

Kirby comes of age: the birth, difficult adolescence, and future prospects of traineeships

Mark Cully

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Dusseldorp Skills Forum

1 Glebe Street,
Glebe NSW 2037
Telephone: +61 2 9571 8347
Fax: +61 2 9571 9703
Email: info@dsf.org.au
Web: www.dsf.org.au

Group Training Australia

GPO Box 7051,
Sydney NSW 2001
Telephone: +61 2 9299 6099
Fax: +61 2 9299 6145
Email: gta@grouptraining.com.au
Web: www.grouptraining.com.au

Mark Cully

National Centre for Vocational Education Research

PO Box 8288,
Station Arcade SA 5000
Telephone: +61 8 8230 8400
Web: www.ncver.edu.au

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Looking back at the Kirby report

Twenty-one years ago, this December just past, the Committee of Inquiry into Labour Market Programs chaired by Peter Kirby submitted its report to the Hon. Ralph Willis, the commissioning Minister. Of its 86 recommendations, the Kirby report is most renowned for recommendation 18 (“a system of traineeships combining work and formal education and training should be developed, initially for young people”) and for recommendation 22 which spelt out the suggested defining features of this proposed new system.¹

The Committee members posited themselves a choice: to “undertake a detailed audit of individual [labour market] programs, or [to] focus on the fundamental philosophical, systemic and structural questions that need to be resolved to develop a coherent framework for government intervention in the labour market” (1985: 3). Fortunately, they opted for the sensible course, the latter one.

Their principal concern was with unemployment rates not seen since before World War II, with young people in particular badly affected, and the ad hoc nature of the labour market programs that were in place to remedy the situation. Rather than devise a new remedy they sought a means of avoiding the blight in the first place: by equipping people with the ability to “control and direct their working and non-working lives” (p.6). The centrepiece of this was to be “a new strategy for the initial training of young people” (p.6) because “it is better to help tomorrow’s adults now rather than wait for them to age” (p.6).

The clear referent in devising the traineeship strategy was the apprenticeship system in the trades (and also hospital training, as it then was, for nurses). The features of apprenticeships the Committee were most keen to emulate were combining institutional training with work experience and learning on the job, with a wage discounted for time spent in institutional training. As with apprenticeships, the target group was those leaving school before completing Year 12.

There were also subtle, but important, differences. Adopting the language of dual labour markets, traineeships were envisaged as a “stepping stone’ into primary labour market jobs” (p.114), and, by implication, not an equivalent end point to an apprentice who had achieved the tradesman’s ticket. Reflecting this, the training was “not [to] be specific to particular jobs but broad based and aimed at providing transferable skills” (p.112) across “a family of occupations” (p.115).

It was, nonetheless, to be “a legitimate skill training system” (p.117), not a wage subsidy scheme (while recognising that subsidies might be required in special circumstances, such as people with disabilities) so as to avoid “develop[ing] a system which relies on continuing government subsidies” (p.117).

¹ See Appendix A for the details of these recommended features.

The changing world of work

The Kirby report shows considerable depth of understanding in its analysis, but the Committee members were not blessed with foresight. What they hadn't reckoned on was such profound changes in the world of work. As Kaye Schofield (2000a: 2), one of the members of the Committee, later put it,

As with almost every other facet of economic and social life, the apprenticeship and traineeship system, born and raised in the old economy, is struggling to come to terms with its form and place in the new global economy.

Most of these changes served to undermine (or, at best, had a neutral effect on) the institutional buttresses of apprenticeships and traineeships. Among the more important ones were (Watson et al. 2002):

- a major recession in the early 1990s which bit especially severely on the manufacturing industry (and which diminished the incentive for employers to invest in training);
- the continuation and acceleration of a fragmentation in working arrangements, notably a proliferation in casual and part-time working and self-employment;
- a demise in industry-level collective bargaining, as trade union membership plummeted;
- increasing participation by women in the workforce;
- employment growth concentrated at either end of the skill spectrum.

TABLE 1
Employment growth, by gender and age, 1996-2005

	"Trainee" occupations	Other occupations (Managers, professionals and trades)
	(%)	(%)
MALES		
15-24	8.0	16.2
25-44	4.1	7.1
45 plus	33.1	41.5
TOTAL MALES	13.5	19.8
FEMALES		
15-24	11.9	22.3
25-44	3.4	28.0
45 plus	48.7	87.9
TOTAL FEMALES	17.6	45.2
TOTAL	15.6	27.3

Source
ABS Labour Force Survey, August figures.

NOTES
Trainee occupations are those in Australian Standard Classification of Occupations major groups 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9. Others are those in the remaining major groups (i.e. 1, 2 & 4).

In Table 1 employment growth over the past decade is shown separately for those in target occupations for traineeships – the term “trainee” is used in this paper to mean people engaged under a Contract of Training and employed outside the trades, the professions and management – and for all other occupations.² It shows that employment in the target occupations for traineeships grew at only about half the rate as it did for management, the professions and the trades. The higher growth rate for the latter applied across both sexes and all age groups within them. Employment of women expanded much faster than it did for men, and grew fastest of all for older workers (as employers began to adjust their hiring behaviour in response to the changing demographic profile of the population).

Underlying these changes is the continued evolution of the “knowledge economy”. A knowledge economy is one “in which the generation and the exploitation of knowledge has come to play the predominant part in the creation of wealth. It is not simply about pushing back the frontiers of knowledge; it is also about the more effective use and exploitation of all types of knowledge in all manner of economic activity” (DTI 1998: 2). That this is occurring has been validated by Pappas (1998) who undertook a detailed analysis of the changing occupational composition of employment in Australia over the period 1976 to 1995 and found a rise in the demand for cognitive skills (and also in interactive skills), with a decline in the demand for motor skills. The changing profile in skills sought by employers has implications for the delivery and character of education and training, a topic we return to at the end of this paper.

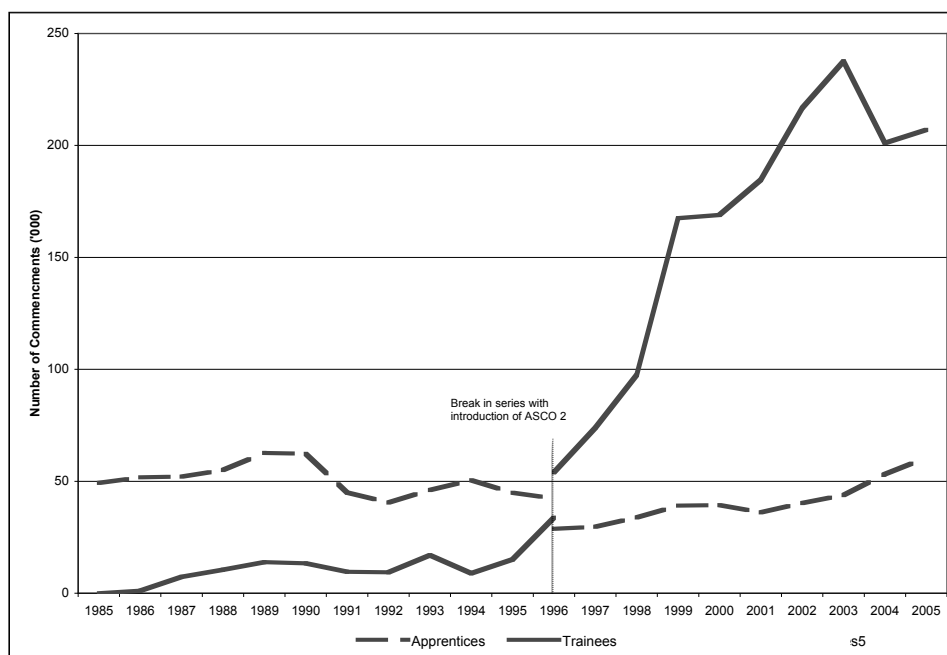
² Management and professional positions are covered by other pathways (e.g. higher education), while for the sake of simplicity all Contracts of Training in the trades are assumed to be apprenticeships, leaving traineeships potentially open to all other occupations.

