



Australian Government
Department of Employment

Employability Skills Training

Consultation Paper



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The document must be attributed as the Employability Skills Training: Consultation Paper.

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Introduction

In the 2016-17 Budget, the Australian Government announced an \$840 million Youth Employment Package to give young people the employability skills and real work experience they need to get a job. The package will deliver a new Youth Jobs PaTH (Prepare – Trial – Hire) to support young job seekers into jobs. The Youth Jobs PaTH will provide:

- Prepare: employability skills training to help young job seekers understand the behaviours expected by employers in the recruitment process and in the workplace;
- Trial: voluntary internships of four to 12 weeks to give young job seekers a chance to show what they can do in a real workplace; and
- Hire: a new Youth Bonus wage subsidy to support the employment of young people.

The Youth Jobs PaTH will encourage employers to hire young people by enhancing their employability, providing them with real work experience, and providing incentives for employers to take them on. The program will also help to instil confidence among young people and incentivise the transition into employment. Further information about the Youth Employment Package can be found [here](#).

Youth Jobs PaTH is designed to build upon existing Government employment services, which include jobactive, Transition to Work and Disability Employment Services.

This consultation paper seeks stakeholders' views about the first stage of the Youth Jobs PaTH, employability skills training. The Department of Employment welcomes written submissions on the questions posed in this paper **by 31 August 2016** by [email](#). Submissions received in response to this consultation paper will be considered in the implementation of the employability skills training element of the Youth Jobs PaTH.

The Department is undertaking consultations about all elements of Youth Jobs PaTH with a broad range of stakeholders. While this will be the only consultation paper issued, the Department also welcomes feedback on the other elements of Youth Jobs PaTH. These comments can be emailed to [voluntary internships](#) or [Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy](#).

Context

The Youth Jobs PaTH will complement the significant measures for young job seekers announced last year in the 2015-16 Budget. This includes:

- the new Transition to Work service, which supports young people aged 15-21 on their journey to employment, providing intensive, pre-employment support to improve work-readiness and help them into work or education;
- ParentsNext, which helps eligible parents to identify their education and employment goals, to develop a pathway to achieve their goals and to link them to activities and services in the local community; and

- Empowering YOUTH Initiatives which support innovative approaches to help unemployed young people improve their skills and move toward sustainable employment.

These measures are now giving young people, and in particular disadvantaged young job seekers, opportunities to succeed in the world of work. The Youth Jobs PaTH represents a scaling up of efforts to improve the employment prospects of a much larger number of young job seekers.

Youth Jobs PaTH is a flexible new approach to youth employment. Employment service providers will help young job seekers to access the elements of PaTH that best meet their needs. In relation to the employability skills training, participants can exit at any time if they find a job or if alternative training opportunities are considered appropriate for them. Many young job seekers will find a job before they undertake any of the employability skills training, while others will find work part way through the training, or after it.

Employability Skills Among Young People

The Business Council of Australia, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and employers more generally have consistently indicated that young people need to improve their employability skills and their level of work experience.

Department of Employment research shows that this view is widespread among employers. As part of the Department's *Surveys of Employers' Recruitment Experiences*, when asked what they thought could be done to improve the employment prospects of young people, employers emphasised that young people need to have a positive attitude to work, motivation, reliability and good personal presentation.¹ Additionally, many employers emphasised the importance of work experience as it develops a young person's understanding of workplace expectations, develops skills and demonstrates commitment.

In other research undertaken as part of the Department's *Surveys of Employers' Recruitment Experiences*, one quarter of all employers recruiting for entry-level jobs reported difficulty filling their vacancies because the applicants lacked employability skills.² As young people commonly rely on entry-level jobs, opportunities for developing such skills are important. Employers who had recruited for entry-level jobs particularly emphasised the importance of people skills, with reliability, motivation, willingness to work and good personal presentation regarded as essential.³

This feedback from employers is reflected in Australian Bureau of Statistics data which show that more than 100,000 unemployed young people have never worked before, close to the highest level since the data series began in 2001-02.⁴

¹ Department of Employment, *Improving the employment prospects of young Australians: a closer look at employer responses*, 2014.

² Department of Employment, *Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences, All regions surveyed and Metro*, 12 months to December 2015.

³ Department of Employment, *Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences, 2014-2015*.

⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force Survey, unpublished data, February 2016.

