level qualifications.⁴⁹

WorkAbility Qld's NDIS education and training project identified that *"while Certificate III qualifications have broadly been accepted as the minimum requirement for ongoing work in individual support, it is not clear whether this will remain the case under the NDIS – either in terms of the actual supports required or the future quality and safeguards regime."*⁵⁰

Preference for generic skills and attributes above formal qualifications

In the NDIS environment, support workers are guided by the participant to assist them meet their needs, wishes, goals and aspirations. A support worker's worth is measured more through their achievements in problem solving and trust-building with people with disability, their family and friends, than through training and length of service. Thus, a support worker's qualification is secondary to ensuring they have the right attributes and values, and are well-matched to the needs and interests of the participant they support.⁵¹

There is some debate about the extent to which the required attributes can be learnt. Certainly, there will be people who are not suited to disability support work and do not display some of the essential characteristics. But outside of that, research and stakeholder opinion would support the view that people are somewhere on a continuum when it comes to attributes, and they can keep learning and developing these qualities.⁵²

Recent research into 'what employers really want' found that in the aged care sector employers placed the highest priority on personal care worker recruits having the underpinning generic skills related to connecting and working with others, including highly developed interpersonal skills and empathy.⁵³ This research is currently being extended to the disability care sector and anecdotal evidence suggests that these skills are needed at even higher levels by personal care workers working in clients' homes.

49 Australian College of Community and Disability Practitioners (2017) *Your Job Your Career Survey*.

50 WorkAbility (2016) *Supporting Queensland's NDIS Workforce Effectively: The vocational Training and Skills Ecosystem*, accessed online at <http://workabilityqld.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/NDIS-Education-and-Training-Issues-Paper-160923.pdf>

51 Outpost Consulting (2017) *NDIS Training Requirements and Products: Report 1 – Essential skills and attributes for NDIS workers*. WorkAbility Queensland.

52 Ibid.

53 Perkins, K (2017) *What employers really want*, Australian Council for Educational Research, accessed online at <https://rd.acer.org/article/what-employers-really-want>.

Workforce characteristics

Research shows that those with low educational attainment and low literacy, those who are older or in low-skill occupations and those who work part-time are less likely to get employer-supported training, such as traineeships (NCVER, 2017). These characteristics are prevalent amongst the disability sector workforce. Low educational attainment and low literacy are particular issues amongst Aboriginal peoples, Torres Strait Islander peoples and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Therefore particular attention needs to be given to training opportunities for these cohorts so that a diverse range of skilled people are available to support NDIS participants.

Enablers

Whilst little has been written about what factors might increase the success or uptake of traineeships in the disability sector, the available research does highlight some issues that may have an impact.

A greater focus on underpinning generic skills

Research suggests that the issue is not so much whether support workers need training, but whether approaches to training strike the right balance between developing interpersonal and 'soft' skills and specific knowledge and practical work skills.⁵⁴ The WorkAbility Qld project has also recommended that given that employers in the disability sector tend to recruit based on values and attitudes rather than an entry level qualification, it will be important to encourage learners and training providers to focus on the same values and attitudes when commencing and delivering a disability qualification.⁵⁵

Provision of follow-up and professional supervision

A study on training for psychiatric disability support workers found that just giving workers training and information is not enough to equip them with the necessary capabilities. There needs to be follow-up and reflection after training, some form of supervision and mentoring, and opportunities to collaborate with peers (Shepherd and Meehan 2013).⁵⁶

This was confirmed in interviews with service providers at trial sites (Outpost Consulting, 2017) who highlighted the value of professional supervision and reflection for support workers, and the challenge this poses in a casualised mobile workforce.⁵⁷

A strong focus on 'on-the-job' training

'On-the-job' training is the favoured form of skill development in the sector. A number of stakeholders interviewed in the 'NDIS Training Requirements' project identified that learning from the NDIS participant and their family was considered to be the best way to learn. There was also seen to be value in providing information and training to staff members and people with disability and their families together.⁵⁸

54 Outpost Consulting (2017) *NDIS Training Requirements and Products: Attachment A Literature Review*, WorkAbility Queensland.

55 WorkAbility (2016) *Supporting Queensland's NDIS Workforce Effectively: The vocational Training and Skills Ecosystem*, accessed online at <http://workabilityqld.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/NDIS-Education-and-Training-Issues-Paper-160923.pdf>.

56 Nicole Shepherd and Thomas Meehan, (2013) "Training for in-home psychiatric disability support workers", *The Journal of Mental Health Training, Education and Practice*, Vol. 8 Issue: 1, pp.35-44.