A faltering start, then a growth spurt

Between 1985 and 1994 traineeships barely registered a blip. Figure 1 shows the annual commencements in traineeships and apprenticeships since 1985. It was not until 1997 that the Kirby target of 75,000 annual commencements was reached, almost a decade late. The growth spurt began in 1994 in response to a series of deliberate institutional design changes to traineeships. Notable among these were the introduction of the National Training Wage in 1994 and the advent of the New Apprenticeship system in 1998 which brought into effect features such as User Choice funding, part-time and school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, and a widening in the scope of eligibility for incentive payments.

From just 9,000 commencements in 1994, traineeships reached a peak of 238,000 in 2003. While the number of trainees increased the number of apprentices fell somewhat before recovering in recent times to levels seen in the early 1990s.³ This enormous growth in traineeship commencements warrants some investigation.

FIGURE 1
Apprentice and trainee commencements, 1985-2005



Sources
1985-1996, NCVER (2001); 1996-2005, NCVER Contracts of Training Collection

NOTES
1985-1996, year ending June figures. See NCVER (2001) for definitions.
1996-2005, year ending September figures. See Appendix B for definitions of apprentices and trainees.

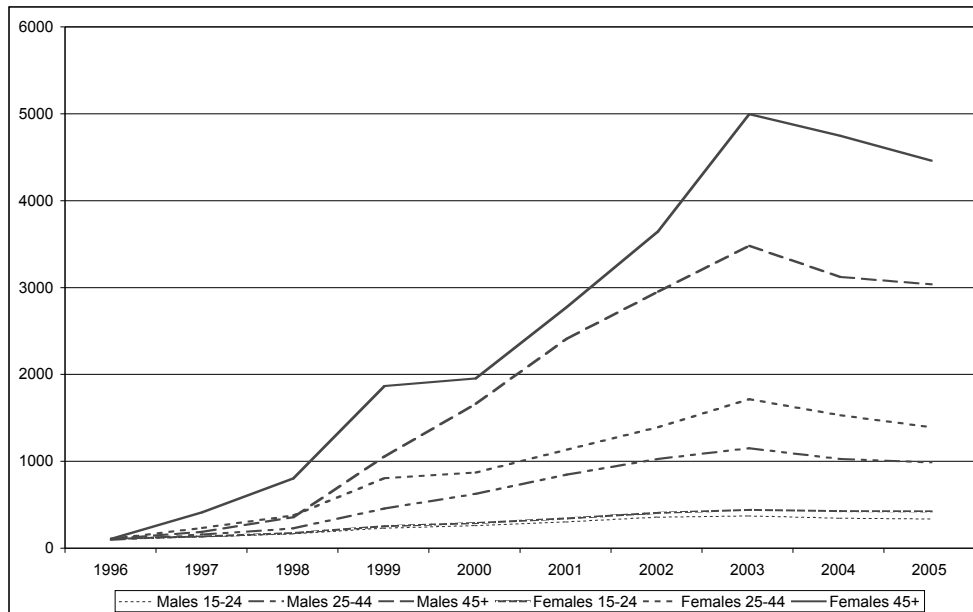
³ The break in series shown in Figure 1 coincides with the introduction of the second edition of the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations. Prior to 1996, apprentice statistics are proxied through the occupational group of tradespersons. From 1996 onwards, the start of NCVER's unit record collection on Contracts of Training, a more refined definition of "traditional" apprenticeships is adopted, which takes into account qualification level (Certificate III or higher) and duration (2 years or more). This means that, as defined, some "trainees" would be included in the apprenticeship count prior to 1996.

Figure 2 shows the relative rise in traineeships among different gender by age groups since 1996.⁴ As can be seen, relative growth was most marked among those aged 45 years or more, and was lowest for those aged 15-24 years. Three out of four commencing trainees were aged 15-24 years in 1996, a proportion which declined each year to 2002, and is now stable at around two in five. It is important to recognise that this is not because the number of young trainees fell – in fact, they more than tripled – but is due to trainees being taken up by groups to whom they had not previously been available. Outside the young, many of the newly commencing trainees were people who added a Contract of Training to their pre-existing contract of employment, hence the label “existing worker”. Precisely how many is not known, at least until 2002, when this information was first collected. Since 2002, the proportion of commencing trainees who are existing workers has been steady at around one in three.

In Appendix B, the first two tables contain the results from a rudimentary shift-share analysis which compares the projected number of trainees in 2005 (based on occupation by gender by age shares in 1996) with the actual numbers. This shows how much of the rise in traineeships can be attributed to general employment growth, or changes in the composition of employment across different occupations by gender by age groups, or increases in the incidence of traineeships within a given occupation by gender by age group. It enables us to pinpoint those areas of the labour market where traineeships carved out new territory.

FIGURE 2

Growth in traineeships, by gender and age, 1996-2005



Source
NCVER Contracts of Training Collection, collection #46.

NOTES
Derived from in-training as at end September figures. 1996 value indexed to 100. Excludes trainees in managerial, professional and trades occupations.

⁴ For reasons of data availability the analysis dates from 1996.

The latter effect is overwhelmingly the predominant one. Allowing for employment growth between 1996 and 2005 we would have expected traineeships to number around 38,800, up from 33,500 in 1996. Taking account of changes in the composition of employment, but holding 1996 training rates constant, the expected number is 37,500. The actual number in 2005 was 227,300.

There are only a handful of occupations where the projected numbers in 2005 are in line with the actual numbers (see Table B1 for details): science and engineering associate professionals, other associate professionals, and elementary clerks. In all other occupations the actual number considerably exceeds the projected number.

How did this remarkable change come about? Saunders (2001: 12) observes, tartly, that the “sea-change in traineeships does not appear to have been anticipated widely”, and goes on to note the limited amount of research into the issue. Toner et al. (2001) identify seven potential factors, although there is little supporting evidence either for or against. The 2004 Review of New Apprenticeships undertaken by the Department of Education, Science and Training also speculates as to causes, including the role of incentive payments, finding somewhat higher growth rates for target groups with enhanced incentive payments.

A 1997 report by the Centre for Labour Market Research for the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs set out to estimate the impact that financial incentives may have had in inducing employers to hire apprentices and trainees. The analysis was inconclusive, in part because of the difficulty in modelling the many changes in eligibility requirements for incentive payments. At the end of their report, the authors confess that “by and large, the way in which recruitment decisions are made for apprentices and trainees remains a mystery” (p.94). What is clear, however, is that the overall cost to employers of hiring and training trainees is significantly reduced through incentive payments, the ability to pay a training wage below the minimum wage, and access to User Choice funds.⁵

It was perhaps inevitable that this very rapid growth would give rise to attendant problems. In a series of reviews of three jurisdictional systems conducted in the late 1990s, Kaye Schofield assessed the fractures, summarising them in a conference paper (2000b). Her main concern was the potential for a dilution in the quality of training, on which there was mixed evidence. Most employers, and trainees also, pronounced themselves satisfied with the delivery of training, and User Choice funding had promoted flexibility, responsiveness and innovation. On the other hand, non-completion rates were high, and quality assurance processes in place were not adequate and left the system exposed to risk. Her longer-term concern was the adaptability of traineeships to changing skill requirements.

⁵ The combination of the training wage and incentive payment can represent a substantial implicit wage subsidy to the employer (e.g. for a full-time adult trainee undertaking a Certificate III in Retail Operations, the annual wage cost to the employer is \$18,220 (made up of \$22,620 minus the \$4,400 incentive payment) compared with \$28,260 for an employee not undertaking a traineeship.

Skills at work

Toner (2001) questioned the practice adopted by NCVER in the late 1990s of grouping together apprentices and trainees in its statistical publications under the New Apprenticeships umbrella,⁶ which he claimed gave a false impression of skill formation across different skill levels. By excluding apprentices from the New Apprenticeships count and tradespersons from the employed persons count, Toner showed that traineeships were skewed towards lower skilled jobs.

