

July 2026

Apprentice Handbook

Australian Apprenticeships
guide for apprentices
and trainees.



**A U S T R A L I A N
A P P R E N T I C E S H I P
S U P P O R T S E R V I C E S**

An Australian Government Initiative

APM
apprenticeships



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Welcome to APM Apprenticeships

Congratulations on starting your Australian Apprenticeship!

This handbook will guide you through your journey, offering practical advice, useful resources, and essential information about what to expect and how to make the most of this opportunity.

Becoming an apprentice or trainee is an exciting step towards a fulfilling career.

Whether you're just out of school or changing careers, this experience will give you valuable skills and knowledge. You'll combine hands-on work with formal education, becoming a skilled

professional in your chosen field. Remember, APM Apprenticeships is here to help you. We offer career advice, help resolve workplace issues, and provide guidance on financial support.

Don't be afraid to ask questions and seek help when needed. Your hard work and dedication will lead to nationally recognised qualifications and a strong foundation for your future career.

We wish you the best of luck and are here to support you throughout your apprenticeship.

This handbook is your go-to resource for all things related to your apprenticeship. It covers everything from understanding your wages and entitlements to knowing what to do if you encounter any issues at work.

Inside, you'll find details on your rights and responsibilities, health and safety guidelines, and the support services available to you.

Who's who

You: The Australian Apprentice joining an apprenticeship or traineeship. You could be a new employee or an existing worker wanting to develop your skills.

Your employer: The business you currently work for.

Parents/Guardians: If you're under 18, a parent or guardian must sign the National Training Contract.

RTO (Registered Training Organisation): The organisation delivering your training, conducting assessments, and issuing your qualification. Training may occur at your workplace or at the RTO's facility.

Australian Government: Department of Employment & Workplace Relations. They handle Australian Apprenticeship policies and funding.

APM Apprenticeships: Your Apprentice Connect Australia Provider. APM Apprenticeships is contracted by the Australian Government to deliver free support to apprentices, trainees and employers in Victoria.

In addition to generalist services, APM Apprenticeships also provides specialist support to women in male-dominated trades, apprentices in clean energy occupations, and First Nations apprentices and their employers.

VRQA (Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority): Victoria's STA (State Training Authority) which manages the National Training Contract. Any changes to your contract must be approved by the VRQA.

Your journey

Before you start working

We can provide career advice and even help you find an employer (if required) via our career assessment tools.

Getting ready

We will contact you and your employer either via phone or face-to-face to discuss the Australian Apprenticeship that you're beginning.

An APM Apprenticeships consultant will then meet with you and your employer to sign up your National Training Contract.

We will also advise on your options in relation to Australian Apprenticeship Support Loan (AASL), Living Away From Home Allowances (LAFHA) and Disability Assistance - if applicable.

Day one

On-the-job training starts with your employer on your first day. Off-the-job training will start once you have signed a Training Plan with your chosen RTO. If additional support is required, at the four, eight and 12-week mark of your apprenticeship we will also phone or email you to see how you're progressing.

During your apprenticeship

We'll contact you and your employer either face-to-face, or via phone or email, at regular intervals - or when required - to see how you're progressing and offer any support.

We'll also be in touch near the point of completing your apprenticeship to ensure everything is on track.

Remember, we're here for you throughout your apprenticeship. You can contact your APM Apprenticeships consultant or one of our friendly team members with any questions or if you need advice.

You've done it!

Your employer and RTO will assess your competency on and off the job in relation to modules in your Training Plan. Once you've reached the level of competency required in your plan, you will have completed your apprenticeship.

How we help

As your service provider, we will support you with:

Personalised advice: Guidance on choosing the right apprenticeship and career path.

Support services: Assistance with your training contract, problem-solving, and accessing government incentives and funding.

Mentorship: Ongoing support and mentorship throughout your apprenticeship to ensure your success.