Youth Jobs PaTH - Employability Skills Training

The employability skills training element of Youth Jobs PaTH aims to ensure all young job seekers have the basic employability skills that Australian businesses need. It will help young job seekers understand and develop the skills that employers are looking for when they hire staff and assist them to be successful in a job. The training provided will be industry endorsed, evidence based and make young job seekers more competitive in the labour market.

The training will be delivered intensively in two blocks of three weeks each. The first block of training will focus on pre-employment skills and preparing job seekers to meet the needs of employers. It will help job seekers to demonstrate that they have the attitude and approach to work that employers want. Job seekers will gain practical experience in basic employability skills such as teamwork, communication, personal presentation, reliability and digital literacy. Training in these skills will be hands-on and as work-like as possible. Training providers may propose to deliver the training in the context of a particular industry's work environment (e.g. retail, hospitality, construction) or in the context of a mix of industries.

The second block of training will sharpen job seekers' understanding of the labour market so they can identify and pursue sustainable employment opportunities. It will focus on advanced job hunting skills, job preparation, career development, interview skills and industry awareness experiences.

Many job seekers will be ready to move into a job or voluntary internship after they have completed the first block of employability skills training, while others will not need the first block of training but need only the second block of employability skills training to get a job.

Employability skills training will be delivered by training providers appointed through a Request for Proposal process to panels in each jobactive Employment Region. jobactive providers will refer each eligible job seeker to the training provider on the panel that best meets the job seeker's needs.

Job Seeker Eligibility

To be eligible for the employability skills training, job seekers will need to be 15-24 years of age, registered with a jobactive provider and to be considered by their jobactive provider to be in a position to benefit from the training. jobactive providers will use their judgement in determining whether the job seeker will benefit, taking into account the job seeker's individual circumstances. The training will be available from the first day that eligible job seekers commence in jobactive but will become compulsory from five months, unless there are extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstances will include:

- the job seeker is already participating in an ongoing activity that is of benefit to the job seeker finding work;
- the job seeker has recently completed a similar type of training;
- the job seeker already demonstrably possesses employability skills, for example by having a strong employment history with positive referee reports from employers; or

- the job seeker is experiencing employment barriers such as homelessness or domestic violence that need to be addressed before the job seeker would be in a position to benefit from the employability skills training.

The employability skills training is not intended to address language, literacy and numeracy skills directly, although these might be addressed incidentally as part of teaching employability skills. Language, literacy and numeracy skills should be addressed through existing Government programs such as Skills for Education and Employment, and the Adult Migrant English Program. Job seekers whose language, literacy or numeracy issues are identified during the employability skills training will be referred back to their jobactive provider for further assistance and referral to a suitable program.

The employability skills training is designed to complement the training which is already available to job seekers through the jobactive Employment Fund.⁵ jobactive providers can use the Employment Fund to pay for accredited training and non-accredited employer-required training to assist job seekers into work. jobactive providers will be expected to make use of both the employability skills training and existing funding for training to provide job seekers with the skills that employers are seeking. This includes industry-specific training.

Young people who are receiving assistance through the Transition to Work service will not be eligible for the employability skills training since they are already receiving an intensive service designed to raise their job readiness.

Mutual obligation

Participation in employability skills training will count towards a job seeker's mutual obligation requirements, with job seekers required to participate for 25 hours each training week, equating to 75 hours per three week block. Job seekers for whom the training becomes compulsory after five months would be subject to the existing compliance framework.

Some job seekers, however, are not able to work or undertake training on a full-time 25 hours per week basis. This may be due to the job seeker having a partial capacity to work or because of parenting responsibilities. Job seekers in both of these categories would be expected to participate for five weeks of 15 hours per week to complete the 75 hours per block of training.

Training providers will be required to record job seekers' attendance at the training, and to notify jobactive providers of any non-attendance. jobactive providers will remain responsible for ensuring that job seekers are meeting their mutual obligation requirements while they are in training.

Limits on access

The Department proposes limiting participation so that those who complete successfully would only be able to re-enrol after a two year break. Job seekers who participate in training for the full

⁵ The Employment Fund General Account is a flexible pool of funds held by the Department that jobactive providers can draw on for reimbursement for goods or services that genuinely assist eligible job seekers to build experience and skills to get and keep a job. The Employment Fund focuses on work-related items, post placement support, professional services and training that meets the needs of job seekers and employers.