His instinct was right but Toner's comparison was itself biased. As we have seen, the traineeship program as suggested by its original proponents was never intended to develop higher order skills. Adopting the same logic as Toner applied in excluding tradespersons, Figure 3 compares the in-work skill level of employed persons and of trainees excluding managers and professionals as well as tradespersons from both groups. Over four in five trainees (84%) are engaged at the two lowest skill levels, compared with 73% of employed persons, an 11 percentage point difference. Toner reports figures of 88% and 53% respectively, a 35 percentage point difference. The safest conclusion to draw from this exercise is that the skill level at which trainees are engaged is a mirror of the labour market for which it is supplying skills.

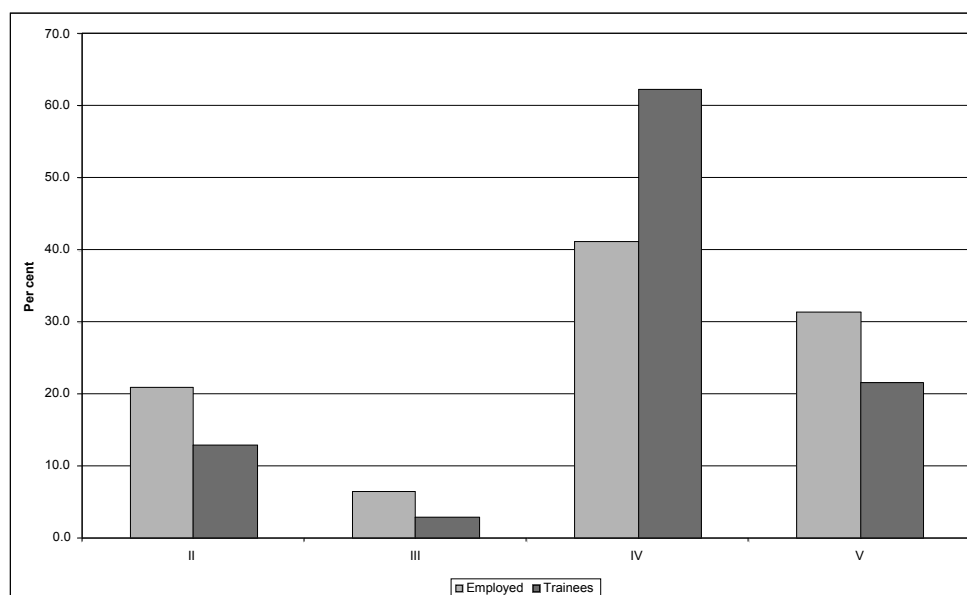
The ongoing issue for discussion is how well the skill level of the training aligns with the in-work skill level. Over time the skill level in training profile has shifted upwards, markedly. For example, four in five traineeship completions in 1996 were at Certificate I and II, whereas in 2005 three in four were at Certificate III or higher. Table 2 lists the most common traineeship courses (and Appendix Table B8 details this by occupation). They are most common in fields such as retail, warehousing and storage, hospitality, process manufacturing, road transport and cleaning. It is also most common for the traineeships to be at Certificate III level.

The assignment of trainees to an in-work skill level (as shown in Figure 3) is based on the occupation in which they are undertaking their training. Each occupation is allocated to one of five skill levels, using a schema developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics which has the Australian Qualifications Framework as its foundation. For example, the occupations which make up skill level IV (where 63% of trainees are employed) are deemed to be those where the entry level for employment is commensurate with a Certificate II qualification or equivalent experience – but most newly commencing trainees are undertaking a Certificate III qualification.

The in-work skill level is not necessarily a true measure of what level of skill is required by individuals in work, and it doubtless can vary significantly across employers within an industry for what is ostensibly the same job. However, the degree of discordance between the in-work skill level and the skill level in training of commencing trainees is too marked for it to be waived away with this argument.

⁶ NCVER re-instituted publication of statistics on "traditional" apprentices in 2003, and has also published a separate report on "Trends in Traditional Apprenticeships" (Brooks 2004).

FIGURE 3
In-work skill level of employed persons and trainees, 2005



Sources
NCVER Contracts of Training Collection, ABS Labour Force Survey

NOTES

Employed persons and trainees exclude managers, professionals and tradespersons.

In-work skill level is defined as per the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ABS Cat. No. 1221.0). There are five skill levels ranging from the highest (group I, managers and professionals) through to the lowest (group 5, labourers and elementary clerical, sales and service).

One possible explanation for the discordance is that the shift in training content towards higher-level qualifications is a response to growing job complexity, and is therefore a source of productivity improvement. As noted earlier, much of the employment growth over the past two decades has been in high skill jobs. A range of Certificate IV qualifications delivered as traineeships, in fields such as managing supervisors, child care and aged care, have evolved as a means of developing the necessary skills for these associate professional jobs (see Table B8). This change in the composition of employment needs to be distinguished from the question of whether particular jobs have become more complex, a point on which it is difficult to find compelling evidence for or against. A sceptic might observe, however, that becoming, say, a cleaner is unlikely to have become such a complex undertaking in recent times that it now requires completion of a Certificate III as the benchmark qualification.

At heart this is an issue about the integrity of the Australian Qualifications Framework, and whether it can sustain equivalence in employment-based training qualifications for the trades and outside of the trades. Most of the traineeships undertaken in lower skill jobs are of a duration shorter than two years. While there is a good deal of baggage around the standard four year duration of an indentured apprenticeship, even a fast-track system is not going to match the rapidity with which traineeships can be completed. Similarly, the wages paid on completion of a traditional apprenticeship tend to outweigh, by some margin, the earnings of those completing a Certificate III in the lower skilled occupations. From both an inputs and an outcomes perspective, therefore, the equivalence test is not met.

TABLE 2
Top 20 traineeship commencements, by course, 2005

Training package and qualification level		No. of trainees (000s)
WRR20102	Certificate II in Retail Operations	15.4
BSB41001/4	Certificate IV in Business (Frontline Management)	10.8
WRR30202	Certificate III in Retail Operations	10.7
TDT30102	Certificate III in Transport and Distribution (Warehousing and Storage)	10.0
THH33002	Certificate III in Hospitality (Operations)	9.8
PMB30401	Certificate III in Process Manufacturing	8.0
TDT30202	Certificate III in Transport and Distribution (Road Transport)	7.6
BSB30201	Certificate III in Business Administration	7.5
MTM20100	Certificate II in Meat Processing (Abattoirs)	7.0
ICT30102	Certificate III in Customer Contact	5.7
WRR30102	Certificate III in Retail Supervision	5.7
THH21802	Certificate II in Hospitality (Operations)	4.2
BSB30101	Certificate III in Business	4.1
CHC30402	Certificate III in Children's Services	4.1
PRM30104	Certificate III in Asset Maintenance (Cleaning Operations)	3.9
CHC30102	Certificate III in Aged Care Work	3.9
BSB20101	Certificate II in Business	3.5
FNB30199	Certificate III in Financial Services	2.2
ICT40102	Certificate IV in Customer Contact	2.0
FD30103	Certificate III in Food Processing	1.8

Source
NCVER Contracts of Training Collection, collection #46

On the links between training, job complexity and productivity improvements, the jury is out. There is a respectable body of research evidence which supports a positive association between skill formation and productivity. This evidence tends to be of a highly aggregated kind, such as examining changes in the overall educational attainment of the population and productivity improvements. The evidence in respect of traineeships is scant. In its evaluation of New Apprenticeships, the Department of Education, Science and Training (2004) could offer only a correlation between those industries which had experienced strong growth in commencements and the largest increases in productivity during the 1990s.

Employers and traineeships

Over time, a vast institutional apparatus of industry bodies, training packages and resource developers, New Apprenticeship Centres and accreditation authorities has developed to support the functioning of the system. So too has a quasi-market for the delivery of training services, with the creation of many new training providers, brokers and group training organisations. That market has a number of virtues – choice, flexibility, diversity and responsiveness – which are primarily geared towards meeting employer needs.

