

# School-based Apprenticeships & Traineeships

The Queensland Government Agenda



TAKE  
a  
JOURNEY  
of  
DISCOVERY



## A message from

# The Premier and the Minister for Education and Training and Minister for the Arts

More than a decade has passed since Queensland's first young school-based apprentices and trainees signed their training contracts.

Back then, school-based apprenticeships and traineeships (SATs) helped young people to complete their schooling and to find jobs at a time when unemployment was at much higher levels than it is today. SATs were predominantly for young people who wanted to enter a trade career after they finished school.

Some of our very first students undertaking SATs became full-time apprentices and then successful tradespeople in occupations experiencing skills shortages in the late 1990s.

As time went on, we found that SATs were not just effective in assisting young people into trades jobs once they completed school. They also provided enormous benefits for young people who went on to further education, training and university.

Young people who had been involved in the SATs program became more motivated at school and developed workplace skills, knowledge, and confidence.

Former Queensland students who participated in SATs can be found across a broad range of trades, in management positions, working in top restaurants and even undertaking Masters studies at Oxford University.

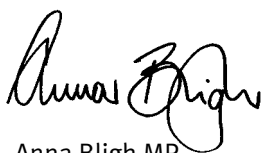
Young people have not been the only ones to benefit from SATs.

In today's booming economic climate, smart employers are recognising the benefits of SATs as a way to build their future workforce and attract the types of young people that they want to have working for them.

Employers have reported the role of SATs in increasing the efficiency of recruitment processes, generating new ideas, improving productivity, and making a contribution to their community.

Our Government recognises the enormous benefits of SATs to our young people and our workforce. That is why we are aiming to double the number of school-based apprentices and trainees in Queensland over the coming years. We have committed an additional \$6.2 million to assist schools to expand the SATs program.

We want SATs working for Queensland – for our young people, for our employers, and our state's future.



Anna Bligh MP  
Premier



Rod Welford MP  
Minister for Education and Training  
Minister for the Arts



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## What are School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SATs)?

SATs allow high school students – typically in Years 11 and 12 – to enter into a contract of employment with an employer and undertake structured training both on and off the job while continuing to be enrolled at school. Students spend some time at school, some time at work, and some time at training.

The students work towards nationally recognised vocational qualifications. A supervising registered training provider such as TAFE or a private training organisation provides the formal training required for the student to complete the qualification.

School-based apprentices and trainees participate in paid employment for at least 48 days each year. At work, they learn skills under the guidance of an employer. School-based apprentices and trainees are paid only for the time spent at work. Their wage is calculated as a percentage of the full-time apprentice or trainee wage as outlined in the relevant agreement or award.

There are more than 700 different apprenticeships and traineeships that can be delivered as school-based arrangements ranging from rural to retail; business to building; hospitality to hairdressing; and automotive to arts.

Depending on the type of traineeship and when the young person commences, many students can complete a school-based traineeship while still at school.

School-based apprenticeships provide a head start into a full-time or part-time apprenticeship and career. Young people may complete up to a third of an apprenticeship while they are still at school.

### Apprenticeships and traineeships? What is the difference?

Apprenticeships are a long-standing system of combining training and employment so that people entering an occupation can receive instruction on specific skills while working in that particular occupation.

Apprenticeships are primarily of three to four years' duration and are at Certificate III or IV level. The apprentice enters into a training contract with the employer. Training is provided both on and off the job by the employer and a supervising registered training organisation.

Apprenticeships in Australia have been mainly confined to skilled trade occupations, such as building and construction, engineering and metals, automotive, electrical and food trades.

Traineeships were introduced in 1985 to complement traditional apprenticeships by extending the coverage of 'apprenticeship-type' training and employment to a much wider range of jobs across the whole labour market.

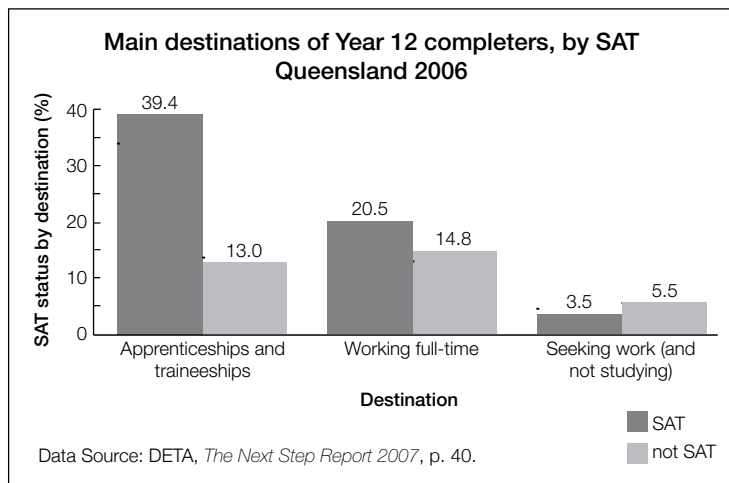
Traineeships are generally available at Certificate II level and above and can be anything from one year's duration up to three years or more. There are hundreds of traineeship vocations in a wide range of jobs across the whole labour market. As with an apprenticeship, the trainee enters into a training contract with the employer and training is provided both on and off the job by the employer and a supervising registered training organisation.