75 hours but do not achieve the required learning outcomes would be able to re-enrol once more but with another training provider.

Job seekers who start the training but do not complete for a reason such as illness or to care for a family member, would also be able to re-enrol at a later suitable date.

Questions for stakeholders

1. Job seekers can participate in employability skills training from their first day in jobactive. What groups of job seeker would benefit most from completing the training before the five-month mark? For example, young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or young people with disability.
2. What arrangements should be put in place to ensure highly disadvantaged job seekers, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers are appropriately represented and referred for training?
3. Participation in employability skills training will become compulsory once a job seeker has been in jobactive for five months subject to extenuating circumstances. How will job seekers, jobactive providers and training providers respond to the compulsory nature of the training? Are there any other extenuating circumstances not covered in the above examples?
4. What is the best way for job seekers who cannot attend for 25 hours each training week to participate in the training? How practical is it to have two five-week blocks for these job seekers?
5. What limits should be placed on job seekers' access to employability skills training?

Training Providers

A Request for Proposal process will be used to establish a panel of employability skills training providers in each of the 51 Employment Regions covered by jobactive. The aim will be to have at least three training providers on each regional panel.

To be appointed to a panel, training providers will need to demonstrate that they can deliver the training at sites across the region noting that job seekers will not be expected to travel for more than 90 minutes each way to attend. Existing provisions within the Employment Fund guidelines allow jobactive providers to provide assistance with transport costs to training activities.

Geographic information will be available in the Request for Proposal documentation.

Panel members will have no guarantee of business and will need to rely on the quality of their services to attract job seeker referrals from jobactive providers.

Organisations will need to be able to deliver both blocks of training over the required number of hours/weeks, with each block generally being for 25 hours per week for three weeks. Organisations with expertise in only the first block of training (employability skills) or expertise only in the second

block of training (job search skills) are encouraged to form partnerships or consortia that offer both blocks of training.

jobactive providers and their related entities will be eligible to be appointed to the employability skills training panel but will not be able to refer job seekers from their own caseload to a training program provided by them or a related entity.

The composition of the panels is expected to be announced from February 2017, ahead of a roll-out across the 51 Employment Regions starting in April 2017. Training organisations will need to demonstrate their ability to meet this implementation deadline to be successful in the assessment of responses to the Request for Proposal.

Diversity

Organisations will need to be able to deliver training to the diverse range of eligible job seekers. The groups of young people undertaking the training can be expected to vary according to their life and labour market experience, their level of labour market disadvantage, their level of language, literacy and numeracy, and their educational attainment. They will of course also vary by age within the 15-24 years eligibility range.

To illustrate, there were around 156,000 job seekers aged 15-24 on the jobactive caseload in August 2016. Of these young job seekers, around 8 per cent had not completed Year 10, around 15 per cent were of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin and 14 per cent had a disability. Around 35 per cent had trade, TAFE or university level qualifications.

Providers will be expected to deliver culturally appropriate training to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth, many of whom are especially disadvantaged in the labour market. Training organisations will be encouraged to subcontract in order to fill gaps in specialised skills, for example in engaging with disadvantaged youth or those from culturally diverse backgrounds.

jobactive providers will refer only job seekers who are in a position to benefit from the training and who do not have significant non-vocational barriers that need to be addressed first. The Request for Proposal documentation will provide information on the expected number of job seekers in each Employment Region who could be eligible for the training.

Indigenous Procurement Policy

The Indigenous Procurement Policy aims to stimulate Indigenous entrepreneurship and business development, including through strengthening Indigenous economic participation in the supply chains of contractors to government.

The Department will apply the principles of the Indigenous Procurement Policy in establishing the training provider panel for each Employment Region.

In addition, training providers will be required to demonstrate the use of reasonable endeavours to increase their purchasing from Indigenous Enterprises and to employ Indigenous Australians in the delivery of the services. In demonstrating reasonable endeavours a training provider will be required to have a Reconciliation Action Plan which includes targets for Indigenous employment and the use

of Indigenous suppliers. Other actions which will demonstrate reasonable endeavours include the actions specified in section 4.7.1 of the *Indigenous Procurement Policy Guidelines*.

More information on the Indigenous Procurement Policy can be found on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Indigenous procurement policy [website](#) or by contacting the Indigenous Procurement [mailbox](#).