Large employers in particular have been able to reconfigure the organisation of work in their business to avail themselves of the supporting elements of traineeships (i.e. traineeship wage rates, Commonwealth incentive payments, and User Choice funds for those who are registered training organisations). In Table 3, the concentration of traineeships among large employers is investigated. Results are presented separately for each State and Territory (as there is not uniform reporting of employer identification numbers across jurisdictions).

In New South Wales the top ten employers of trainees accounted for 5,200 trainees or 7% of all trainees in that State. Other than New South Wales and Victoria, the top ten employers in the remaining six jurisdictions accounted for at least one in eight of all trainees in-training as at September 2005, and in the Northern Territory made up two in five of all trainees. Most of these employers are enterprise registered training organisations.

As enterprise registered training organisations, the employer is able to deliver the training themselves and, if they so choose, opt for a predominantly on-the-job mode of training.⁷ The resultant qualification is nationally recognised, but the degree of organisational specificity in the training must mitigate against its value to other employers (and also to the trainee).

There are reasonable grounds, therefore, to mount an argument that the chief beneficiaries of traineeships, as they have evolved since the mid-1990s, have been employers. A system which is attuned to the needs of employers and meets their skill requirements is, of course, a *raison d'être* of vocational education and training. The important public policy question is to what extent the success of the evolution of traineeships in meeting employer needs is conditional upon the level of public investment made in it.

In 2004-05, the Australian government spent \$705.1 million in administering New Apprenticeships (Department of Education, Science and Training 2004-05 Annual Report), of which around three-quarters is likely to have been spent on employer incentive payments.⁸ Some State and Territory governments also make available incentive payments, but the full extent of these is not known.

⁷ The extent of on-the-job traineeships is unknown because the data is not required to be reported as part of the national Contracts of Training collection maintained by NCVET.

⁸ In 2003-04, incentive payments comprised \$510.0 million (Department of Education Science and Training 2004, Appendix 6) out of a total of \$674.6 million spent on New Apprenticeships (Department of Education, Science and Training 2003-04 Annual Report). There is, naturally, a high correspondence between course commencements (see Table 2) and the amount of incentive payments with 13 traineeship courses each accounting for at least \$10 million in incentive payments in 2004 (Senate Hansard, Questions on Notice 1079, 6 October 2005).

TABLE 3
Top 10 employers of trainees, by State and Territory, 2005

	No. of trainees (000s)	Proportion of total trainees (%)
New South Wales	5.2	6.8
Victoria	4.0	5.2
Queensland	6.0	13.4
Western Australia	3.7	15.6
South Australia	2.4	16.8
Tasmania	1.4	16.5
Northern Territory	0.7	38.9
Australian Capital Territory	0.7	17.5

Source
NCVER Contracts of Training Collection, collection #46

A more important contribution of these governments is funding of private registered training organisations, including enterprises, under User Choice arrangements. In 2004, State and Territory governments collectively spent \$610.3 million in User Choice funding (Report on Government Services 2006, Table 4A.6) of which around half is likely to have gone to private registered training organisations.⁹

Taking all of this into account, it is likely that a total sum of at least \$750 million was paid by governments directly to employers in 2004 to either hire or train apprentices and trainees.

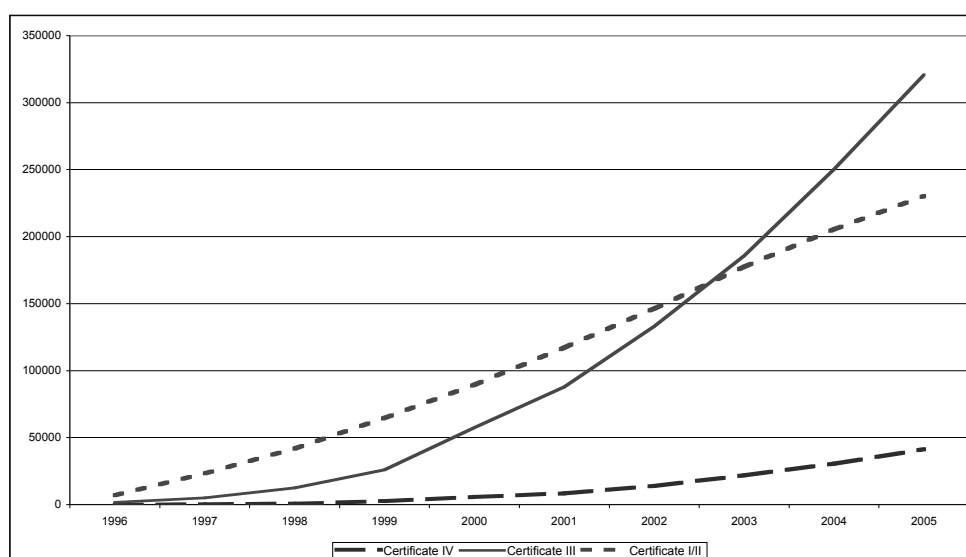
To the extent that employers are the prime beneficiaries, it represents a departure from the original goals in the formulation of traineeships, where the focus was on creating opportunity for young people at risk of falling by the wayside. This should not be taken to imply that traineeships are without value to the trainees themselves.

⁹ State and Territory governments reported that User Choice funding accounted for 87% of "contestable" funding in 2004, and 49% of this funding went to non-TAFE providers (Report on Government Services 2006, Tables 4A.5 and 4A.6). The amount of User Choice funding allocated to non-TAFE providers is not reported, but lies somewhere between \$250.8 million and \$342.9 million. There is also no breakdown of the dispersion of the funding by different types of non-TAFE providers.

Trainees and their outcomes

Cumulatively, around 1.7 million Australians have been part of the traineeship experience since their introduction in 1985, with over 650,000 completing a traineeship in that time.¹⁰ Figure 4 shows the cumulative number of completed traineeships since 1996 by qualification level. This very clearly illustrates the changing profile of level of qualification completed, with Certificate IIIs coming into the fore from 1999 onwards and, as of 2005, accounting for two in three of all completed traineeships, with a further one in ten at Certificate IV. The number of completions since 1996 at Certificate III exceeds the number at Certificate I or II by around 90,000, with the cross-over period occurring in around 2003.¹¹

FIGURE 4
Cumulative number of completed traineeships, by qualification level, 1996 to 2005



Source
NCVER Contracts of Training Collection, collection #46.

NOTES
Year ending September figures. Excludes trainees in managerial, professional and trades occupations.

An important characteristic of trainees has been that a very high proportion of them have no prior non-school qualifications. Among those commencing in the year ending September 2005, three in four have no non-school qualifications, against an overall workforce proportion of one in two. This has, however, fallen steadily since 1996 when 97% of commencing trainees had no non-school qualification. This, it must be noted, is not due to the older age profile of trainees (i.e. older trainees are no more likely to have non-school qualifications than younger trainees, see Table B7). Rather, it appears to be a result of the population-wide increase in educational participation and attainment

¹⁰ Allowing for a one-year lag between commencements and completions, this implies an overall completion rate of no more than 47%.

¹¹ As most of the pre-1996 completions would have been at the lower level of Certificates I and II, the cross-over point over the life span of traineeships may be somewhat later.

over the past decade combined with changes in employers' selection of trainees towards more highly qualified applicants.

There is relatively little information on the experience of trainees after they complete (or fail to complete) their training. NCVET conducts an annual destination survey of vocational education and training students, but this is not well suited for monitoring the outcomes of trainees.¹² Cully and Curtain (2001) report the results of two outcomes surveys, one of completing trainees, the other of non-completing apprentices and trainees. They find high employment rates for former trainees one year after stopping training – over four in five employed, mostly in full-time work – and remark that “the real testament of the system is the success of the non-completing group in finding ongoing work” (p.210).