Both school-based apprenticeships and school-based traineeships strengthen a young person's transition to further education, training and employment. The choice of a school-based apprenticeship or school-based traineeship will be informed by the industry in which the young person is seeking to work, their aptitudes and other learning and employment goals.

## Why SATs?

The Queensland Government's decision to double the number of school-based apprentices and trainees in Queensland is based on strong evidence that SATs benefit young people and employers.

The *Next Step Report 2007* found that young people who had participated in SATs were more likely to be in full-time work or study after completing Year 12 than other young people. Almost one in seven young people who participated in SATs went on to university.



Other advantages of SATs for young people include:

- **More flexibility and variety** – SATs provide young people with more flexibility and variety in their senior schooling. SATs can have enormous benefits for young people who want hands-on learning to supplement traditional schooling pathways. SATs can be combined with an academic program and contribute to a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE).
- **A head start into a career** – Young people employed as SATs develop workplace skills, knowledge, confidence and a competitive edge when applying for jobs or undertaking further study. SATs provide young people with valuable exposure to potential careers and workplaces. For some young people, SATs have led directly to full-time or part-time employment after they have completed school. SATs can reduce the time taken to complete an apprenticeship or high-level vocational qualification.
- **Nationally recognised vocational qualifications** – All school-based apprentices and trainees participate in vocational training that contributes to a VET Certificate II, III or higher-level vocational qualification. These qualifications are nationally recognised by industry and employers.
- **An opportunity to learn and earn** – School-based apprentices and trainees are paid while they learn workplace skills, gain confidence, and adapt to a work environment.

*'By choosing to complete this certificate while at high school, my career progress has been moved forward by two years.'*

Werner Lindenberg, Kirwan State High School

*'My marks at school have risen ... and [doing a SAT] has helped me become more efficient at study.'*

Ryan Osborn, St Patrick's College (Gympie)

*'I want to own my own electrical company so that I can encourage others to become apprentice electricians like myself.'*

Sam Timmins, Emerald State High School

*'Due to the experience and knowledge gained through the traineeship, I have the expertise and ability to start my own business, which I am currently developing.'*

Ben Hopper, Mackay Christian College

SATs offer employers value-for-money. There are many potential benefits to a business. Employers have consistently identified benefits of SATs as including:

- **An investment in their future workforce** – At a time of unprecedented demand and competition for skilled labour, some employers see SATs as an investment in the future of their industry and an integral component of their workforce recruitment strategy. Employers train school-based apprentices and trainees within their work environment and in their areas of skills need.
- **A catalyst for rethinking systems and processes** – Employers have reported that training a school-based apprentice or trainee often encourages staff to rethink and challenge existing work practices. Productivity improvements can be an unexpected consequence of employing a school-based apprentice or trainee.
- **Contributing to their community** – SATs can make a real difference in motivating young people to complete school and to work towards their future goals. Employers have reported that SATs give them a direct opportunity to give back to their community through supporting young people.
- **Personal satisfaction** – Employers and supervisors often experience a great deal of satisfaction as their school-based apprentice or trainee learns new skills, gains confidence and makes the transition from student to worker.

Employers of school-based apprentices and trainees may also benefit from State and Commonwealth Government incentives depending on the location, industry and young person employed.

### Dingo satisfied with SATs

Hydraulics equipment manufacturer Dingo Mini Diggers Pty Ltd is using school-based apprenticeships to help combat a chronic skills shortage in Western Queensland.

Dingo actively promotes SATs through school visits, work experience programs and careers events.

National Training Manager Tom Steverink uses school-based training as part of his plan to attract the 'best of the best' for the Dingo workforce.

Dingo recruits three or four school-based engineering apprentices each year at the start of Year 11, after they have undertaken work experience with the company.

Tom is convinced that the strategy is working, with most school-based apprentices converting to full-time apprenticeships with the firm when they finish school.

'School-based apprenticeships are working for us,' he said.

## SATs to suit all kinds of goals

With around 700 different types of apprenticeships and traineeships available for young people who are still at school, SATs suit young people with all kinds of goals.

There are SATs to suit young people who are planning on:

- full-time employment after finishing school
- pursuing a traditional apprenticeship
- going to university or other training
- mixing part-time work with university or training.

SATs can also suit young people who don't really know what they want to do, or who want to gain some new and interesting skills.

### Fitness traineeship a path to physiotherapy

Georgina Clutterbuck is combining her studies at the Sunshine Coast Grammar School with a school-based traineeship. While working towards an OP at school, Georgina is also completing a Certificate III in Fitness with her supervising registered training organisation, the Australian YMCA Institute of Education and Training. Georgina hopes to study physiotherapy after completing school and believes that her fitness studies will give her a definite advantage.