Payment

Training providers will be paid a fixed price for each participant for each completed block of training as follows:

- \$504.35 (including GST) per participant in Employment Regions (or parts thereof) which attract a regional loading for the purposes of the jobactive Deed⁶
- \$403.70 (including GST) per participant in all other Employment Regions (or parts thereof).

The Department proposes to pay part on commencement and part on completion for each participant.

Questions for stakeholders

6. Should there be an upper limit on the number of training providers per Employment Region? If so, what should that limit be?
7. What practical limitations might there be on providing training to all job seekers in an Employment Region within 90 minutes travel time?
8. How can training providers be encouraged to form partnerships or consortia to deliver both blocks of training which also meets the needs of a diverse range of young people?
9. How could the Department best ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other diversity groups have access to training providers with appropriate cultural competence?

Accreditation status

The duration of the employability skills training is too short for it to incorporate a complete, nationally recognised qualification. It could, however, incorporate a number of accredited units of competency for which the job seeker could obtain recognition of prior learning and build upon to achieve a formal qualification. This would have obvious benefits for the job seeker in terms of skill acquisition and labour market mobility, and would also have benefits for employers as it would encourage further vocational training, particularly through apprenticeships and traineeships. This has particular value since the new Youth Bonus wage subsidy (the Hire stage of the Youth Jobs PaTH) can be combined with the Australian Government's existing Australian Apprenticeships Incentive Program, providing a strong incentive for employers to take on a young job seeker in an apprenticeship.

⁶ See jobactive Deed, Annexure B2, table 4:
https://docs.employment.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/jobactive_deed_2015-2020_with_gdv_2_variations_fix_up.pdf

The employability skills training could incorporate units from the existing Foundation Skills Training Package or from a number of other Training Packages, all of which have employability skills embedded into them.

The Foundation Skills Training Package is accredited training that aims to prepare participants for the world of work. The package provides an extensive range of units that, when combined, form Certificate I in Access to Vocational Pathways, Certificate I in Skills for Vocational Pathways and Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways. Many of the units in the Training Package align with the intended content for the Employability Skills Training program.

It needs to be recognised, however, that the primary purpose of the training is to instil in job seekers the skills they need to get and keep jobs so not all elements of the employability skills training would need to be accredited. Further, it is recognised that some non-accredited training in employability skills and job search skills, such as those delivered by specialist youth organisations, may be more engaging for young job seekers.

Accordingly, it is proposed that only Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) will be eligible to apply to deliver the employability skills training, but that sub-contracting arrangements with specialist youth organisations (such as not-for-profit and community organisations) who might be better able to engage with young job seekers will be encouraged. These sub-contracting arrangements would be similar to existing third-party arrangements which are allowable under the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015.

Delivery of the training by RTOs is supported by consultations to date with industry and employer groups, who have emphasised the importance of the job seeker being able to pursue further training, potentially with the same training organisation. Training providers will be expected to provide advice to jobactive providers on options for further education and training for job seekers who show an interest.

Questions for stakeholders

10. Should the employability skills training include accredited units and be delivered by RTOs? What are the advantages and disadvantages to the job seeker, the training industry, jobactive providers and employers?
11. If so, how might accredited units be delivered within the two blocks of training?
12. How should training providers adapt the training to address the cultural and social diversity of young job seekers including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth?
13. What are the advantages and disadvantages of specialist youth or community organisations being involved in delivery of the training?

Training Content

The Department will prescribe the overarching principles and topics to be covered by the training, while the training provider will develop the required training materials and methodology.

Employability Skills (Training Block 1)

A significant body of analysis already exists to identify the skills required to succeed in the workforce. The *Employability Skills Framework* was developed by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Business Council of Australia 2002, and identified eight skills:

- communication
- teamwork
- problem solving
- initiative and enterprise
- planning and organising
- self-management
- learning
- technology

From this research, the *Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework* (2013) was created in consultation with employers to assist training providers, employment services and any other organisation assisting people to become work ready to identify behaviour relevant to each of the 10 Core Skills for Work.

- manage career and work life
- work with roles, rights and protocols
- communicate for work
- connect and work with others
- plan and organise
- make decisions
- identify and solve problems
- create and innovate
- recognise and utilise diverse perspectives
- work in a digital world

The Core Skills for Work framework was designed to make clear and explicit a set of non-technical skills and knowledge that underpin successful participation in work and provide a common reference point and language to assist:

- those who develop standards, curriculum, programs and learning and assessment resources to more clearly articulate the Core Skills for Work required for certain occupations or at particular points in career development
- trainers, educators and those who work with job seekers to more explicitly address the development of these skills in learners, and to assist those they work with to more clearly articulate the skills they do possess and identify those that they would like to develop.