We will also help you to:

- Stay proactive in your learning and seek feedback regularly
- Set clear career and training goals to stay motivated
- Take advantage of the support services and training provided
- Manage your time effectively to balance practical work and training requirements



Your training

Training Plan

On your National Training Contract, your employer will select a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) as your training provider.

The RTO will contact you to arrange enrolment and discuss a Training Plan tailored to your needs. This plan should be completed during the probation period.

Your Training Plan outlines how your training will be delivered and must be signed by you, your employer, your RTO representative, and your school if applicable.

Training costs

The cost of training can vary by state and the type of apprenticeship. Discuss potential fees with your employer and RTO.

Unique Student Identifier (USI)

You need a USI to track your training records online. Apply for a USI online before starting your apprenticeship. If you already have a USI, bring the number with you to the sign-up. Apply online usi.gov.au

Support payments

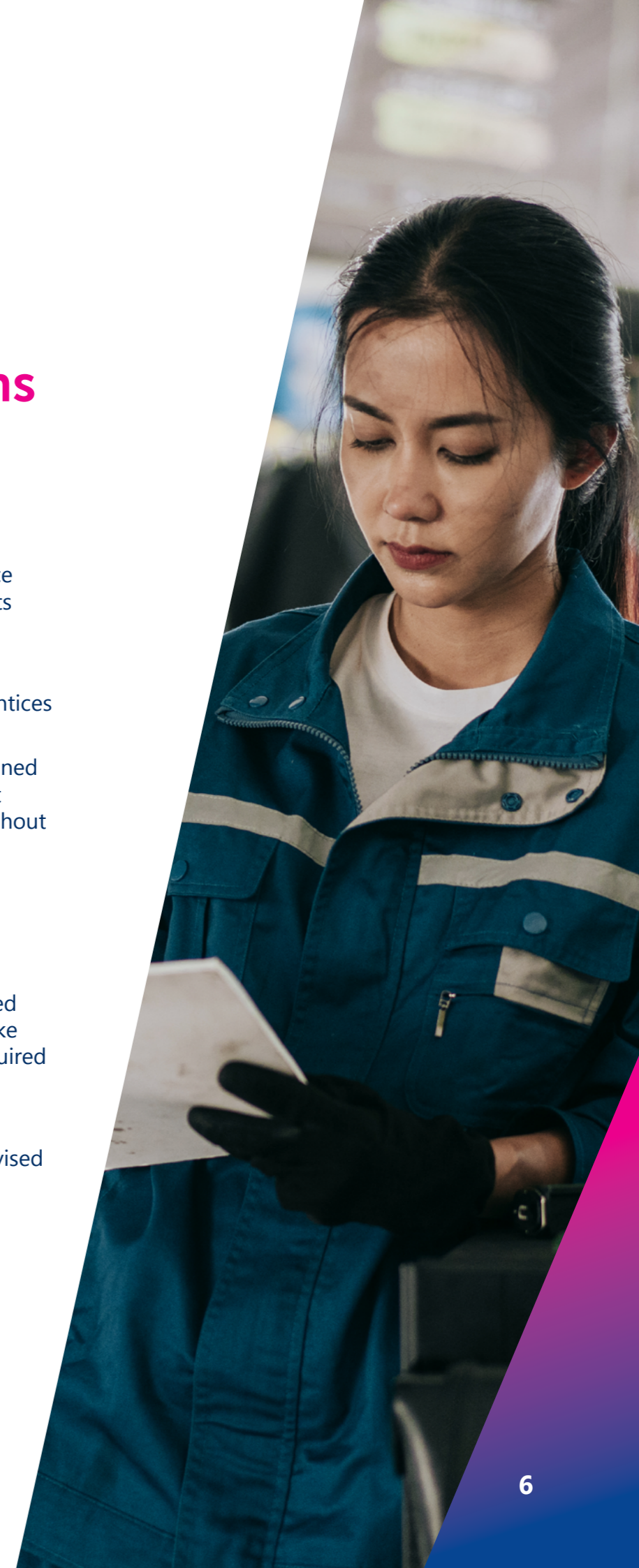
Contact Services Australia (formerly Centrelink) to find out about support payments available while you study.

