

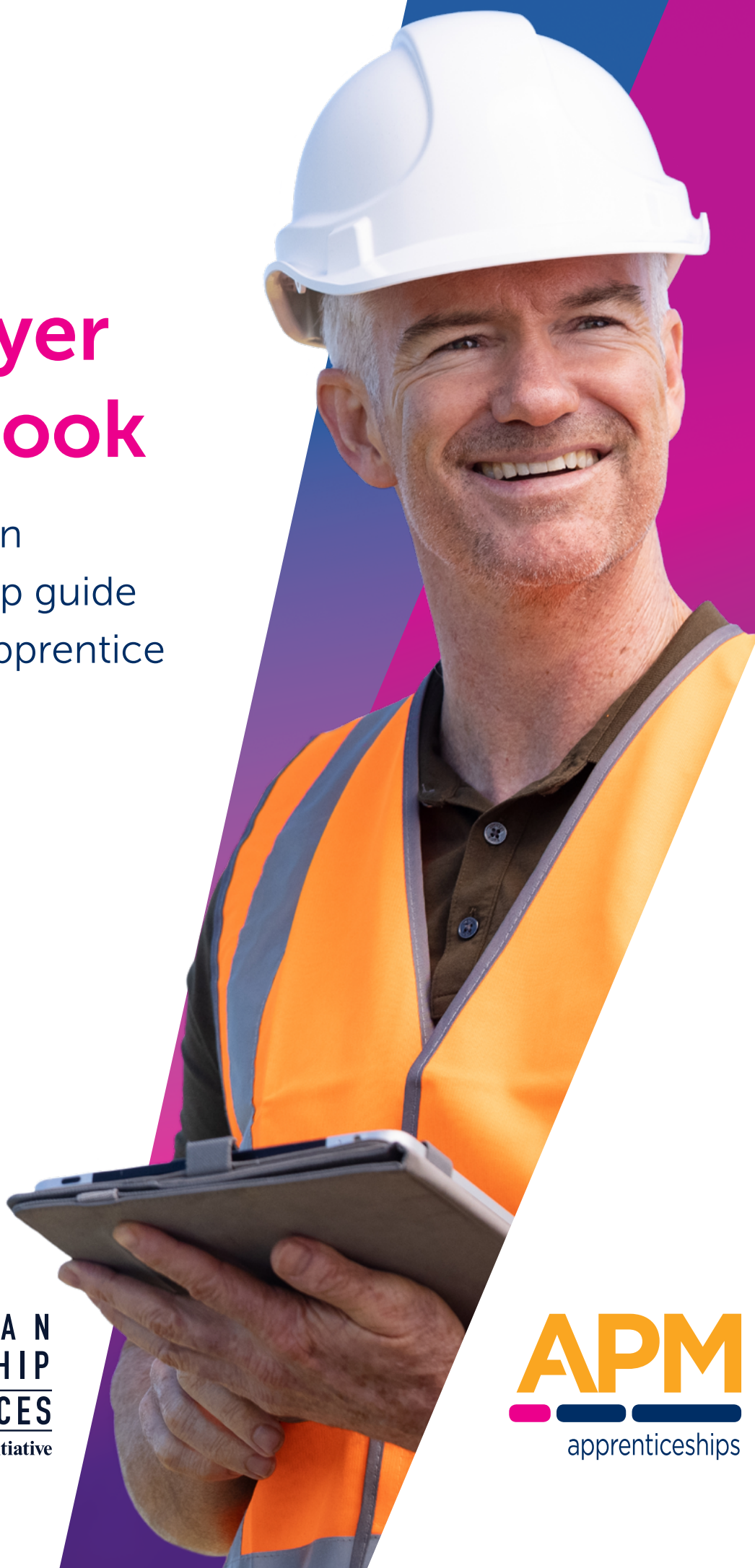
January 2026

Employer Handbook

Your Australian
Apprenticeship guide
to hiring an apprentice
or trainee.

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

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.

Hiring an apprentice is a valuable way to grow your business and we understand the commitment required to make it a success.