*'I hope to use this qualification as a skilled job while I'm at uni, both making money ... and increasing my experience and career path.'*

Georgina Clutterbuck, Sunshine Coast Grammar School

### Combining college, carpentry and cubby houses

Simon Mulheran is on track to becoming a registered builder. Simon is undertaking a school-based apprenticeship with RAM Constructions as part of his schooling at Redlands College. Simon is already applying the theory he has learned through his Certificate III in Carpentry studies at the Trades and Technologies Skills Institute, on the job with RAM and in his two businesses – designing and constructing cubby houses, and chopping and bagging firewood.

*'My apprenticeship has given me opportunities that I would not have had any other way. From the people I've worked with and my trainers I have extended my skills, and my confidence level has increased.'*

Simon Mulheran, Redlands College

### A healthy option for Jodie

Former Clifton State High School student Jodie Pauli worked with a variety of clients and health professionals as part of her school-based traineeship with the Clifton Co-op Hospital. Jodie completed a Certificate III in Health Services Assistance (Allied Health Assistance) as part of her traineeship. The Sunshine Coast Institute of TAFE provided her formal training. Jodie is now studying to become a registered nurse and is continuing to work part-time as an assistant nurse at the Co-op Hospital.

*'I've been inspired to help people since I was young. Working in Allied Health for Clifton Hospital is a big job for someone my age, but the hospital has given me a lot of support, and placed a lot of trust in me. There is a lot of satisfaction and reward in helping families to look after their older members.'*

Jodie Pauli, formerly of Clifton State High School

### James' own restaurant plan

James Bambrick wants to one day own his own restaurant and treat diners to the unique tastes of Australian Indigenous cuisine. James, who attends the Good Shepherd Catholic College at Mt Isa, is one step closer to realising his goal with the skills he is gaining through his school-based traineeship. James is learning on the job at the Redearth Boutique Hotel and training towards a Certificate III in Hospitality (Commercial Cookery) at the Mt Isa Institute of TAFE.

*'Doing my apprenticeship at school has given me a leadership role and taught me to take control of situations. I can handle more responsibilities and do a number of tasks at once.'*

James Bambrick, Good Shepherd Catholic College

# 1. Building on our success

Queensland continues to lead Australia in implementing SATs. The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) reported that Queensland accounted for 40.5% of all SATs commencements in Australia in 2006<sup>1</sup>.

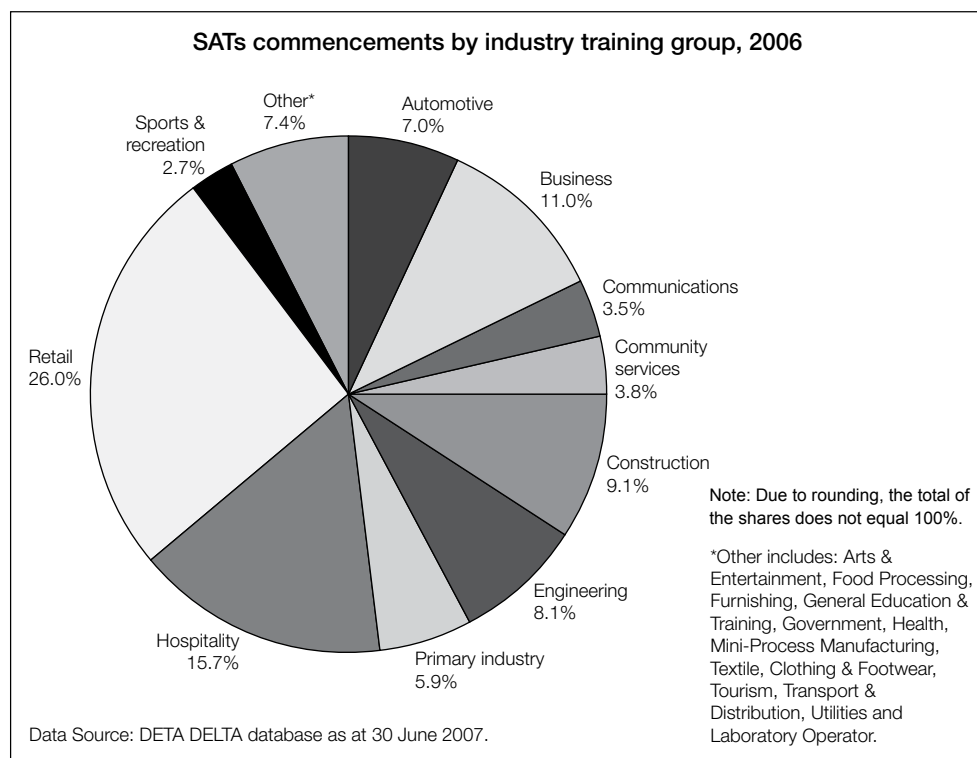
School-based apprenticeships in particular have been a major success in Queensland. Our state has 74.3% of all school-based apprentices in Australia<sup>2</sup>.

