

Length of apprenticeships and traineeships

Most apprenticeships and traineeships in Queensland are competency-based. This means the apprenticeship or traineeship, will be completed when competence is reached, regardless of time served or time remaining.

Information to get you started

What is it?

There are three important terms to remember in regards to the length of an apprenticeship or traineeship:

- nominal term
- competency-based training
- expected durations.

Nominal term

The nominal term of an apprenticeship or traineeship is a period of time during which it is anticipated that the majority of apprentices or trainees can complete their training contract. The nominal term allows for determination of a nominal completion date of a training contract.

The [probationary period](#) of an apprenticeship or traineeship must be included as part of the nominal term.

Nominal terms may be amended for any of the following reasons:

- apprentice or trainee may have previous training contracts in the same trade calling in either Queensland or [interstate](#) and is applying for [time credit or recognition of prior learning](#) to reduce the nominal term
- apprentice or trainee may have successfully completed a [pre-vocational or pre-apprenticeship course](#) which may reduce the nominal term

- apprentice or trainee may amend their training contract mode which will result in a reduction of nominal term (school-based or part-time converted to full-time) or extension of nominal term (full-time converted to part-time) – all parties to the training contract must agree to apply to amend the contract
- apprentice or trainee has not been able to complete all training within the nominal term and is required to [apply to extend the nominal term](#).

Competency-based training

Apprenticeships and traineeships in Queensland were previously time-based, meaning apprentices and trainees were required to serve out the entire time of a training contract (generally four years for apprentices/two years for traineeships).

Most apprenticeships and traineeships are now practised under competency-based training which places emphasis on the workplace application of attained knowledge and skills – not how long is spent or the amount of knowledge acquired in a formal learning environment.

Competency-based training allows apprentices and trainees to move through their apprenticeship or traineeship efficiently while maintaining an emphasis on quality of work.

Once all competencies outlined in a training plan have been achieved, and all parties agree, the apprentice or trainee can complete their

apprenticeship or traineeship before the nominal term ends.

Expected durations

The expected duration applies to apprenticeships only and is the amount of time it is reasonably expected an apprentice can become fully competent and achieve completion of their apprenticeship (this duration may be shorter than or equal to the nominal term). Expected durations can be found on the [Queensland Training Information Service \(QTIS\)](#).

All apprenticeship training contracts commenced or re-commenced after 1 January 2007 will have both an expected duration and nominal term applied. All training plans for these training contracts must indicate the expected duration and all training must be arranged to be completed prior to the expected duration.

Expected durations along with competency-based training have been developed to allow for early completion of the apprenticeship.

Early completion will only occur where full attainment of all competencies outlined in the training plan, have been achieved and all parties agree on this.

Please note that although an apprenticeship may have a shorter expected duration than the nominal term, if an apprentice has achieved all competencies outlined in the training plan (under competency-based training) and all parties agree the apprentice is competent, the training contract can still be completed earlier than the expected duration end date.

Where the apprentice has not achieved competence by the end of the expected duration, a period of time may remain until the end of the nominal term. This period of time will provide a 'safety net' to allow for any outstanding training to occur.

Timeframe

Nominal terms for all existing full-time apprenticeships and traineeships are recorded in the [Queensland Training Information Service \(QTIS\)](#) database.

Nominal terms for part-time and school-based apprenticeships and traineeships are double the full-time arrangements.

Who to contact?

For further information, contact Apprenticeships Info on 1800 210 210.