In March 2016, the Business Council of Australia released the publication *Being Work Ready: A Guide to What Employers Want*, which groups skills and attributes desired by employers into three categories: values, behaviours and skills. *Being Work Ready* is designed to show the minimum standard of skills that employers expect from job applicants soon after they have started the job.

Values	Behaviours	Skills
Accountability	Adaptable	Business literacy
Continuous improvement	Authentic	Critical analysis
Honesty	Business-minded	Data analysis
Knowledge	Collaborative	Digital technology
Respect	Customer focused	Literacy
Tolerance	Flexible	Numeracy
Work ethic	Globally aware	Problem solving
	Self-aware	Technical skills
	Resilient	

The diagram on page 12 provides a visual representation of how the values, behaviours and skills in *Being Work Ready* map to the Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework. Apart from literacy, numeracy and technical skills, which are out of scope for this training, there is considerable overlap between the two frameworks.

Accordingly, it is proposed that the topics to be covered by the first block of training be based on the Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework. This would allow training providers to use readily available units from the existing Foundation Skills Training Package where within their scope. (See Delivery Issues.)

Examples of units that could be taught from the Foundation Skills Training Package include:

- Use oral communication skills to participate in workplace teams.
- Interact effectively with others at work.
- Use digital technology for basic workplace tasks.

Examples of units that could be taught from industry specific Training Packages are:

- from the Certificate I in Retail Services: ‘use digital technology for simple workplace tasks’ and ‘communicate in the workplace to support team and customer outcomes’
- from the Certificate II in Warehousing Operations: ‘deliver a service to customers’; ‘work in a socially diverse environment’; and ‘apply keyboard skills’
- from the Certificate II in Business: ‘work effectively in a business environment’; and ‘work effectively with others’.

Job seekers would receive a Statement of Attainment for completing any units of competency which could contribute to a formal qualification.

Employability skills training needs to be hands-on and contextualised to the work environment.

Training providers may propose to deliver the training in the context of a particular industry’s work environment (e.g. retail, hospitality, construction) or in the context of a mix of industries. Training