More than 45 000 young Queenslanders have participated in SATs since the program first started. Each year, the number of young people participating in SATs continues to grow<sup>3</sup>.

A number of factors have contributed to the success of SATs in Queensland. These have included:

- the high level of commitment, cooperation and leadership across all stakeholder groups including schools, industry and employers, unions and government agencies
- a legislative and regulatory environment that has supported implementation of SATs and
- widespread regard for SATs as a worthwhile program that provides real outcomes for young people.

School-based apprentices and trainees can now be found in state and non-state schools across every region of Queensland and in all kinds of industries.



Our aim is to continue to build on this success. We want to give more young people opportunities to benefit from this valuable program.

<sup>1</sup>National Centre for Vocational Research. National Apprentice and Trainee Collection, March 2007 estimates, unpublished

<sup>2</sup>National Centre for Vocational Research. National Apprentice and Trainee Collection, March 2007 estimates, unpublished

<sup>3</sup>Department of Education, Training and the Arts, DELTA Database as at 30 June 2007

## Action 1: Increase the uptake of SATs across government agencies

Government agencies benefit from SATs in the same way as other employers. SATs provide opportunities for workforce recruitment and development, re-assessing and streamlining processes, and supporting the community.

In 2006, a total of 418 school-based apprentices and trainees commenced work with a range of state, Commonwealth and local government agencies throughout Queensland. These young people joined school-based apprentices and trainees already working for the government in fields as diverse as business, aged care, forestry, multimedia, library services and carpentry<sup>4</sup>.

There are many workplaces across government that are ideal environments to begin training Queensland's next generation of workers. Over the coming months the Queensland Government will investigate ways to increase awareness and employment of school-based apprentices and trainees within government.

We will start with our own state government agencies. We will identify opportunities to streamline school-based apprentice and trainee recruitment, strengthen induction processes, and support our school-based apprentices and trainees and their supervisors.

We will ensure information is more easily accessible for potential public sector school-based apprentices and trainees, their parents, and government employers.

As the public sector workforce ages and retires over the coming years, it is likely that young people entering the public sector through SATs will experience a range of opportunities. SATs are one of the strategies that government can use as part of its approach to recruitment and workforce development.

### A healthy generation of SATs

Queensland Health's Statewide Traineeship Coordinator Lynda Cichocki said the department's districts had dramatically increased their employment of school-based trainees as they saw the benefits of attracting long-term, enthusiastic staff in a wide range of fields.

Lynda said a survey of supervisors in Queensland Health's districts this year showed that the main benefit of school-based traineeships was as a way to recruit young people and mould them to suit the workplace.

'Queensland Health has very high retention rates for school-based trainees, who either go into full-time jobs with the department when they finish school, or work part-time while they undertake further study,' she said.

'People are surprised by how many choices of traineeships we offer, from nursing assistant to horticulture,' Lynda said.

<sup>4</sup>Department of Education, Training and the Arts, DELTA Database as at 30 June 2007

## Action 2: Work with industries and employers to increase the uptake of SATs

SATs provide a valuable opportunity for employers and industries to work with schools to provide young people with the skills and knowledge required in the workplace.

Young people undertaking SATs gain experience and confidence working with colleagues, interacting with clients, and using the latest industry equipment. They finish school better prepared for full-time work, both now and in the future.

Many employers are using SATs as a key component of their entry-level recruitment processes. Employers gain an opportunity to check the suitability of a young person for their business while the young person gets a chance to kick-start their career.

The Queensland Government works closely with a wide range of employers, industries and unions to ensure that Queensland's education and training system provides the right mix of skills to support industry growth and expansion.

The *Queensland Skills Plan* outlines strategies aimed at strengthening partnerships between government and industry. These partnerships support continuous improvement in the responsiveness of our training system to industries' skill needs. Different partnerships have been established with different industries in recognition of the diversity of needs. Partnership arrangements include Skills Formation Strategies, Skills Alliances, and Centres of Excellence.

Many of Queensland's schools also have partnerships in place with local industries and employers. The Government is also working with industries to establish industry-school partnerships through projects such as the Aerospace Project, the Queensland College of Wine Tourism, the ICT Industry partnership, and the Queensland Minerals and Energy Academy. SATs are a key feature of many of these partnerships.

The Queensland Government will continue to work with industries that see value in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships and are seeking to increase the number in their field. The Government can assist by helping industries to identify appropriate strategies to achieve this goal, working with them to overcome barriers to employing school-based apprentices and trainees, sharing information on successful models in other industries, raising general community awareness of the benefits of SATs, providing employers with up-to-date information through the State Government's *ApprenticeshipsInfo* hotline and website and encouraging schools to involve industry in students' career-planning processes.

**Mentoring and monitoring is the MAIN game**

Mackay engineering firms are working together to make sure the school-based apprenticeship system meets their industry's needs.

The Mackay Area Industry Network (MAIN) has negotiated on behalf of local firms to adapt school-based apprenticeships so that students are employed for several blocks each year rather than the traditional one day a week.