57 Outpost Consulting (2017) *NDIS Training Requirements and Products: Attachment A Literature Review*, WorkAbility Queensland.

58 Chenoweth, L., Ward, M (2015) *"I'm here to help": Enabling user-direction*, Griffith University.

Introduction of the Quality and Safeguarding Framework

An NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework was developed at the end of 2016, which includes measures related to individuals, providers and workers in providing safe services under the NDIS and preventing adverse outcomes. While states and territories are able to maintain their current arrangements to protect people with disability during NDIS transition, at full scheme roll-out (currently mid 2020) the national framework will apply.

In relation to workforce skills, the framework includes the following components:

- **Developmental:** Building a skilled and safe workforce – with the attitudes and skills that meet the needs of participants.
- **Preventative:** Screening workers – to help ensure that they keep people with disability safe and ensuring workers have the skills for specific roles through provider quality assurance and registration.
- **Corrective:** Monitoring worker conduct through screening, serious incident reports, complaints and breaches of the Code of Conduct.⁵⁹

When the framework is implemented in Queensland, registered NDIS providers will have a greater responsibility to skill their workers, particularly entry-level workers. Nevertheless, it has been criticised as having an insufficient focus on capacity building and long-term skill development.⁶⁰

Messages from key informant interviews

A total of 11 interviews were conducted with representatives of organisations from across the disability and VET sectors. A list of those consulted can be found in Attachment A.

The purpose of these interviews was to identify high level issues impacting upon the uptake of traineeships and other formal training pathways, which will then guide the focus of the fieldwork to be conducted in Stage 3 of the project.

The messages arising from these interviews very much support the findings of the literature and data review and can be summarised as follows:

- The uptake of traineeships in community services qualifications in Queensland has traditionally been low and there has been no noticeable change in this since the introduction of the NDIS.
- Key barriers to the uptake of traineeships in the disability sector are:
 - o challenges with providing adequate levels of supervision, which is reportedly exacerbated by NDIS pricing models
 - o poor delivery of training by some providers
 - o suggestions by some that the training product may not be fit for purpose
 - o lack of awareness of the value and potential flexibilities of traineeships
 - o the unstable, casual nature of work in the sector
 - o lack of financial incentives for existing workers.

⁵⁹ Department of Social Services (2016) *NDIS Quality and Safeguards Framework*. www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/04_2017/ndis_quality_and_safeguarding_framework_final.pdf.

⁶⁰ The Australia Institute (2018) *A Portable Training Entitlement System for the Disability Support Services Sector*, Report for ASU NSW Branch.

- Traineeships may not be the right training pathway for the sector and skill sets may be of greater value – particularly for existing workers. However, it may be more a case of different training pathways needed for different worker cohorts.
- School-based traineeships may be an important pathway for new entrants to the sector. However, there is little understanding and promotion of the sector amongst schools – despite the fact that there are jobs available. Lack of funding for disability-related qualifications at Certificate II level and for Certificate III qualifications delivered through VET in Schools (VETiS) is also a barrier to formal training.
- There were reports of reluctance by service providers to employ young people to work in the sector and a lack of understanding of how to adequately support, develop and supervise young employees. One informant suggested that lack of quality staff supervision is an issue across the sector as a whole – not just in relation to young people. This may be an area that requires awareness raising and education of employers.
- Traineeships seem to be offered by service providers that have some kind of institutional/residential setting in which the trainee can work under close supervision. This type of setting also allows larger providers to take on multiple trainees.
- Offering of traineeships through a group training organisation also appears to be a viable model, but reportedly few service providers see the value in this option and continue to rely on traditional recruitment practices. There are suggestions that awareness of this option may be growing in the sector.
- Whilst there is no mandated qualification for entry to the sector, some employers do pay a higher wage for those that have the Certificate III qualification, providing an incentive for employees or would-be employees to gain the qualification.
- Some consider that there are no visible benefits for learners to undertake a traineeship over 12 months, when they could complete the qualification in six months under the Certificate 3 Guarantee.
- Some employers will pay for their employees to complete a qualification, while others provide time off to study or other forms of non-financial support. However, for learners in metropolitan areas who are not already employed, there is fierce competition for work placements, which are needed to complete the mandatory 120 hours of work experience. This does not appear to be an issue in regional areas.
- Programs that provide additional support for those seeking to work in the sector, such as those offered under the Skilling Queenslanders for Work, are seen to be of great value.

