

AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICESHIPS ACCESS PROGRAM FACT SHEET

5500 Additional training and support places for job seekers

The Australian Government is investing \$33.7 million over three years for additional and more tailored pre-vocational training and support places to help vulnerable job seekers into an apprenticeship or further training.

In 2009-10, an additional 5500 pre-vocational training places will be available under the Australian Apprenticeships Access Program (the Access Program). These places will support job seekers who are most likely to be affected by the impact of the global recession on the labour market and also those made redundant.

Of these, 3650 places will support young people aged 19–24 years and 1850 places will support people aged 25 years and over.

The Access Program helps vulnerable job seekers facing barriers to skilled employment to access pre-vocational training and other supports so they can move into an apprenticeship or further training and ultimately onto skilled employment once the economy recovers.

This is a targeted response to the global recession. By supporting job seekers into apprenticeships and vocational qualifications, the Government is making a strong contribution to lifting the skill base and job readiness of individuals in the labour market in anticipation of economic recovery.

The additional places for vulnerable young people in the Access Program also complements the recently announced Compact for Young Australians.

Funding will also be provided to enhance the delivery of the Access Program which will benefit all clients. Enhancements to the program will include: more tailored servicing to meet client needs; a modest increase in Broker outcome payment amounts; an increase in the target number of payable outcomes; and targeted research to better inform future early foundational interventions.

How many new places will there be in the Access Program?

There are currently 9500 places available nationally per annum in the Access Program. In 2009-10 there will be an additional 5500 places available for vulnerable job seekers including 1850 places for retrenched workers aged 25 years and over with barriers to skilled employment and 3650 for vulnerable job seekers aged 19-24 years.

These extra places will support job seekers facing barriers to skilled employment who are most likely to be affected by the impact of the global recession on the labour market and also target those made redundant by the effects of the global recession.

Who is eligible?

Prior to being accepted into the Access Program, a job seeker needs to: express an interest in pursuing an Australian Apprenticeship; meet the program's eligibility criteria – namely, they have barriers to gaining an Apprenticeship; and be assessed by an Access Program broker as having a capacity to benefit from the program.

Eligible participants in the Access Program include (but are not limited to) mature-aged job seekers re-entering the labour force, people who left school early, the long term unemployed, people with disability and Indigenous Australians.

How do job seekers access the additional places?

Job seekers who are interested in participating in the Access Program should speak with their local Centrelink or employment service provider to find out if they are eligible for the program.

How will the enhancements and expansion assist vulnerable job seekers?

With its unique package of individualised support and proven track record of assisting vulnerable job seekers, the Access Program delivers early intervention training and support to help vulnerable job seekers to achieve successful transitions to training and skilled employment.

The additional places in the Access Program will enable more vulnerable job seekers to be assisted into skilled employment pathways and/or further training in anticipation of the economy recovering.

All participants in the program receive:

- a minimum of 150 hours pre-vocational training;
- up to 13 weeks job search support; and
- at least 13 weeks post-placement support in an apprenticeship, further training or employment.

What are the new enhancements to the Access Program?

During 2009-10, the enhanced Access Program, whilst retaining the major elements of the existing program, will introduce:

- enhancements to program delivery, based on the principles of greater flexibility and better targeting of services;
- new time-limited incentives for brokers to place participants in a Certificate III course or above in the Productivity Places Program,
- a modest increase in broker payments and a 10% increase in the number of successes under the program,

- extended post-placement support for participants with greater levels of need; and
- funding to establish a Pre-Vocational Training and Support Research Fund to generate an evidence base for further development of pre-vocational training policy and program delivery. The fund will also investigate innovative, tailored approaches to pre-employment and pre-training initiatives which can better support job seekers by ensuring they have the foundation skills to contribute to a productive Australia.

How will the enhancements and expansion of the Access Program be delivered?

Prior to undertaking a competitive tender process, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations will be approaching existing Access Program brokers offering an extension of existing contracts to commence delivering these additional places.

How do people interested in completing the Access Program find out more information?

Job seekers who are interested in participating in the Access Program should speak with their local Centrelink or employment service provider to find out if they are eligible for the program.

Further information on the Access Program can be found at <https://accesstraining.deewr.gov.au/>