MAIN also provides regular mentoring and monitoring for school-based apprentices to make sure the arrangements are working for the student, the employer and the school.

MAIN Care Operations Manager Bronwyn Armstrong said that the longer stints of on-the-job training allow school-based apprentices to see a project through to the end, rather than start something without having the chance to finish it.

'The support we provide means that students have a real pathway into full-time apprenticeships or cadetships with local firms,' Bronwyn said.

'That's good for our local industry because it keeps young people here to train locally, and it's good for the students because they have a smooth, well-supported career and training path.'

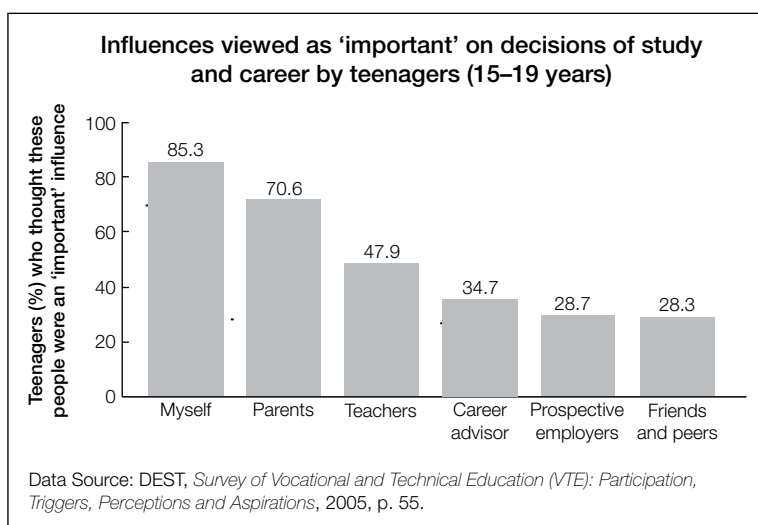
## 2. Marketing and promoting SATs

A number of school communities across Queensland have embraced SATs wholeheartedly with many of their senior students participating in the program.

Staff, students and parents can see the enormous benefits of SATs for young people and have worked with local employers and training providers to establish quality opportunities.

The Queensland Government is encouraging more schools, parents and students to discover the benefits of SATs to ensure that young people consider them as part of their senior education and career-planning processes.

Many people play an important role in helping young people to make study and career decisions. Research shows that parents, in particular, have a major influence on young people’s study and career decisions.



We want to ensure that parents, and everyone else who influences career decisions, have an understanding of the SATs program and the kinds of benefits it can have for young people.

While SATs might not be for everyone, we want all young people to have access to reliable information that will help them make good decisions about their futures.

### Action 3: Improve access to SATs information

As a priority, the Queensland Government is undertaking a campaign to increase awareness of, and participation in, SATs.

While information on SATs is currently available from websites, training providers, schools, apprenticeships centres, and elsewhere, the Government aims to streamline access.

A wide range of communication and marketing tools will be used to create a consistent message for young people, parents, schools, employers and training providers.

This communication will build on the internet gateway that has been established to provide a single location for comprehensive information about SATs.

The newly established website provides information on how to become a school-based apprentice or trainee, how to hire a school-based apprentice or trainee, and the role of schools, training providers and employers. It tells employers how to engage a school-based apprentice or trainee in their workplace and provides schools with examples of how to successfully integrate SATs within their school's program.

The gateway can be accessed through the *AppenticeshipsInfo* website and is supported by the *AppenticeshipsInfo* telephone and email service. *AppenticeshipsInfo* already provides free advice, referrals and support for all Queenslanders about apprenticeships, traineeships and training options.

The Government will also publish brochures and information kits providing young people, parents, schools and employers with important facts about SATs. This will be a useful resource for vocational education and training co-ordinators, guidance officers, and others when discussing education and training options with young people and their parents.

#### ***AppenticeshipsInfo***

*AppenticeshipsInfo* – a web-based and telephone hotline service – is a valuable source of information to support school-based apprentices, trainees and their employers. The *AppenticeshipsInfo* team handles in excess of 11 000 calls per month, averaging around 600 calls per day. In addition, approximately 1400 emails are responded to each month from clients requesting information on topics ranging from how to become a school-based apprentice/trainee or employer, to assistance with training contracts and early completion of training. For more information, visit [www.appenticeshipsinfo.qld.gov.au](http://www.appenticeshipsinfo.qld.gov.au) or call 1800 210 210.

## Action 4: Promote the value of SATs to students, parents, schools and employers

SATs help young people get to the places they want to be when they've finished school – whether that's a job, a trade career, university, TAFE or other training. The workplace skills and confidence that they gain during their SAT provide a solid foundation for any career.

Despite this, the benefits of SATs are not widely understood by parents and young people, employers and some school staff.

The Government will implement marketing programs to promote SATs as a desirable pathway through education and training to work to increase their uptake.

The message will be that SATs benefit young people with all kinds of goals.

Through *ApprenticeshipsInfo* and other information services successful examples of school-based apprentices and trainees will be showcased to explain how SATs work and deliver results.