The Department of Education, Science and Training (2004) also report findings from a survey of former New Apprentices which includes a table showing employment outcomes for traditional apprentices compared with other New Apprentices. Taking the latter to be trainees, employment rates one year after stopping training are again found to be high, at 93% for those who completed and 81% for those who cancelled or withdrew.

Cross-sectional studies on educational attainment tend to show that individuals with a Certificate III qualification or above as their highest educational attainment do better on a variety of measures – employment, full-time employment, earnings – than those who have no non-school qualifications (Ryan 2002, Cully 2005). It is generally not possible in such studies to distinguish outcomes between those who attained a Certificate III through a traineeship from those who undertook a trade apprenticeship or did wholly institutional-based training. Outcomes are less positive for those with lower level vocational certificates as their highest educational attainment (Stanwick 2005), although again here it is difficult to distinguish between qualifications attained through traineeships and those attained through institutional-based training. Dockery et al. (2005), in an econometric analysis of the Longitudinal Survey of Australian Youth, find that those who commenced a traineeship upon leaving school in the second half of the 1990s were more likely to be employed and to have somewhat higher earnings at age 21 than those who left school without going on to any further study.

¹² It relies on self-identification of trainees, is not designed to be a representative sample of trainees, does not distinguish between trainees who completed their qualification and those who cancelled or withdrew, and may capture some trainees at a point where they have not fulfilled all of the requirements to be awarded a qualification.

Traineeships as a youth pathway

The outcomes reported above are, on the whole, positive, but they apply in an economic environment very different from that which existed in 1985: an unemployment rate currently hovering near 5% against one then above 8%. They are also set in an environment where the opportunities and prospects for young people are quite different to what they were in 1985. It is now far more common for young people to complete twelve years of schooling, for the transition from school to work to be more drawn out, and for that transition to be one where there are many different pathways from which to choose.

In Figure 2 we showed the relative growth in traineeship commencements across different age by gender groups. As a result of the very rapid growth in traineeships among older workers, the share of 15-19 year olds in total commencements fell from 70% in 1996 to 27% in 2005. Traineeships remain, however, a very significant pathway for young people, with 51,500 teenage commencements (excluding school-based New Apprenticeships) in 2005, representing 12% of all 15-19 year olds not in full-time education, and 16% of those employed and not in full-time education.

There has been a steady drift upwards in the proportion of commencing teenage trainees who have completed Year 12, as shown in Figure 5, with a majority having done so since 2000. In comparison, among teenagers starting an apprenticeship the proportion who had completed Year 12 dropped between 1996 and 2000 before rising again. By 2005, there was a 14 percentage point difference in Year 12 completion for commencing teenage trainees and apprentices compared with a difference of 7 percentage points in 1996. Over roughly the same period the apparent retention rate to Year 12 went up slightly from 72.2% in 1995 to 75.3% in 2005 (ABS Cat. No. 4221.0). This suggests employers have become somewhat more selective over time when hiring young trainees.

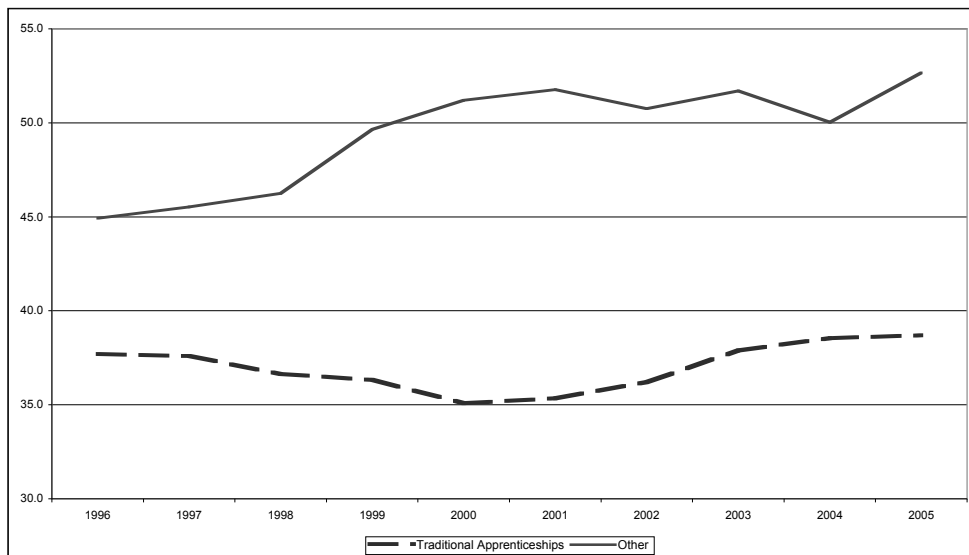
The study by Dockery et al. (2005) examined the characteristics of young trainees compared with other groups of young people. They find that those commencing a traineeship are distinct from those who finished Year 12 and from those who left school in Year 10.¹³ The main differences are that trainees fall between both groups in “natural ability” (as measured by standardised test scores in reading and mathematics), in the proportion whose father and mother are employed in higher skilled jobs, and in the proportion whose father and mother have a degree or diploma. The group whom teenage trainees most closely resemble is teenage apprentices. It would seem from this that traineeships are catering for a distinct niche of young people. It is worth noting, however, that almost all of the trainees examined in the Dockery et al. study commenced between 1997 and 1999, and it may be that a study of teenage trainees commencing in 2005 (where a clear majority had completed Year 12) would yield different results.

¹³ The comparison is not mutually exclusive, i.e. trainees are included in the group who completed Year 12 and who left school in Year 10.

It is also the case that young people whose predestination does not incline them towards higher education now have more options open to them than they did in the second half of the 1990s. In 2004, there were 211,900 senior secondary school students – more than half the total – who were enrolled in one or more subjects delivered under the auspices of VET-in-Schools. Victoria has introduced a Certificate of Applied Learning as an alternative end-of-schooling qualification to the Certificate of Education, one which is designed to foster “employability” skills and a ready transition to work. Finally, it is now possible to commence a traineeship or apprenticeship while at school. Take-up of these School-based New Apprenticeships is growing rapidly, with 15,300 commencements in 2005.

FIGURE 5

Proportion of commencing teenage apprentices and trainees who have completed Year 12 schooling, 1996 to 2005



Source
NCVER Contracts of Training Collection, collection #46.

NOTES
Year ending September figures. Excludes school-based New Apprentices.
A small number of apprentices and trainees of unknown schooling level have not been included in the calculations.

Despite the variety of options now available to young people, and the much more favourable economic environment, the problem of a large tranche of disengaged youth remains. For many years the Dusseldorp Skills Forum has produced an annual publication, *How Young People are Faring*, which reports a number of risk indicators. One of these, the percentage of 15-19 year olds who are neither in full-time study nor in full-time work, has proved impervious to change, stuck at around 15% since 1999. In raw terms that amounts to 208,400 people in 2005, higher than any other year since 1994 when it was 217,400.

Conclusion

Since their birth in 1985, traineeships have evolved in ways quite different from that envisaged by the Committee of Inquiry into Labour Market Programs. The world never stays still, and it would be unreasonable to hold the current model of traineeships to account because they have not held to the original concept. It is, however, worth reflecting on the differences so that it is quite clear how much traineeships have been stretched and changed, and to consider whether they are still right for the time.

There are three main points of departure. First, the original target group for traineeships – young, pre-Year 12 school leavers – now account for only one in eight of all newly commencing trainees. That group was targeted because they faced the greatest risk of unemployment, and the intent of equipping them with skills was that it would lower the chances of this occurring. As we have seen, most newly commencing trainees are no longer young, one in four of them already hold a non-school qualification, and one in three of them have been with their employer for some time before commencing. While some residual elements of traineeships favouring groups at risk remain (e.g. special incentive payments for older workers who have been made redundant), it can no longer be considered to be a program which is targeted at individuals at risk of failing in the labour market.