Our team is available to guide you all the way until your apprentice successfully completes their training and gains their qualification.

We can help resolve workplace issues and provide guidance on accessing any financial support and government incentives you may have access to.

If at any stage throughout your journey together you need help with anything at all, please contact us on 1800 276 221 and our dedicated team will be happy to support you.

About this handbook

This handbook is your go-to resource for all things related to the apprenticeship. It covers everything from understanding your entitlements, your obligations and what you can expect from your apprentice.

Who's who

You: The employer. The business or organisation that is employing an Australian Apprentice.

Your apprentice: Your new employee or existing employee looking to learn new skills and qualifications.

Parents/Guardians: If your apprentice is under 18, a parent or guardian must sign the National Training Contract.

RTO (Registered Training Organisation): The organisation delivering your apprentice's training, conducting assessments, and issuing their 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.

STA (State Training Authority): State Governments register and manage the National Training Contract in their states. Any changes to your contract must be approved by the State Government.

Your journey



Getting started

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

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

On-the-job training starts with your employee on their first day.

Off-the-job training will start once you have signed a Training Plan with your chosen RTO.

During the apprenticeship

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

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

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

Successful completion

You and the RTO will assess your apprentice's competency on and off the job in relation to modules in their Training Plan.

Once they've reached the level of competency required and any additional logbooks, profiling or time required, they will have completed their apprenticeship.

How we support you

We work closely with you to ensure the success of your apprenticeship. This includes:

- Help to find new apprentices
- Advice on retaining and completing your apprentice
- Keeping you updated with industry insights
- Help to access eligible funding or incentives

Throughout the duration of employing your Australian Apprentice you can contact one of our friendly staff with any questions you have or advice you need.

At any time, should you feel your Australian Apprentice is struggling or may need additional assistance to continue their apprenticeship, they can request our mentoring support.

How we help your apprentice

As their service provider, we will support your apprentice with:

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

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

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

If at any time you're concerned about the performance or successful completion of your employee's apprenticeship, please contact us on 1800 276 221.

Apprentice training

Training Plan

On the National Training Contract, you will select a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) as your apprentice's training provider.

The RTO will arrange enrolment and discuss a Training Plan tailored to their needs. This plan outlines how their training will be delivered and must be signed by you, your apprentice, and the RTO representative.

Training costs

The cost of training can vary by state and the type of apprenticeship, so it's important to discuss potential fees with the RTO and your apprentice. The award your apprentice is employed under may outline obligations of fees.

Unique Student Identifier (USI)

Your apprentice will need a USI to track their training records online. They should apply for a USI online before starting their apprenticeship with you. Apply online usi.gov.au.

Support payments

Your apprentice should contact Services Australia (formerly Centrelink) to find out about support payments available while they study. Learn more at Services Australia website.

Your apprentice's obligations

When your apprentice signs their National Training Contract they agree to:

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



Your obligations

When you sign your apprentice's National Training Contract you 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 your apprentice receives an appropriate induction to the workplace

Support structured training

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

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

Advise your apprentice of their rights and responsibilities

- Ensure your apprentice feels safe raising issues and problems both in the workplace and with their RTO
- Advise your apprentice of entitlements including wages and work conditions
- Provide comprehensive induction process for the start of the apprenticeship

Learn more

- National Code of Good Practice for Australian Apprenticeships

Your apprentice's rights and entitlements

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

These set out minimum pay rates, leave entitlements and conditions.

Before your employee starts their 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 to download a copy

Learn more

- fairwork.gov.au - National Employment Standards
- Fair Work Ombudsman Guide – Guide to taking on an apprentice fairwork.gov.au

Financial support for your apprentice

Your apprentice may be entitled to one of the support payments or loans the Australian Government offers to help with training costs.