Learn more at servicesaustralia.gov.au/apprenticeship

Your obligations

When you sign your National Training Contract you agree to:

- Attend and perform work in a professional manner in accordance with your employer's requirements
- Take care of workplace property and resources
- Respect the rights of other apprentices and employees in the workplace
- Remember that information obtained from your employer must be kept confidential and not disclosed without approval from your employer
- Obtain consent from a parent or guardian, if you are under 18 years of age
- Make all reasonable efforts to achieve the competencies specified in your training plan and undertake any training and assessments required
- Participate in the development of your training plan
- Attend training sessions or supervised workplace activities



Your employer's obligations

When your employer signs your National Training Contract they agree to:

Maintain health and safety

- Follow relevant Australian Government and State/Territory legislation, relating to Australian Apprenticeships
- Provide a safe working environment free from bullying, discrimination, and verbal, physical, racial, and sexual abuse
- Ensure all occupational health safety requirements are addressed and you receive an appropriate induction to the workplace

Support structured training

- Provide opportunities to develop knowledge and skills
- Work with APM Apprenticeships to lodge your National Training Contract and select a RTO (Registered Training Organisation)
- Enrol you in training within the required timeframe
- Participate in developing your Training Plan and provide facilities and expertise to assist in training of your agreed qualification

- Ensure your training record is maintained and relevant authorities are notified when you complete your training
- Provide supervision and support in the workplace and stay mindful Australian Apprentices under the age of 18 are minors, and their parents or guardians have legal responsibility for them

Advise you of your rights and responsibilities

- Ensure you feel safe raising issues and problems both in the workplace and with your Registered Training Organisation
- Advise you of your entitlements including wages and work condition
- Provide comprehensive induction process for the start of your apprenticeship

Learn more

- National Code of Good Practice for Australian Apprenticeships

Your rights and entitlements

Most employers and employees (including apprentices) in Australia are covered by something called awards and by the National Employment Standards (NES).

- These set out minimum pay rates, leave entitlements and conditions.
- Before starting your apprenticeship, it's helpful to know the minimum standards employers must provide to all employees.
- Maximum weekly hours – 38 hours per week, plus reasonable additional hours
- Requests for flexible working arrangements – certain employees can request a change in their working arrangements
- Parental leave – up to 12 months of unpaid leave per employee, as well as the right to request an additional 12 months leave
- Annual leave – four weeks paid leave per year, plus an additional week for some shift workers
- Personal/carer's leave and compassionate leave – up to 10 days per year for full-time employees, two days of unpaid carer's leave and two days compassionate leave as required
- Family and domestic violence leave – 10 days of paid leave per year.

- Community service leave – unpaid leave for voluntary emergency management activities and leave for jury service
- Long service leave – paid leave for employees who have been with the same employer for a long time
- Public holidays – an entitlement to a day off on a public holiday, unless reasonably requested to work
- Superannuation (super) – employers must make contributions to eligible employees' super funds under super guarantee laws
- Notice of termination and redundancy pay – up to five weeks' notice of termination and up to 16 weeks redundancy pay
- Fair Work Information Statement - must be provided to all new employees. Visit fairwork.gov.au/fwis to download a copy

Learn more

- fairwork.gov.au - National Employment Standards
- Fair Work Ombudsman Guide – Guide to starting an apprenticeship



Financial support for you

You may be entitled to a support payment or loan from the Australian Government to help apprentices and trainees with costs.

Your APM Apprenticeships consultant can guide you through the process of applying for support payments if you are eligible.