Second, traineeships have moved away from a model of general, transferable skills that might serve a family of occupations and be a stepping stone to higher skilled jobs, towards a model which is more closely married with a given occupation and where completion is an end-point. The two main developments that have contributed to this have been the advent of training packages, which have a high degree of industry and occupational specificity, and the ability of employers to customise delivery of the training, including through predominantly on-the-job training. This change to the content of traineeships has meant that they have come to more closely resemble apprenticeships. This is a significant shift, as it makes the demand for labour the primary driver, whereas the Kirby report hoped, with more than a dash of faith, to jemmy up demand through raising the skill profile of the workforce.

The final point of departure is the marked shift towards higher level qualifications. Traineeships were initially offered at Certificate I and II, and were broadened to encompass higher level qualifications from 1994. Lower level qualifications now account for only one in four traineeships that are completed. In part this is a response again to labour demand, particularly the advent of qualifications to develop higher order service and technical skills for associate professional jobs in areas such as health care, welfare, financial services and frontline management. It is not clear, however, what labour market purpose is served by structuring traineeships as Certificate III qualifications for many lower level jobs. On the face of it, these appear to be more an educational product than a spur to higher productivity.

Since 1985 education and training has come to occupy a much more prominent role in Australian affairs, something which might gladden the heart of Peter Kirby and his fellow committee members. The number of Australians in the workforce with a tertiary qualification has risen from two in five to more than half. Participation in post-school education and training is at an all-time high. Traineeships have played a role in this transformation, but in truth a less important role than envisaged. The economic and labour market circumstances which confronted the committee have

also altered substantially. The blight of unemployment is at its lowest rate since the mid-1970s. The proportion of Australians working in high skilled jobs is greater than at any point in our history. Neither of these outcomes has much to do with traineeships.

By dint of their adaptiveness, traineeships now have a hazy purpose. They have not yet become established as the primary pathway for developing skills for technical and associate professional jobs. As this is a likely area of future job growth a considered skill formation strategy may be required. Traineeships no longer serve a distributional goal of providing jobs for disadvantaged groups. Moreover, the magnitude of youth unemployment is likely to lessen in coming years: the demographic dice have been cast and the age profile of the Australian workforce will shift upwards rapidly. Irrespective of the age structure, there is an ongoing need for workforce development, and traineeships play a valuable role here, albeit as one of a set of delivery modes. The time has come for a reformulation of the purpose of traineeships, in conjunction with a consideration of the role that government ought to play in funding workforce development.

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Appendix A: Proposed features of traineeship system

The new traineeship system should have the following basic features:

- i. formal off-the-job education and training complemented by work in a related occupation;
- ii. the target group initially should be those aged 16 and 17 who have left school before completing year 12 and there should be equal access for females and males;
- iii. traineeships should be of a minimum of one year's duration with a minimum of 13 weeks off-the-job training covering broad based skills relating to families of occupations. The on-the-job training should be flexible in content, duration and attendance patterns;
- iv. trainees should be contracted to individual employers or State regulated group training schemes;
- v. income support should be provided through appropriately negotiated wages which take into account the value of the training to the trainee, the trainee's productivity and other relevant factors;
- vi. there should be contracts of training, administered by the State training authorities;
- vii. training arrangements and conditions should be consistent across States and Territories;
- viii. the Commonwealth should lead and co-ordinate the development of the traineeship system;
- ix. TAFE should be the predominant provider of the off-the-job component, but industry and private organisations should be encouraged to participate in this training;
- x. the program should be appropriately accredited and provide avenues to further accredited education, training and employment;
- xi. in 1985 there should be a national conference on the proposal, followed by a White Paper and legislation and pilot programs;
- xii. the target should be at least 75 000 traineeship places by the end of 1988; and
- xiii. an appropriate recruitment incentive in the form of a wage subsidy should be introduced to ensure that especially disadvantaged young people are able to participate in the system.

Appendix B: Data tables

The data tables contained in this appendix are drawn from three main sources.

1. ABS Labour Force Survey (Cat. No. 6291.0.55.001, data cube EM1)
 - August estimates of employed persons by sub-major occupational group, age and gender.
 - Where occupations were not able to be assigned to a sub-major occupational group, they have been pro-rated based on the distribution within the relevant major occupational group.
2. ABS Survey of Education and Work (unpublished data purchased from the ABS)
 - May 2005 estimates of highest non-school educational attainment by sub-major occupational group.
3. NCVER Contracts of Training Collection (based on collection #46)
 - September quarter data is used to produce in-training figures (end quarter) and commencement and completion figures (year ending).
 - Figures are actual counts up to September 2004 for commencements and completions and up to September 2003 for in-training. Subsequent figures are estimated as per NCVER's estimation methodology (see <http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistics/aats/quarter/estimation2004.pdf>).
 - Where occupations were not able to be assigned to a sub-major occupational group, they have been pro-rated based on the distribution within the relevant major occupational group.
 - The measure of trainee is based, in the absence of any standardised national definition, on a statistical proxy. A trainee is anyone undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship outside of the trades plus anyone undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship in the trades but below AQF III level or of a duration shorter than two years (full-time, or eight years part-time).

TABLE B1
Shift-share analysis of traineeship growth, by occupation

Occupation	Projected trainee numbers in September 2005		Actual numbers in September 2005
	(000s)	(000s)	(000s)
	Scenario A	Scenario B	
31 Science, Engineering & Related Associate Professionals	1.50	1.13	1.55
32 Business and Administration Associate Professionals	0.96	1.80	15.53
33 Managing Supervisors (Sales and Service)	0.07	0.08	9.36
34 Health and Welfare Associate Professionals	0.22	0.13	1.09
39 Other Associate Professionals	1.04	1.29	1.78
51 Secretaries and Personal Assistants	0.00	0.00	0.56
59 Other Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	0.31	0.32	6.07
61 Intermediate Clerical Workers	9.94	8.22	27.61
62 Intermediate Sales and Related Workers	5.93	6.38	31.42
63 Intermediate Service Workers	2.97	3.68	36.87
71 Intermediate Plant Operators	0.31	0.26	4.31
72 Intermediate Machine Operators	0.20	0.08	12.52
73 Road and Rail Transport Drivers	0.32	0.27	12.58
79 Other Intermediate Production and Transport Workers	1.20	1.16	16.77
81 Elementary Clerks	0.77	0.51	0.87
82 Elementary Sales Workers	6.32	6.73	13.93
83 Elementary Service Workers	0.06	0.06	7.26
91 Cleaners	0.10	0.08	6.46
92 Factory Labourers	3.57	2.85	10.65
99 Other Labourers and Related Workers	2.95	2.43	10.12
TOTAL	38.77	37.47	227.33

Sources
NCVER Contracts of Training Collection, ABS Labour Force Survey

NOTES

Scenario A: Constant employment growth. Derived by multiplying trainee numbers in 1996 for each occupation by total employment growth (for "trainee" occupations).
Scenario B: Employment growth allowing for occupational, gender and age compositional changes. Derived by multiplying employment in trainee occupations in 2005 for each gender and age group by the 1996 training rate for the same group.
Total excludes trainees in managerial, professional and trades occupations.

TABLE B2
Shift-share analysis of traineeship growth, by gender and age

Occupation	Projected trainee numbers in September 2005		Actual numbers in September 2005
	(000s)	(000s)	(000s)
	Scenario A	Scenario B	
MALES			
15-24	13.5	13.5	39.9
25-44	5.9	5.1	50.1
45 plus	0.9	1.0	22.5
TOTAL MALES	20.3	19.6	112.5
FEMALES			
15-24	14.6	13.9	52.9
25-44	3.3	3.1	39.7
45 plus	0.6	0.9	22.0
TOTAL FEMALES	18.5	17.9	114.8
TOTAL	38.8	37.5	227.3

Sources
NCVER Contracts of Training Collection, ABS Labour Force Survey

NOTES
Scenario A: Constant employment growth. Derived by multiplying trainee numbers in 1996 for each occupation by total employment growth (for "trainee" occupations).
Scenario B: Employment growth allowing for occupational, gender and age compositional changes. Derived by multiplying employment in trainee occupations in 2005 for each gender and age group by the 1996 training rate for the same group.
Total excludes trainees in managerial, professional and trades occupations.

