

FINDING THE RIGHT TRAINING PROVIDERS

If you need help finding high quality training providers who can provide the training or workforce development support you want, this is the place to start.

Also, if you've been approached by a training provider and want to figure out whether what they're offering is right for your organisation, Steps 1, 4 and 5 can help.



STEP 1 – WRITE A BRIEF

Write your own brief on what your organisation needs in terms of skills, training and workforce development. Think of it as background information you'll provide to prospective training providers.

Even if you're offered free or subsidised training, a brief will help you assess whether what's on offer will meet your needs and be of value to the organisation.

Be strategic and consider which workforce development challenges and goals you need help to address.

The template on p.55 - [Considering your workforce development needs: A background brief](#) will help you to get started.

Read more about the [potential benefits of training](#) and [how Vocational Education and Training can help](#) with workforce development in the previous section of this guide.

“Be really clear. What do you want out of the training? It's not just getting the qualification. It has to deliver a business result. How will you measure success?”

You have to be able to justify training and articulate ‘this is the benefit.’”

(Disability service provider)

STEP 2 – DO SOME RESEARCH

To find out what support training providers are offering, try some of the following.

Search online

- MySkills (<https://www.myskills.gov.au/>)
This is an Australian Government directory where you can search and compare VET courses and training providers, find contact details, course costs and lengths.
- State and Territory education and training departments each have a list of training providers that can access government training subsidies for particular courses in their jurisdiction.

Ask around. You could talk to:

- other employers in your industry
- people in your industry association
- members of your industry networks
- employees of yours that have done training
- trainers or training provider staff who you already work with.

Visit career expos or industry events.



STEP 3 – CREATE A SHORTLIST AND INTERVIEW

Shortlisting

A training provider’s website can provide useful information, but you might also want to speak to someone about your organisation’s particular needs.

Many training providers have business development people who can answer your questions or find the person who can.

Questions at this point could include:

- What training options are available to meet our needs? (the brief you wrote in Step 2 will help here)
- What costs are involved?
- Can training be delivered online, at our workplace, at a campus, outside of business hours?
- What support will be provided to help our employees (or students) succeed?

“Flexibility’s really important for us. The nature of work in human services is very different from others. We have staff who start at 6.30 in the morning and don’t finish until 7pm or start at 4pm and finish in the morning. We need training providers who can be flexible with the times they deliver, and that’s been a barrier for us.

We had one provider who asked students to attend a zoom class from 10 – 12. That didn’t suit many of them. They [the RTO] did eventually realise and changed the times to outside hours so people could actually attend”

(Disability Service Provider)

Training providers have different strengths and service offerings. Many employers work with several providers to meet their different workforce development requirements. For example, they might work with one to deliver traineeships for new employees and another for training existing employees for more specialised skills.

“You’ve got to interview the RTO to get a feel for them; making sure they understand what our values are and what we’re looking for in our employees. I think it’s just building that connection, really. So we’ve used several RTOs over the years, but at the moment, we’re engaging with probably two or three major ones.”

(Disability service provider)

Interviewing

Once you’ve narrowed down potential training providers, approach them as if interviewing for a job. You may want to visit their facilities and meet training staff.

If you’re planning a significant or long-term investment, why not ask shortlisted training providers to submit and/or present a proposal?

The template on p.56 - [Finding the Right Training Provider: Questions to Ask](#) contains questions you can ask at the shortlisting and interviewing stages.

“I set up a meeting and said, ‘We’re thinking of this training pilot...What can you do?’

Can you deliver any of the training on site? How flexible are they? How far is their reach? I’m in Brisbane, but that doesn’t mean the rest of the organisation is. How many students have they had? I wanted their stats. What qualifications does the trainer have?”

(Aged care provider)



STEP 4 – CONDUCT OTHER CHECKS

As well as your own organisation's due diligence checks, you may want to check some regulatory basics before engaging a training provider.

A search of the national training register (www.training.gov.au) can help you confirm:

- Are they a Registered Training Organisation? And if so for how long?
- What qualifications can they offer?
- Who are they owned and run by?
- Are there any regulatory restrictions imposed on them?

You can find instructions on [how to use the register](#) on p.58 of this guide.

STEP 5 – UNDERSTAND WHAT TO EXPECT FROM TRAINING PROVIDERS

You'll want to work with training providers that are client focused and as responsive as possible to the needs of you and your employees. A training provider should be willing to work with you to get the best outcome, explaining what they can and can't do.

After discussing your desired outcomes together, training providers may offer a range of options, such as:

- accredited or non-accredited training
- whole or part qualifications, perhaps with combinations called skill sets
- potential electives
- Recognition of Prior Learning and credit transfer options.

Expect to work through the benefits and challenges of options before coming to possible solutions together.

Discuss how training will be contextualised so that intended outcomes have meaning and relevance to your workplace. Training that is customised involves a degree of change, a more 'bespoke' approach tailored specifically for your organisation. The greater the customisation, the more time and effort involved, the more you'll need to invest.

To retain the benefits of being a nationally recognised qualification, some things may not be able to be removed. It's possible to add more if needed.

Feel confident to ask for explanations and alternatives. There could be different ways to balance your imperatives. Look for training providers that help you explore options.

“Employers should understand that RTOs have a suite of units of competency they can deliver training for, and they can put those together in a full qualification or a skill set. They can group those units of competency in a meaningful way and deliver training for them.”

(Youth and Community services provider)

Just like the human services sector, the regulatory environment for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) is designed to protect consumers. For example, RTOs are required to provide all learners with written information when they enrol, describing:

- the training, assessment and support services they will provide, including when, where and how the course will be delivered
- rights and obligations, including payment terms and cancellation as well as refund conditions.

VET regulators oversee the many technical aspects of high-quality training and assessment with which RTOs must comply.