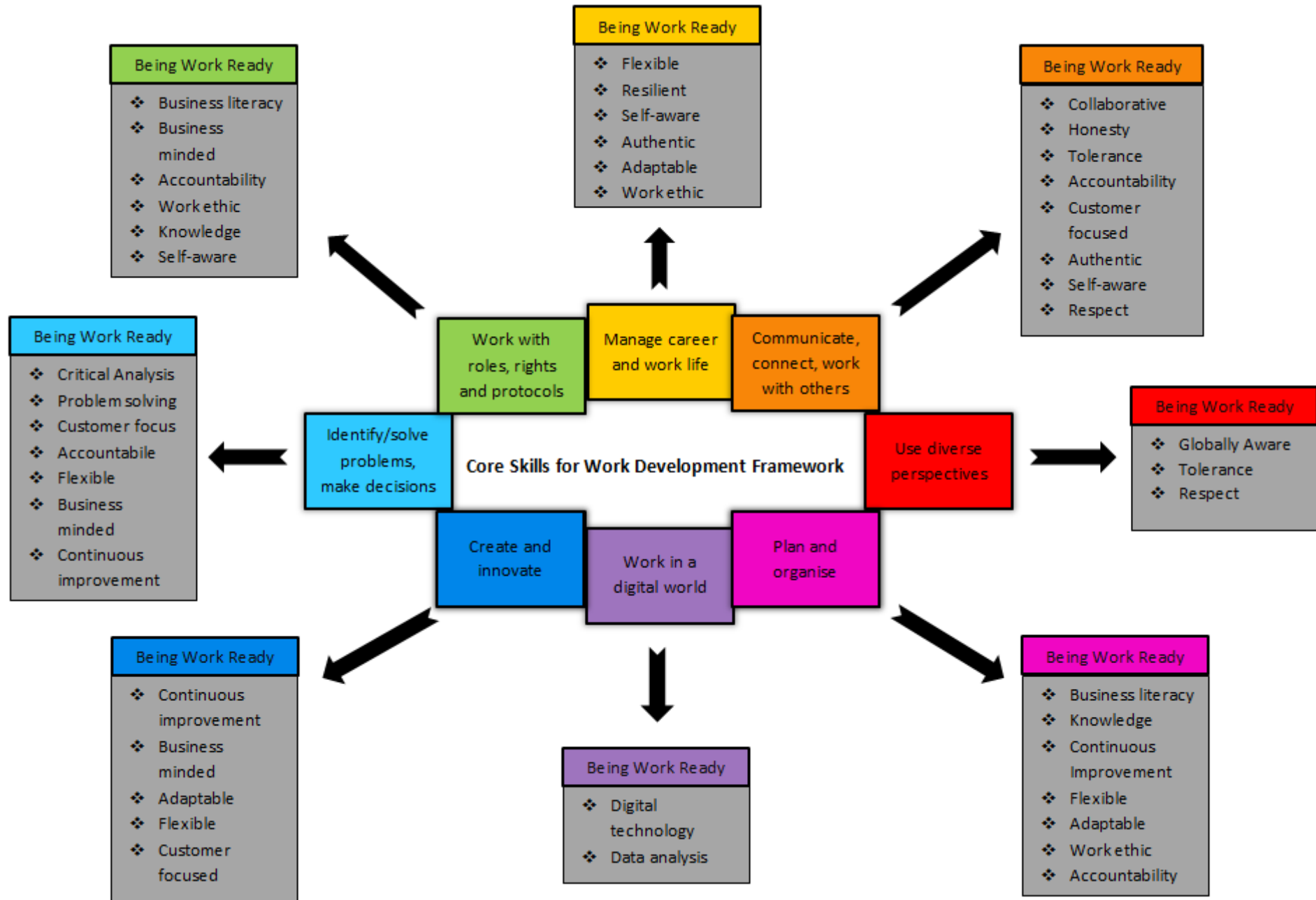
providers will need to specify in their response to the Request for Proposal whether their training will be delivered in the context of a particular industry or a combination of industries.

To add value for employers, jobactive providers will be strongly encouraged to arrange for job seekers to complete additional industry-specific training, such as a White Card (construction), Responsible Service of Alcohol or Responsible Service of Gaming. Funding for this type of expenditure is already available to jobactive providers for eligible job seekers through the Employment Fund.

Following the first block of training, it is expected that job seekers will be much better prepared for work. Their jobactive provider will assist them to determine the next activity they undertake. This could include the second block of training, the voluntary internship (the second element of the Youth Jobs PaTH), or a range of other activities such as getting the job seeker into work, or into a work experience opportunity. This work experience opportunity is not part of the employability skills training itself, but makes use of other programs available to job seekers in jobactive, such as the National Work Experience Program and Work for the Dole. The work experience opportunity may lead to an offer of ongoing employment, but where it does not, the job seeker will have gained valuable experience and referees who can vouch for their employability skills and advocate for them in job applications. The jobactive provider may then refer the job seeker to the second block of training which will give the job seeker the skills to market themselves, capitalising on their recent work experience and newly obtained referees.

Questions for stakeholders

14. Employability skills can be defined and categorised in different ways, and stakeholders will have differing views on the relative importance of particular employability skills. What skills should be included in an employability skills training course specifically designed for young job seekers?
15. What elements of employability skills training would give an employer the confidence to provide a young job seeker with a job or a work experience opportunity?



Intensive Job Search (Training Block 2)

The second block of training is focused on job preparation, advanced job hunting skills, career development, interview skills and industry awareness experiences. This block will sharpen job seekers' understanding of the labour market in order to successfully identify and pursue sustainable employment opportunities, including apprenticeships and traineeships.

Content in the second block of training will include:

- how to identify growth occupations/industries in the local labour market
- how to identify career pathways in an industry/occupation and setting career goals
- how to identify entry-level requirements in a particular occupation/industry including the preferred industry entry pathway
- how to assess your suitability for a particular job
- planning and organising your job search
- writing and updating résumés (for example to reflect the recently completed units of competency and recent demonstration of employability skills in a workplace)
- writing cover letters and addressing selection criteria
- identifying recruitment methods most commonly used in identified industries/occupations of interest
- how to apply for jobs online
- preparing applications tailored to the job
- pursuing job 'leads'
- building and expanding networks
- obtaining references
- approaching employers
- preparing for and practising interviews
- job search etiquette
- staying positive/job search resilience
- what a work trial is and when it is okay
- preparing to start your new job

This block of training should include considerable involvement by employers, for example in conducting mock interviews and giving presentations about the jobs available in particular industries. It could also include presentations by former job seekers who are now employed to talk about their experience of getting a job.