TABLE B3

Proportion of employed persons with VET qualifications, by occupation, 2005

Occupation	Diploma or advanced diploma	Certificate level III or IV	Certificate level I or II	TOTAL
	%	%	%	%
31 Science, Engineering & Related Assoc Professionals	19.9	27.0	6.9	53.8
32 Business and Administration Associate Professionals	13.9	12.8	6.5	33.2
33 Managing Supervisors (Sales and Service)	9.2	19.5	7.3	36.0
34 Health and Welfare Associate Professionals	32.4	27.7	5.8	65.9
39 Other Associate Professionals	23.1	15.3	3.9	42.3
51 Secretaries and Personal Assistants	10.8	10.2	19.9	40.9
59 Other Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	10.1	10.5	9.2	29.8
61 Intermediate Clerical Workers	9.1	11.6	10.1	30.8
62 Intermediate Sales and Related Workers	8.2	15.7	6.2	30.1
63 Intermediate Service Workers	12.5	20.1	7.8	40.4
71 Intermediate Plant Operators	2.1	19.3	4.7	26.1
72 Intermediate Machine Operators	4.5	15.0	5.8	25.3
73 Road and Rail Transport Drivers	3.0	19.1	4.5	26.6
79 Other Intermediate Production & Transport Workers	4.5	14.5	5.9	24.9
81 Elementary Clerks	7.0	11.9	8.1	27.0
82 Elementary Sales Workers	4.7	8.2	6.8	19.7
83 Elementary Service Workers	6.2	15.5	6.8	28.5
91 Cleaners	4.1	12.5	8.0	24.6
92 Factory Labourers	3.5	11.9	5.9	21.3
99 Other Labourers and Related Workers	4.8	13.5	4.7	23.0
TOTAL	8.0	14.9	8.1	31.0

Source

ABS Survey of Education and Work 2005 (unpublished data purchased from the ABS)

NOTES

Educational attainment is the highest non-school qualification based on the Australian Qualifications Framework. In the absence of information about the type of institution awarding the qualification, it is assumed that all Associate diplomas and Diplomas are a vocational education and training qualification. Total is for all employed persons (including managers, professionals and trades occupations).

TABLE B4
Training rate, by occupation and age, 2005

Occupation	15-24	25-44	45 years or more	TOTAL
	%	%	%	%
31 Science, Engineering & Related Assoc Professionals	6.3	0.5	0.2	1.0
32 Business and Administration Associate Professionals	9.5	3.3	2.0	3.3
33 Managing Supervisors (Sales and Service)	4.1	2.7	1.0	2.1
34 Health and Welfare Associate Professionals	4.1	1.4	0.9	1.4
39 Other Associate Professionals	4.8	1.0	0.4	1.6
51 Secretaries and Personal Assistants	1.2	0.2	0.1	0.3
59 Other Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	10.2	2.6	1.7	2.9
61 Intermediate Clerical Workers	9.2	2.3	1.3	3.1
62 Intermediate Sales and Related Workers	91.1	8.7	4.3	18.4
63 Intermediate Service Workers	9.1	5.2	4.0	6.1
71 Intermediate Plant Operators	3.7	2.4	1.7	2.3
72 Intermediate Machine Operators	21.0	20.2	14.8	18.0
73 Road and Rail Transport Drivers	4.6	5.5	3.2	4.3
79 Other Intermediate Production & Transport Workers	5.8	7.5	5.2	6.4
81 Elementary Clerks	2.7	1.1	0.4	1.1
82 Elementary Sales Workers	2.5	1.2	0.5	1.8
83 Elementary Service Workers	5.5	7.2	5.6	6.1
91 Cleaners	2.4	3.3	2.8	2.9
92 Factory Labourers	8.2	4.8	2.5	4.8
99 Other Labourers and Related Workers	4.3	1.8	1.1	2.4
TOTAL	7.0	3.5	2.2	3.8

Sources
NCVER Contracts of Training Collection, ABS Labour Force Survey

NOTES
Training rate derived by expressing trainee numbers for each occupation and age group (as of September 2005) as a proportion of total employment (as of August 2005).
Total excludes trainees in managerial, professional and trades occupations.

TABLE B5

Cumulative number of traineeship completions, by occupation and qualification level, 1996-2005

Occupation	Diploma or advanced diploma (000s)	Cert IV (000s)	Cert III (000s)	Cert I/II (000s)	TOTAL (000s)
31 Science, Engineering & Related Assoc Professionals	0.2	0.6	1.3	3.6	6.2
32 Business and Administration Associate Professionals	0.1	12.8	7.3	2.4	22.6
33 Managing Supervisors (Sales and Service)	0.0	8.4	0.5	0.2	9.2
34 Health and Welfare Associate Professionals	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.0	1.6
39 Other Associate Professionals	0.0	0.2	2.8	1.1	4.1
51 Secretaries and Personal Assistants	0.0	0.7	3.1	0.0	3.8
59 Other Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	0.0	0.3	8.6	0.4	9.4
61 Intermediate Clerical Workers	0.1	7.2	71.6	37.3	116.8
62 Intermediate Sales and Related Workers	0.0	0.3	34.0	46.1	80.3
63 Intermediate Service Workers	0.2	6.6	67.9	21.5	96.3
71 Intermediate Plant Operators	0.0	0.0	6.0	1.1	7.1
72 Intermediate Machine Operators	0.0	0.0	5.8	2.8	8.6
73 Road and Rail Transport Drivers	0.0	0.3	24.4	3.1	27.8
79 Other Intermediate Production & Transport Workers	0.0	0.6	25.5	9.4	35.6
81 Elementary Clerks	0.0	0.7	5.7	4.6	11.1
82 Elementary Sales Workers	0.0	1.3	13.7	36.8	52.0
83 Elementary Service Workers	0.0	0.0	12.3	3.0	15.3
91 Cleaners	0.0	0.3	14.8	4.4	19.5
92 Factory Labourers	0.0	0.0	6.5	29.5	36.2
99 Other Labourers and Related Workers	0.0	0.2	7.9	23.3	31.4
TOTAL	1.0	41.5	320.8	230.5	595.7

Sources
NCVER Contracts of Training Collection

NOTES
Total includes a small number of completions of an unknown qualification level.

TABLE B6

Highest prior educational attainment of commencing trainees, by occupation, 2005

Occupation	Degree or higher	Diploma	Cert III/IV	Cert I/II	No non-school
	%	%	%	%	%
31 Science, Engineering & Related Assoc Professionals	0.7	1.6	8.5	7.1	82.0
32 Business and Administration Associate Professionals	3.7	3.8	19.7	7.4	65.4
33 Managing Supervisors (Sales and Service)	5.6	4.3	19.1	7.4	63.6
34 Health and Welfare Associate Professionals	2.2	3.8	14.0	5.6	74.3
39 Other Associate Professionals	3.8	2.9	10.5	16.9	65.8
51 Secretaries and Personal Assistants	2.9	2.7	51.0	7.0	36.3
59 Other Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	5.0	3.7	10.5	8.3	72.5
61 Intermediate Clerical Workers	3.9	3.0	8.9	13.7	70.6
62 Intermediate Sales and Related Workers	2.1	2.0	5.6	11.4	78.9
63 Intermediate Service Workers	2.3	2.0	7.2	9.4	79.1
71 Intermediate Plant Operators	0.9	1.1	13.2	7.6	77.2
72 Intermediate Machine Operators	1.6	1.5	13.7	4.1	79.1
73 Road and Rail Transport Drivers	4.4	3.3	15.5	5.1	71.7
79 Other Intermediate Production & Transport Workers	1.0	1.6	8.6	7.7	81.1
81 Elementary Clerks	5.9	3.7	8.7	11.1	70.5
82 Elementary Sales Workers	1.1	1.1	4.4	11.2	82.2
83 Elementary Service Workers	4.6	4.3	9.0	20.6	61.5
91 Cleaners	1.5	1.2	5.2	7.2	84.8
92 Factory Labourers	1.3	1.3	7.0	9.6	80.7
99 Other Labourers and Related Workers	0.9	0.7	5.3	9.7	83.3
Total	2.6	2.3	9.3	9.9	75.9

Source

NCVER Contracts of Training Collection

NOTES

A small number of trainees with unknown highest prior educational achievement are excluded from the calculations.

