



MASTER BUILDERS
A U S T R A L I A

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Submission Coordinator
Employability Skills Training
Department of Employment
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Dear Submission Coordinator

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Employability Skills Training Consultation Paper for Youth Jobs PaTH programme.

Master Builders Australia supports the Government's announcement in the 2016-17 Budget for the \$840 million Youth Employment Package to give young Australians the skills and real work experience they require to get a job.

Master Builders believes that it is essential for young job seekers to possess people skills, a positive attitude to work, motivation, reliability and good personal presentation as outlined in the consultation paper.

1. Youth Jobs PaTH – Employability Skills Training

Master Builders recommends that for young people seeking to work in the construction industry that Youth Jobs PaTH incorporates an industry-centred model. This model should involve a partnership framework with a national and/or state industry body such as Master Builders.

Master Builders maintains that the Youth Jobs PaTH may have a vastly reduced prospect of success if left solely to employment service providers and training providers due to industries having differences in approaches to employment and training.

The initial proposed three weeks of training will be vital to the success for the individuals taking part in the programme. While Master Builders supports two distinct blocks of three weeks of training, this training must offer participants realistic work experience to prepare them for work with industry and vocational skills.

Master Builders notes the benefits of acquiring such skills as resume preparation, job search and interview techniques. However it should be noted that construction employers will be seeking employees who have vocational skills such as manual handling, fork lift licence training, working at heights and their 'white card' to enable them to work on-site for trade related job roles. For non-trade roles, employers will be seeking more generalist employment skills such as business literacy, critical analysis, digital technology, problem solving and technical skills appropriate for use within a broader construction industry context.

Master Builders notes the consultation paper recommends that the programme enables participants to undertake foundation skills training, which Master Builders strongly supports. We are concerned however that this training may not lead directly to immediate job outcomes. The Foundation Skills Training Package was developed to provide trainers with additional financial support for students with low literacy and numeracy levels to enable them to complete a qualification. The completion of any units from the Foundation Skills Training Package ideally should occur within a vocational context.

Master Builders recommends that employers have the ability to select the training provider and to inform the training that the intern undertakes, particularly in the second block of training.

2. 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 will need to be seen by their provider as benefiting from Youth Jobs PaTH involvement. Master Builders recommends that Jobactive providers develop criteria for prospective candidates to match their interests to particular industries.

Master Builders recommends that mentoring provision for both the interns and employers would be beneficial in the programme. The positive results of mentoring are well documented such as in Master Builders' Construction Apprenticeship Mentoring Scheme (CAMS).

All Youth Jobs PaTH participants should receive an appropriate vocational assessment and be issued with appropriate units of competency and corresponding licences as part of their training where applicable. For this to occur successfully, the PaTH programme should aim to work with a range of existing employment programmes for the best outcomes for both industry and participants.

3. Training Providers

Master Builders contends that \$504.35 (including GST) per participant in regional areas and \$403.70 (including GST) per participate in other locations for each block of training is inadequate for any meaningful vocational training to occur within the Youth Jobs PaTH programme.

While Master Builders agrees that the role of the PaTH programme is not to incorporate a complete nationally recognised qualification, there should be scope to include training for a number of accredited units of competency which could meet diverse vocational licencing requirements, particularly within a trades' context.

Training providers involved in PaTH should have a strong connection to industry and be able to demonstrate their ability to achieve employment outcomes. Consideration should also be given to incentive payments to training organisations that successfully place students into work, particularly after completing their initial three week block of training and prior to entering their second block of training. Without potential incentive payments, funding policy may distort PaTH with training providers encouraged to hold onto participants to collect a second round of training payments.

4. Summary

In summary, Master Builders congratulates the Government on the Youth Jobs PaTH initiative and looks forward to working with the Government on its successful implementation for the benefit of both young people and employers.

The training offered in the programme must have vocational outcomes whether this be within a trade or non-trade context. Participants within a trades' context should have the opportunity to acquire the appropriate licences in their chosen employment field where applicable. Master Builders recommends an industry centred model which reflects the differing needs of industries, and even the differing needs of employers within construction who require both trade and non-trade outcomes.

For further information or a discussion on Master Builders' submission please contact Robert Wilson, National Director Workforce Development and Training, on 0407 771 704 or by email robert.wilson@masterbuilders.com.au.

Yours Sincerely



Wilhelm Harnisch
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