Many industries have indicated their willingness to promote SATs as part of their recruitment processes. We will work with them to get their messages to schools, young people and parents.

### The Best of SATs at Beerwah

Beerwah State High School has achieved 40% participation in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships for Year 11 and 12 students by stressing commitment, preparation and diversity.

The school's Student Support Officer Graham Woods said he had developed a holistic school-based apprenticeships and traineeships program to which students had to demonstrate their commitment before formally signing up.

'Each student undertakes training to build their employability, then they line up work experience in an industry that interests them,' he said.

Work experience gives the students inside knowledge to be sure they want to proceed with a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship, resulting in strong levels of participation, and also very low cancellation rates.

'If you make things competitive then kids want to do it, and if you ask them to demonstrate their commitment before they sign up to a training contract they are much more likely to complete the qualification.'

To give students diverse options, the school works with employers in a wide range of industries to make sure school-based training options are available in areas that interest individual students, from aeroskills to meat processing.

### 3. Working with education and training partners

Many partners play a role in the SATs program. Some are highly visible while others work behind the scenes to support its smooth running and maintain quality standards. The SATs program is most effective when all partners work together to support the young participants.

The Department of Education, Training and the Arts (DETA) oversees and administers the apprenticeship and traineeship system. Key SATs partners include:

#### Direct relationship with SATs

**Staff within schools** encourage young people to consider SATs, assist them to find an employer, and arrange programs and timetables around their work and training

**Employers** provide paid employment and assist school-based apprentices and trainees to develop new skills and adjust to a work environment

**Group training organisations** employ school-based apprentices and trainees and place them with ‘host’ employers to develop skills in the workplace

**Supervising registered training organisations** such as TAFE and private training providers deliver the off-the-job training required for qualifications

**Australian Apprenticeships Centres** are contracted by the Commonwealth Government to oversee contracts, provide information and assistance, and advise employers on Commonwealth subsidies

**Australian Technical Colleges** are non-state schools funded by the Commonwealth Government to specifically focus on school-based apprenticeships

#### Behind the scenes

**District Youth Achievement Plan (DYAP) management committees** work with a broad range of local stakeholders to improve education and training outcomes for young people aged 15–17 years

**DETA regional staff** administer and oversee the apprenticeship and traineeship system, provide information and assistance, and visit apprentice and trainee workplaces

The **Training and Employment Recognition Council** registers, finalises and cancels apprenticeships and traineeships, approves programs, determines probationary periods, and registers training organisations

**Queensland’s Training Ombudsman** receives and reviews complaints about the training system including concerns about individual apprenticeship and traineeship contracts, employment and training

**Local Community Partnerships (LCPs) and Regional Industry Career Advisors (RICAs)** are part of the Commonwealth Government’s Career Advice Australia program which facilitates local collaboration between employer and industry groups, schools, students and parents to improve career information and planning.

## Action 5: Support coordination between schools and other parties to increase SATs

Schools with thriving SATs programs usually have strong relationships with many organisations across their communities. These include local employers and employer groups, industries, local community partnership (LCP) officers, Australian Apprenticeships Centres, other schools, training organisations and regional DETA staff.

We will ask schools with outstanding SATs achievements to share their formula for success. Although every school experiences different local employment opportunities and parent and student expectations, there may be benefits in considering how other schools have achieved success and whether their approaches can be adapted to suit local needs.

District Youth Achievement Plan (DYAP) management committees have now established themselves as a feature of each education district in Queensland. DYAPs combine community efforts to improve education and training outcomes for young people, particularly 15–17 year olds.

Many DYAP committees have excellent relationships with local schools, TAFE institutes, training providers, community groups, parents, employer groups and industries. Some DYAPs have played an active role in promoting and supporting SATs within their district.

DETA will work with all DYAP committees to identify opportunities to further support SATs at the local level. This will include provision of information and ideas on how SATs might be increased.

### Building community partnerships through school-based apprenticeships and traineeships

Catholic secondary schools and colleges in the Diocese of Toowoomba are able to offer their students school-based apprenticeships and traineeships by utilising the services of the *Catholic Education: SBA Program*. This is a program that represents the schools to employers, state and Commonwealth governments, training organisations and agencies involved in SATs.

The *SBA Program* provides a range of services to schools. These include conducting regular visits to provide information and support to employers, parents and schools about SATs; advertising vacancies listed by employers; arranging and attending the SAT signup; liaising with training providers; completing associated paperwork; and monitoring student progress and reporting to schools and other authorities. Services are adapted to individual school needs.

Karen Coulston, Senior Project Officer for the *SBA Program*, highlighted the importance of building community partnerships as critical to the success of the SATs program.

‘The *SBA Program* liaises regularly with a number of industry and community partners such as the Australian Apprenticeship Centres (AACs), the Department of Education, Training and the Arts, Education Queensland, Supervising Registered Training Organisations (SRTOs), employers and industry, group training organisations and VET coordinators. Without maintaining these relationships SATs would not work,’ said Karen.