TABLE B7

Highest prior educational attainment of commencing trainees, by gender and age, 2005

Occupation	Degree or higher	Diploma	Cert III/IV	Cert I/II	No non-school
	%	%	%	%	%
MALES					
15-24	1.5	1.5	4.8	12.5	79.7
25-44	4.7	3.5	16.5	6.7	68.6
45 plus	2.1	2.6	16.2	3.8	75.2
TOTAL MALES	2.9	2.5	11.4	8.7	74.4
FEMALES					
15-24	1.4	1.4	6.1	15.1	75.9
25-44	4.5	3.5	10.1	7.2	74.8
45 plus	1.6	1.8	6.7	4.4	85.5
TOTAL FEMALES	2.4	2.1	7.4	11.1	77.0
TOTAL	2.6	2.3	9.3	9.9	75.9

Source
NCVER Contracts of Training Collection

NOTES

A small number of trainees with unknown highest prior educational achievement are excluded from the calculations.

TABLE B8

Top 3 traineeship commencements, by course and occupation, 2005

Occupation and course (training package and qualification level)	No. of trainees
31 Science and engineering associate professionals	
MEM20198 - Certificate II in Engineering - Production	373
HLT42202 - Certificate IV in Health Services (Supervision)	89
MEM30598 - Certificate III in Engineering - Technician	87
32 Business and Administration Associate Professionals	
BSB41004 - Certificate IV in Business (Frontline Management)	5,485
CHC40302 - Certificate IV in Disability Work	1,327
PRD40101 - Certificate IV in Property (Real Estate)	1,150
33 Managing Supervisors (Sales and Service)	
ICT40102 - Certificate IV in Customer Contact	1,910
BSB41001 - Certificate IV in Business (Frontline Management)	1,278
WRR40102 - Certificate IV in Retail Management	1,193
34 Health and Welfare Associate Professionals	
CHC40402 - Certificate IV in Out of School Hours Care	164
CHC41802 - Certificate IV in Community Services (Protective Care)	90
HLT41802 - Certificate IV in Pathology Specimen Collection	66
39 Other Associate Professionals	
SRO30103 - Certificate III in Sport and Recreation	284
SRS20203 - Certificate II in Sport (Career-oriented participation)	152
SRO40103 - Certificate IV in Sport and Recreation	124
51 Secretaries and Personal Assistants	
BSB40201 - Certificate IV in Business Administration	441
59 Other Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	
FNB30199 - Certificate III in Financial Services	1,857
FNS30104 - Certificate III in Financial Services	647
ICT30102 - Certificate III in Customer Contact	630
61 Intermediate Clerical Workers	
BSB30201 - Certificate III in Business Administration	7,385
BSB30101 - Certificate III in Business	4,067
ICT30102 - Certificate III in Customer Contact	3,936
62 Intermediate Sales and Related Workers	
WRR20102 - Certificate II in Retail Operations	9,640
WRR30202 - Certificate III in Retail Operations	8,705
WRR30102 - Certificate III in Retail Supervision	5,006
63 Intermediate Service Workers	
THH33002 - Certificate III in Hospitality (Operations)	9,772
THH21802 - Certificate II in Hospitality (Operations)	4,212
CHC30402 - Certificate III in Children's Services	4,065
71 Intermediate Plant Operators	
BCC30703 - Certificate III in Civil Construction (Road Construction and Maintenance)	442
BCC30603 - Certificate III in Civil Construction (Plant Operations)	440
NWP30101 - Certificate III in Water Industry Operations	321
72 Intermediate Machine Operators	
PMB30401 - Certificate III in Process Manufacturing	8,040
PMB30101 - Certificate III in Plastics	787
LMT30100 - Certificate III in Textile Production	403
73 Road and Rail Transport Drivers	
TDT30202 - Certificate III in Transport and Distribution (Road Transport)	6,029
TDT30402 - Certificate III in Transport and Distribution (Rail Operations)	576
TDT20202 - Certificate II in Transport and Distribution (Road Transport)	422
79 Other Intermediate Production and Transport Workers	
TDT30102 - Certificate III in Transport and Distribution (Warehousing and Storage)	9,955
TDT20102 - Certificate II in Transport and Distribution (Warehousing and Storage)	808
LMF20302 - Certificate II in Furniture Making	226

TABLE B8 (CONT.)

Occupation and course (training package and qualification level)	No. of trainees
81 Elementary Clerks	
ICT30102 - Certificate III in Customer Contact	658
BSB20101 - Certificate II in Business	162
BSB30201 - Certificate III in Business Administration	142
82 Elementary Sales Workers	
WRR20102 - Certificate II in Retail Operations	5,764
WRR30202 - Certificate III in Retail Operations	2,028
WRP20102 - Certificate II in Community Pharmacy	759
83 Elementary Service Workers	
PRS30103 - Certificate III in Security Operations	1,262
PRS30198 - Certificate III in Security (Guarding)	1,134
HLT30902 - Certificate III in Health Support Services (Cleaning Support Services)	780
91 Cleaners	
PRM30104 - Certificate III in Asset Maintenance (Cleaning Operations)	3,942
PRM30198 - Certificate III in Asset Maintenance (Cleaning Operations)	895
PRM20104 - Certificate II in Asset Maintenance (Cleaning Operations)	482
92 Factory Labourers	
MTM20100 - Certificate II in Meat Processing (Abattoirs)	6,994
FD20103 - Certificate II in Food Processing	1,022
MEM20198 - Certificate II in Engineering - Production	850
99 Other Labourers and Related Workers	
TDT30202 - Certificate III in Transport and Distribution (Road Transport)	1,558
RTF20103 - Certificate II in Horticulture	920
AUR21799 - Certificate II in Automotive (Mechanical - Vehicle Servicing)	899

Source

NCVER Contracts of Training Collection, collection #46

Appendix C: Descriptors of competencies in vocational certificates

Certificate I	Certificate II	Certificate III	Certificate IV
Do the Competencies enable an individual with this qualification to:	Do the Competencies enable an individual with this qualification to:	Do the Competencies enable an individual with this qualification to:	Do the Competencies enable an individual with this qualification to:
demonstrate knowledge by recall in a narrow range of areas	demonstrate basic operational knowledge in a moderate range of areas	demonstrate some relevant theoretical knowledge	demonstrate understanding of a broad knowledge base incorporating some theoretical concepts
demonstrate basic practical skills such as the use of relevant tools	apply a defined range of skills	apply a range of well developed skills	
	apply known solutions to a limited range of predictable problems	apply known solutions to a variety of predictable problems	apply solutions to a defined range of unpredictable problems
perform a sequence of routine tasks given clear direction	perform a range of tasks where choice between a limited range of options is required.	perform processes that require a range of well developed skills where some discretion and judgement is required.	identify and apply skill and knowledge areas to a wide variety of contexts with depth in some areas
receive and pass on messages/information	assess and record information from varied sources	interpret available information, using discretion and judgement	identify, analyse and evaluate information from a variety of sources
	take limited responsibility for own outputs in work and learning	take responsibility for own outputs in work and learning	take responsibility for own outputs in relation to specified quality standards
		take limited responsibility for the output of others	take limited responsibility for the quantity and quality of the output of others.

Source
Australian Qualifications Framework Implementation Handbook, 3rd Edition, 2002.

NOTES

Italicised words emphasise distinguishing features of the competencies between qualifications. In order to assist determining the relevant qualification, the most compatible set of features should be selected. Not all features will necessarily apply.