The aim of industry awareness experiences is to provide job seekers with an insight into the tasks and duties of different occupations in different industries to help identify the job seeker's interests and aptitudes. Training providers will be expected to show in their response to the Request for Proposal how they will manage and arrange industry awareness experiences. Industry awareness experiences could take the form of group tours of workplaces to give job seekers an idea of what work is like in particular industries, job shadowing or short-term work experience ranging from a few

hours to a few days. Trainers' insurance policies will need to cover any industry awareness experiences.

There are a number of readily available units from training packages that could be delivered as part of the second block of training. Examples of units from the Foundation Skills Training Package include:

- Use basic strategies for career planning
- Use strategies to identify job opportunities
- Participate in work placement.

Examples of units from industry-specific Training Packages are:

- from Certificates I and II in Retail Services: 'plan a career in the retail industry'
- from the Certificate II in Automotive Vocational Preparation: 'carry out research into the automotive industry'
- from the Certificate II in Plumbing (Pre-apprenticeship) 'identify career pathways in the plumbing industry'.

Questions for stakeholders

16. What subject matter should be included in the second block of training?
17. What form should industry awareness experiences take and what might the implementation issues be?

Delivery Issues

Training must meet the need of employers and young job seekers

It is essential that training providers on the panel are effective in preparing young job seekers for gaining jobs and keeping them. To achieve this goal it is proposed to appoint training providers who can demonstrate:

- that they have the endorsement of one or more local employers and/or one or more industries more broadly
- that they can develop and deliver training to meet employers' needs
- that they can deliver training that engages young people from diverse backgrounds especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers in regions where there are significant Indigenous youth populations
- that they can deliver training that instils in young people the behaviours and employability skills that employers expect in the recruitment process and in the workplace
- how they will work effectively with employers and jobactive providers to prepare job seekers for work experience (especially the voluntary internships under Youth Jobs PaTH) and for work, and assist job seekers into work

- how they will obtain feedback from employers, jobactive providers and job seekers on the effectiveness of their training and indicate how they will use that feedback to continuously improve their training.

Training is to be as work-like as possible

Given participants are expected to develop work skills, it is expected that the training will mimic a work environment and encourage young people to engage in the training through interactive and scenario based learning. In a work-like environment, young people learn what is expected in the workplace, including strong expectations about punctuality and attendance, and being cooperative and positive.

Given that many young job seekers may have disengaged from school, the training should avoid theoretical classroom based learning, and should instead use hands-on and practical teaching methods. The use of simulated work environments will be strongly encouraged.

Delivery modes

The training is expected to be delivered in a group setting, with the exception of the industry awareness experiences, which a job seeker may undertake as a sole participant. Within the group setting, the training must be tailored to the needs of each individual. To facilitate this individual attention, the number of participants per group should not exceed 12.

It is expected that the training will be delivered in person rather than online. There may be scope for additional optional online learning modules, but these cannot be used to substitute for the required number of contact hours (25 or 15 hours per week, depending on the job seeker’s capacity).

Assessment

In order to provide training which meets the needs of individuals, training providers will need to conduct a skills assessment for each participant at the commencement of the first block of training to provide evidence of each participant’s needs.

At the completion of each block of training, providers will be required to assess whether participants have achieved the required learning outcomes. Where training is delivered as a unit from an existing training package, providers will need to use previously approved assessment methods. Where the training is non-accredited, training providers will need to show how they will assess participants.

The Department of Education and Training is developing the Foundation Skills Assessment Tool to assess foundation skill levels against the Australian Core Skills Framework and Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework. Training providers will be encouraged to use this tool, which is expected to be available before the employability skills training commences in April 2017.

State / territory government programs

State governments also invest in programs which aim to improve the job readiness of job seekers with varying eligibility and approaches. Examples include:

- Learn Local (Victoria)
- Ready for Work (Queensland)
- Job First Employment Projects (South Australia)
- Work Readiness for Growth Industries Program (Tasmania).