Another important *SBA Program* service is the monitoring of student progress throughout the SAT. SBA makes regular contact with the student, employer, school and SRTO to ensure that students are progressing and that any issues are identified and addressed.

‘School-based apprenticeships and traineeships are a great opportunity for our students. However, it takes commitment and hard work to complete or progress through a SAT. The *Catholic Education: SBA Program* is here to help students manage all aspects of a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship so they can achieve their goals.’

## Action 6: Additional support for schools to increase the uptake of SATs

The Queensland Government will allocate an additional \$6.2 million to support the increased uptake of SATs across the state by 2009.

The Government will work with the state and non-state schooling sectors to identify the most effective way to distribute these funds and maximise outcomes for young people. Ideally, schools will work together to promote and increase SATs across their district.

We will also provide schools with tools, information and ideas that will assist them to make the most of SATs.

The SATs internet gateway at *ApprenticeshipsInfo* will showcase innovative and high-achieving schools and how they have managed to:

- increase student participation in SATs
- address complicated timetabling issues
- gain parent support for the SATs program
- get employers involved
- build relationships across their community.

In addition to the *ApprenticeshipsInfo* internet gateway, we will provide schools with resources and ideas for promoting SATs within their school community. We will support schools to fully integrate SATs within their learning program and ensure that students participating in SATs have learning support across all learning environments.

### Centenary Heights – four factors for success

More than 20% of Centenary Heights State High School's Year 11 and 12 students – over 80 students – are undertaking school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.

Head of Senior School Tim Ryan attributes the program's success to four factors: building relationships with employers; encouraging students to use their networks to find positions; having school personnel who work the hours that employers need; and offering a three-day program.

'Our employers realise we're fair dinkum, and that we're in it for the long term,' Tim said.

'That means we get employers coming back to take on more apprentices and trainees, and more than half of our school-based apprentices and trainees convert to full-time when they finish school.'

Tim and his small team encourage students to find their own jobs by marketing themselves through their family, friends and friends-of-friends.

School staff who liaise with employers also need to be flexible about the hours they are prepared to work, according to Tim.

A typical day for the Centenary Heights staff can start with a sign-up meeting at 7.30 am with a panel beater, or finish with a follow-up visit to a hairdresser after 7 pm.

## Action 7: Work with training providers to improve training outcomes for young people undertaking SATs

Training is one of the components that sets a school-based apprentice or trainee apart from work experience or part-time employment.

Every school-based apprentice and trainee has a Training Plan that is agreed to by them, their employer and training provider. The Training Plan outlines the skills that the student needs to complete their apprenticeship or traineeship. Successful completion of the training contributes to nationally recognised vocational qualifications at Certificate II, III or higher levels.

Training for school-based apprentices and trainees comprises a mix of formal training delivered by a training provider such as TAFE, or a private training organisation, and on-the-job training and experience. High-quality training ensures that the skills students gain during their SAT meet the expectations and needs of employers.

Training provided to school-based apprentices and trainees is similar to training provided for any other apprentice or trainee. However, because of students' study demands, training providers need to be more innovative and flexible about how the training is delivered to school-based apprentices and trainees.

The Government will explore and encourage innovation. We will identify opportunities to improve collaboration between schools and training providers to provide better outcomes, which may include online training delivery, use of school or industry facilities to deliver training, industry involvement in training and clustering across schools where students have similar requirements.

We will continue to look for opportunities to increase understanding of SATs, promote innovation and share good training practice at workshops, conferences and other forums where people associated with SATs meet. We will also develop information sessions for training providers and schools to support continuous improvement.

Through the *ApprenticeshipsInfo* SATs internet gateway, training providers will be able to access the additional information that they require to provide training for school-based apprentices and trainees. This will include information on the Queensland Certificate of Education and registering enrolments and results with the Queensland Studies Authority.

### On-the-job support improves outcomes

A south-east Queensland registered training organisation is using regular on-the-job training as a way to help students and their employers make sure school-based traineeships work for them.

Jenny Field, from Specialised Training Services, believes training delivered by a trainer visiting the students' workplace allows students to apply their learning to real tasks in the workplace context.

'We've found that doing it this way means students take it more seriously. The student and trainer can sometimes come up with bright ideas that can improve business productivity.'

'Regular visits to the workplace also allow us to support the employer and provide coaching and mentoring for the student,' she said.

Specialised Training Services currently provides training for 224 school-based trainees in business, IT and teacher aide certificate qualifications.

## 4. Continuous quality improvement

The success of SATs in Queensland is directly related to uptake and acceptance by industry, employers, schools, students and parents.

SATs are seen as a quality training product, a desirable education and training pathway for young people and a worthwhile commitment.

Independent evaluation studies undertaken in Queensland back in 2000 revealed that up to 90% of participants in the SATs program reported very high levels of satisfaction. Since then, SATs have been further developed, refined and improved through evaluation and consultation with stakeholders. More recent departmental surveys and evaluations have confirmed ongoing high levels of satisfaction amongst participants.