If you started after 1 January 2026, you may be able to access:

Australian Apprentice Training Support Payment (AATSP)

For apprentices and trainees starting, restarting or already working and undertaking a qualification including Certificate III, IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma or listed on the Priority List. Check the full eligibility online at apm.net.au/apprenticeships

- \$2,500 for full-time Australian Apprentices (\$625 at six and 12, 18 and 24 months)
- \$1,250 for part-time Australian Apprentices (\$315 at six and 12 months, then \$310 at 18 and 24 months)

Key Apprenticeship Program (KAP)

If your apprenticeship or training includes meaningful exposure, experience, and work in the clean energy or housing construction sector, you may be eligible for the KAP payment.

- \$2,000 at 6, 12, 24 and 36 months and on completion (full-time)
- \$1,000 at 6, 12, 24 and 36 months and on completion (part-time)

Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans (AASL)

For eligible apprentices in priority areas, repaid through the tax system when your income reaches the repayment threshold. Loan terms are flexible to suit individual needs.

Living Away From Home Allowance (LAFHA)

If you have to move to take up or continue training you may be eligible for the Living Away From Home Allowance to support you with the additional costs of living.

LAFHA is a weekly tax-free payment that reduces as you progress in your training

Other government payments

You may be eligible for other general supports on offer from Services Australia. These payments may include:

- Youth Allowance - Financial help if you're 24 or younger
- Austudy - Financial help if you're 25 or older
- ABSTUDY - Payments for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander apprentices

To learn more about these payments, visit the Services Australia website.

Download a copy of the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System guidelines.

Trade Apprentice Vehicle Discount

Up to 100% off car registration renewal in Victoria. See VRQA online for details.

Financial support for your employer

A range of financial incentives and support may be available to your employer.

Disability Australian Apprentice Wage Support (DAAWS)

If you have a disability, your employer may be eligible for a weekly payment to support them during your apprenticeship.

Who to contact

If you need...	You can...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed information about an Australian Apprenticeship • Information before starting or during my Australian Apprenticeship • Assistance in understanding and applying for incentives, loans, and allowances under the Australian Apprenticeship Support Service • Help because your apprenticeship has been suspended or terminated • To talk because things are tough at work and you need some help • Help catching up with training on an Australian Schools based Apprenticeship 	<p>Speak to your APM Apprenticeship consultant or call our friendly team on 1800 276 221</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on, or have any queries about wages, training fees, and terms and conditions of employment 	<p>Visit Fair Work Commission website</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To speak about being treated fairly or if your work is rationed OR you believe you are being harassed or discriminated against at work or in training • Obtain your Trade Certificate of Completion 	<p>Contact us in the first instance on 1800 276 221</p> <p>Victorian Regulation and Qualification Authority</p> <p>Fair Work Ombudsmen</p>

Useful information

National resources

- Unique Student Identifier
- Accessing ADMS
- myskills – Training & Course Options
- Services Australia Payments (Youth Allowance, Austudy, ABSTUDY)
- Record keeping and employee payslip

Apprenticeships.gov.au

- Information for apprentices
- School-based apprenticeships
- Support Loans
- Living Away from Home Allowance
- Financial support for apprentices in priority occupations
- National Code of Good Practice
- Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System guidelines
- Support Loan Change of Circumstances

Fair Work Ombudsman

- Guide to starting an apprenticeship
- Fair Work Information Statement
- Apprentices and trainees
- Introduction to the National Employment Standards



About APM Apprenticeships

APM Apprenticeships is dedicated to supporting apprentices, trainees and employers in Victoria.

As a specialist provider, we deliver tailored support to female apprentices in male-dominated trade roles, apprentices in clean energy occupations, and First Nations apprentices.

APM Apprenticeships is part of APM Employment Services – a national provider of employment programs supporting tens of thousands of Australians to enter and stay in the workforce every year.

This includes people with disability, injury, health conditions, and other barriers to employment.

APM's experienced and dedicated teams have been supporting Australians for more than 30 years.

With team members in more than 500 communities across the country, we understand the local job markets, industries and needs of employers near you.

Contact us

 **1800 276 221**

 **apprenticeships@apm.net.au**

 **apm.net.au/apprenticeships**