The employability skills training element of the Youth Jobs PaTH will be separate to these programs and will offer a nationally consistent program which is flexible enough to cater for differences in regional labour markets and in individual learning needs. Subject to eligibility, providers of state programs may apply to deliver the national employability skills training through the Request for Proposal process to be conducted later in 2016.

Job seekers who participate in a state / territory program that offers the same or very similar training would be unlikely to benefit from the employability skills training program. Jobactive providers will be expected to take this into account when deciding whether to refer a job seeker.

Questions for stakeholders

18. What is the best way to ensure that both blocks of training are high quality and meet the needs of employers and job seekers?
19. How can the training be made as work like as possible?
20. What are most effective modes of delivery for this type of training?
21. How could employers play a role in assessing young job seeker's employability skills in a way that provides maximum value to the job seeker without unduly imposing on the employer?
22. What role might assessment tools play and what tools are available for this task?
23. Which state level employability skills training programs are working well and have features that can be adopted nationally?

Next Steps

The Department will draw on the views of stakeholders obtained through consultations, including responses to this consultation paper, to prepare the Request for Proposal documentation for release later in 2016. The Request for Proposal process will invite organisations to apply to be appointed to a panel to deliver the employability skills training.

How to Have Your Say

The Department of Employment welcomes written submissions on the questions posed in this paper by **31 August 2016** by emailing [here](#) or by mail to

Submission Coordinator
Employability Skills Training
Department of Employment
Location C12MT4
GPO Box 9880
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Consultations:

The Government is undertaking consultations with a range of employers, employer groups, training organisations and other stakeholders.

These consultations have been taking place since July 2016 and this discussion paper is built upon and designed to extend and test these findings.

Closing Date:

Submissions close at 5:00 pm (AEST) on **31 August 2016**

No extensions to this timeframe can be accommodated. Submissions received after this date may not be taken into account in the implementation of the employability skills training element of the Youth Jobs PaTH.

Format for Submissions:

Submissions should be in Word format. While there is no word limit we ask that submissions be kept brief and structured as responses to the discussion questions outlined in this consultation paper. Where you wish to raise points not covered directly in this consultation paper these can be done under a separate heading.

Publication

Submissions will not be made publicly available as a matter of course. However, the Department of Employment ('the Department') may choose to make your submission, or parts of your submission, public at its discretion. This may be, for example, on the Department's website, in reports or other materials published by the Department. If you do not wish the Department to make your submission, or any aspect of your submission, public, you must state in writing that your submission is 'confidential'. Please note that automatically generated confidentiality statements in emails attaching the submissions will not suffice for this purpose. If you request parts of your submission to remain confidential, you will need to provide this information marked clearly in a separate attachment.

Privacy

Personal information collected from submission authors is managed under the *Privacy Act 1988* ('Privacy Act'). The Department will collect personal information from submission authors for the purposes of developing and reviewing the Youth Jobs PaTH and the Youth Employment Package. Any personal information collected will only be used by the Department for this purpose. By making a submission in response to the Employability Skills Training Consultation Paper you are consenting to the disclosure of your personal information by the Department through the possible publication of your submission or parts of your submission. Personal information within your submission may also be disclosed by the Department in related reports or material published by the Department, which can be accessed by overseas recipients. The personal information collected will not otherwise be disclosed without your consent unless the disclosure is permitted under the Privacy Act, for example where disclosure would be authorised or required by law. Information about access, correction and complaints handling process of personal information is outlined in the Privacy Policy located on the Department's website [here](#).

Freedom of Information

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* ('FOI Act') applies to documents in the possession of the Department. The FOI Act provides a person with a right of access to documents held by the Government. This extends to any submissions provided to the Department in response to the Employability Skills Training Consultation Paper, including any submissions which have been provided on a confidential basis. A decision regarding access to documents under the FOI Act will be made by an authorised FOI decision-maker in accordance with the requirements of the FOI Act.

Submissions which are requested under the FOI Act may also be published on the Department's disclosure log, in accordance with the publications requirements of the FOI Act.

Copyright

Ownership of all intellectual property rights vest in the author of a submission. The author grants to the Commonwealth a permanent, royalty-free licence to use and adapt material contained in a submission, including publication on the department's website. The receipt of your submission will be taken as your acceptance of this term.

Questions

Should you have any questions please email them [here](#).

We shall endeavour to respond to your question within two working days of its receipt.