The Queensland Government is committed to maintaining and continuously improving SATs as a robust and structured training program that delivers real outcomes for participants.

## Action 8: Consult with industry to continually improve the quality and quantity of SATs in Queensland

SATs are only useful to young people while employers consider them to be effective. This means that SATs must provide skills that are recognised and valued by employers.

There is significant evidence demonstrating that employers see benefits in the SATs program. For example, they continue to be involved with SATs and are increasingly using SATs as part of their recruitment strategies.

To maintain this high level of satisfaction with SATs, government, schools, training providers and industry must continue to work together to maintain and continuously improve the quality of outcomes.

The Queensland Government will consult with employers and industry about the ongoing effectiveness of SATs, whether they are continuing to meet expectations and their value in providing students with skills and experience.

Department of Education, Training and the Arts regional training staff will continue to work closely with employers, training providers and apprentices and trainees in their regions to make sure that the quality of the SATs program is maintained and improved.

The Queensland Government will also consult with industry through its formal and informal partnerships including industry forums, Centres of Excellence, Industry Skills Alliances and Skills Formation Strategies. We will use these avenues to listen to employers and identify opportunities to further improve SATs in Queensland.

### **Brisbane City Council is one major employer that keeps coming back for more school-based apprentices and trainees**

Employment Project Officer Sharon McCormick oversees employment of more than 30 school-based trainees and about six apprentices each year.

In an organisation with staff in more than 4000 occupations, students are undertaking qualifications in fields as diverse as libraries, horticulture, civil construction, water treatment, business administration and IT.

Sharon said SATs had proven good for recruitment with many students going on to full-time apprenticeships or jobs in Council.

‘They are often great employees because they know the work area, they are confident and they know what they want to do,’ Sharon said.

Over the years Brisbane City Council has streamlined its recruitment of school-based apprentices and trainees, advertising in July for positions the following year.

‘We interview short-listed applicants, then the best students come in for work experience in September,’ Sharon said.

High-performing students are offered school-based traineeships or apprenticeships beginning in November of Year 10 with an induction for the students, parents and school representatives.

‘We start them early so they can come in for a week in the Christmas holidays to get to know everyone,’ Sharon said.

‘This means they can finish in November in Year 12 so they can do their exams and go to Schoolies Week if they want to. Our first priority is for them to finish school,’ she said.

Sharon said the program’s success was evident in the growing enthusiasm for school-based trainees from supervisors and managers across Council.

## Action 9: Coordinate with *Queensland Skills Plan* initiatives to increase the quality and quantity of SATs

The \$1 billion *Queensland Skills Plan* outlines the Government's approach to reforming and modernising training in Queensland. The *Skills Plan* announced major reforms to Queensland's apprenticeship and training systems.

The reforms being implemented through the *Queensland Skills Plan* will improve SATs in Queensland.

School-based apprentices and trainees will benefit significantly from *Skills Plan* initiatives such as:

- strengthened relationships between government and industries which will mean that school-based apprentices and trainees can be even more confident that they are developing skills that meet industry needs
- development of a 'Try a Trade' facility which will assist young people to identify which trades careers are compatible with their interests
- major improvements to TAFE including improved product development and co-ordination of training in specific industry areas and the new Trade and Technician Skills Institute known as SkillsTech Australia
- strategies to improve workplace practices to support apprentices and trainees to complete their training
- a greater emphasis on competency-based training allowing apprentices to complete their trade qualification when the training provider, apprentice and employer determine that the apprentice is fully competent, irrespective of the time the apprentice has spent in training
- fundamental changes to User Choice funding arrangements that are increasing the number and capacity of quality training providers delivering apprenticeship training
- additional trade training places
- increased opportunities for training providers to access professional development and become even better at delivering training.

As implementation of the *Queensland Skills Plan* continues, the impacts and opportunities to improve school-based apprenticeships and traineeships will be carefully considered.

### Action plan boosts support for apprentices and trainees

A new initiative released by the State Government recently is set to boost economic growth and address the skills shortage.

The Train to Retain Action Plan aims to ensure apprentices and trainees complete their full trade qualifications to become valued members of the skilled workforce.

Part of the \$1 billion *Queensland Skills Plan*, the Train to Retain initiative is a response to the Training Ombudsman's report on improving workplace practices for apprentices.

The Action Plan's strategies aim to make workplaces more attractive for Queensland's 82 000 apprentices and trainees including our school-based apprentices and trainees.

The plan outlines a range of strategies to improve apprentice retention, including an education program to help build supportive workplaces and improve reporting systems.

## Where can I find out more?

To find out more about SATs:

**Visit** *ApprenticeshipsInfo* at [www.apprenticeshipsinfo.qld.gov.au](http://www.apprenticeshipsinfo.qld.gov.au)

*or*

**Call** the *ApprenticeshipsInfo* telephone service on 1800 210 210  
(between the hours of 8.30 am and 4.45 pm Monday – Friday)

*or*

**Ask** your school's Vocational Education and Training Coordinator