Attachment D: Consultation list

Key informant interviews

	Organisation	Stakeholder categorisation/perspective
1	Workforce Council	NDIS systemic level / VET systemic level
2	National Disability Service QLD	NDIS systemic level
3	WorkAbility Coordinators	NDIS systemic level
4	Department of Employment, Small Business and Training	VET systemic level (apprenticeship and traineeships and VET Investment in Queensland Government)
5	Community Services and Health Sunshine Coast TAFE	VET systemic, service provider and individual worker levels (provider of training under traineeship arrangements)
6	Busy at Work	Service provider and individual worker level (organisation that supports individuals and employers in recruitment and sign up into traineeships)
7	Australian Services Union	Individual worker level
8	Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN)	NDIS systemic level
9	Community Solutions Group	NDIS systemic level / VET systemic level (as a group training organisation, Disability Employment Services, jobactive services and NDIS services provider)
10	NDS Tasmania	NDIS systemic level

Field work interviews

Number of people	Person and/or organisation	Stakeholder categorisation/perspective
22	Students at TAFE Queensland – Cairns	Individuals
4	Students at TAFE Queensland – Hervey Bay	Individuals
1	School-based trainee – Cairns	Individuals
1	GTO Indigenous trainee – Cairns	Individuals
2	Unqualified support workers – Brisbane	Individuals
3	Parents of children with disability	NDIS participants
1	My Horizon – Brisbane	Service Provider
2	ARC Disability Services – Cairns Region	Service Provider
1	Centacare – Cairns Region	Service Provider
1	Synapse – Cairns Region	Service Provider
1	Good Start to Life – Cairns Region	Service Provider
1	Marlin Coast Neighbourhood Centre – Cairns Region	Service Provider
1	FNQ Allied Health – Cairns Region	Service Provider
1	Apunipina Aboriginal Medical Centre – Cairns Region	Service Provider
1	Homes West – Brisbane	Service Provider
1	YMCA Community Inclusion – Bundaberg	Service Provider
1	Carinbundi – Bundaberg	Service Provider
1	Southern Cross Support Services – Bundaberg	Service Provider
1	Integrated Disability Support Services – Bundaberg	Service Provider
1	Burnett Coast CTC – Kingaroy	Service Provider

Number of people	Person and/or organisation	Stakeholder categorisation/perspective
1	Mamre – Brisbane	Service Provider
1	Arafmi Qld – Ipswich	Service Provider
1	Steps – Bundaberg	Service Provider/Private RTO/ Employment Service Provider
1	Impact Community Services	Service Provider/Private RTO/ Employment Service Provider
2	TAFE Queensland – Cairns	Public RTO
4	TAFE Queensland – Hervey Bay	Public RTO
1	TAFE Queensland – Bundaberg	Public RTO
1	Total Training – Cairns	Private RTO
1	Orion Training and Performance Management – Brisbane	Private RTO
1	East Coast Apprenticeships – Bundaberg	GTO
1	Australian Training Works – Cairns	GTO (Indigenous)
1	Mabel Park State High School	School
1	Busy at Work – Bundaberg	AASN
1	MEGT – Bundaberg	AASN
1	Disability sector policy consultant – Cairns	Other
1	WorkAbility – Bundaberg	Other
1	WorkAbility – Cairns	Other
1	Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships	Other
3	Skilling Queenslanders for Work	Other

Attachment E: Factors that might increase the likelihood of taking on a trainee

Service providers were asked to allocate a limited number of 'votes' to 10 factors according to extent to which it would increase the likelihood of them taking on a new employee under a traineeship.

The 10 factors are listed in rank order according to the number of votes received in the list below.

Factor	% of votes
Financial benefits (including lower wages during the traineeship, government incentives of up to \$4000 and payroll tax rebate of 50%)	30%
The possibility of 'sharing' a trainee with other service providers (e.g. through a group training organisation or an alternative traineeship model)	14%
Training content that is more customised to my organisation	12%
Flexibility in how, where and when the training was delivered by the training organisation (e.g. all training delivered in the workplace, greater use of online training, training delivered in blocks 'off-the-job')	11%
Support with recruiting the 'right' trainee	10%
Special arrangements that allow for indirect supervision of trainees once they have met certain requirements	7%
Mentoring support for you and the trainee during the traineeship	7%
Only needing to provide a minimum of 15 hours of employment per week for the trainee (averaged over each four-week period)	6%
Other	3%
Nothing would make it worthwhile for me to take on a trainee	0%