Their APM Apprenticeships consultant can guide them through the process. Here are some key support options they may be able to access:

Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans (AASL)

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

Living Away From Home Allowance (LAFHA)

- If your apprentice has to move to take up or continue training they may be eligible for the LAFHA to support with additional costs of living
- LAFHA is a weekly tax-free payment that reduces as they progress in your training

LAFHA payment rates from the start date include:

- \$120 a week for first 12-months
- \$90 a week for second 12-month period
- \$45 a week for third 12-month period

Other government payments

Your apprentice may be eligible for other general supports on offer from Services Australia while training as an apprentice.

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.

Key Apprenticeship Program (KAP)

The KAP payment is available to eligible apprentices where their employment or training includes meaningful exposure, experience, and work in the clean energy or housing construction sector.

This payment is worth up to \$10,000 for full-time apprentices, and up to \$5,000 for part-time apprentices over the course of the apprenticeship.

- Full-time: \$2,000 at 6, 12, 24 and 36 months and on completion
- Part-time: \$1,000 at 6, 12, 24 and 36 months and on completion

Financial support for you

As an employer of an Australian Apprentice, you may be eligible for financial assistance from the Australian Government to help with hiring, training, and retaining an apprentice.

The employer incentives includes support to industries considered a priority to the Australian economy.

These occupations are listed on the Australian Apprenticeships Priority List.

To learn more about support for priority occupations, use the Priority List Explorer tool.

Priority Hiring Incentive

The Priority Hiring Incentive aims to boost the number of Australian Apprentices and improve retention rates in roles experiencing a national skill shortage.

As an employer, you could be eligible for up to \$2,500 over 12 months for full-time apprentices, and up to \$1,250 for part-time apprentices.

Payments are made according to the following schedule and rates:

- \$1,000 paid at six months from start or re-start for full-time apprentices
- \$1,500 paid at 12 months from start or re-start for full-time apprentices
- \$500 paid at six months from start or re-start for part-time apprentices
- \$750 paid at 12 months from start or re-start for part-time apprentices

You can claim your incentives online through the ADMS Portal.

Download a copy of the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System guidelines.

Disability Australian Apprentice Wage Support (DAAWS)

If your apprentice has a disability, you may be eligible for a weekly payment to support them during their apprenticeship.

Your APM Apprenticeships consultant will help you find out which support option you're eligible for and guide you through the application process.

Who to contact

If you need...	You can...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Detailed information about an Australian ApprenticeshipInformation while employing your apprenticeHelp claiming your government incentivesTo advise your apprentice wants to suspend or end their apprenticeshipAssistance to support your apprentice, or think your apprentice might need extra helpTo advise your apprentice needs help catching up with trainingHelp enrolling your apprentice or trainee into their qualification and notifying their TAFE or RTO	<p>Speak to your APM Apprenticeship consultant or call our friendly team on 1800 276 221</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">If you need to register for ADMS Portal access to start or continue to receive Australian Apprenticeship incentives or payments	<p>Visit MyGovID and ADMS Portal</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Information on, or have any queries about wages and terms and conditions of employment	<p>Visit Fair Work Commission</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">To help because your apprentice believes they are not being treated fairly or their work is being rationed OR if they believe they are being harassed or discriminated against at work or in trainingTo help your apprentice obtain their Trade Certificate of Completion	<p>Please contact us in the first instance on 1800 276 221.</p> <p>You can also visit vrqa.vic.gov.au/apprenticeships and Fair Work Ombudsmen</p>

Useful information

- National resources**
 - Unique Student Identifier
 - Accessing ADMS
 - National Code of Good Practice for Australian Apprenticeships
 - Information for Apprentices
 - Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans
 - Living Away from Home Allowance
 - Services Australia Payments (Youth Allowance, Austudy, ABSTUDY)
 - Record Keeping and Employee Payslip
 - myskills - Training & Course Options
 - Single Touch Payroll
 - Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System Guidelines
- Victoria resources**
 - Competency Based Completion for Apprenticeships
 - Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority
 - WorkSafe Victoria
- Fair Work Ombudsman**
 - Guide to taking on an apprentice
 - Fair Work Information Statement
 - 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 businesses who hire women in trades roles, apprentices in clean energy occupations, and First Nations apprentices and employers.

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**

