



BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS

Supporting vocational education and training

On 29 November 2008, the Council of Australian Governments agreed to major investments in skills training, a key component to ensuring Australia continues to be a productive, prosperous and internationally competitive nation.

This substantial investment in vocational education and training (VET) will give people the opportunity to learn new skills and gain the experience they need to get the job they want.

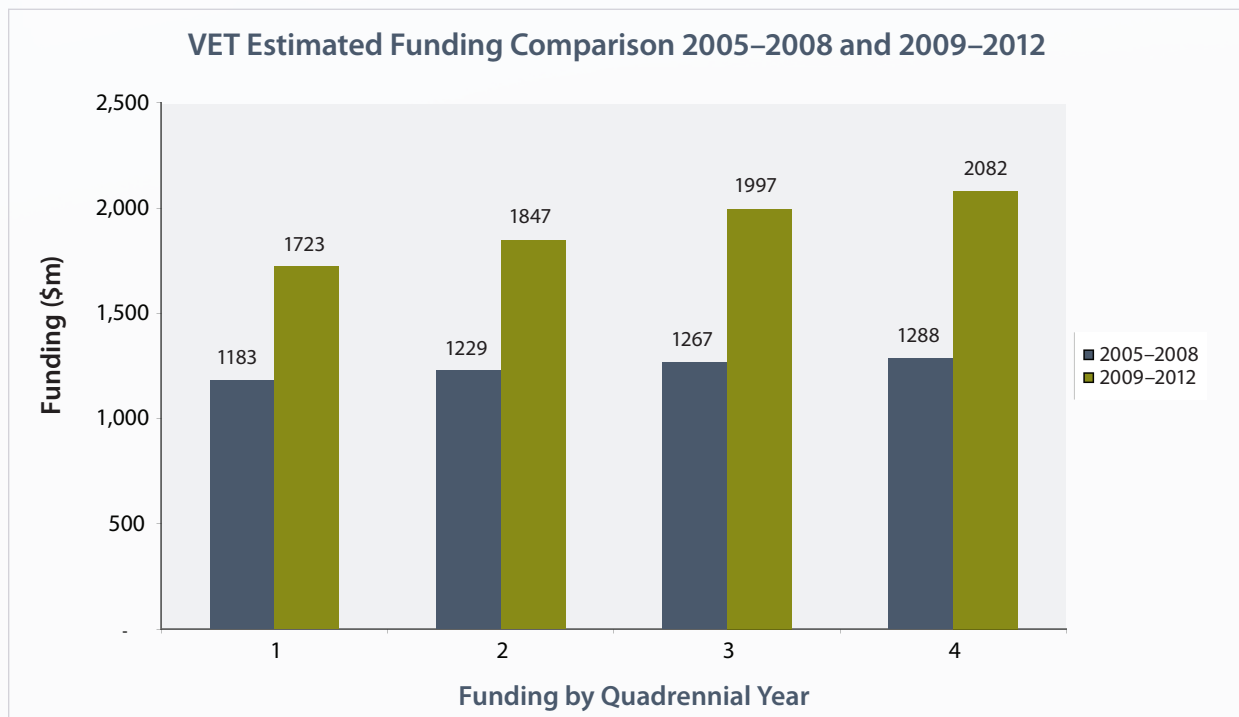
National Skills and Workforce Development Agreement

From 1 January 2009, the National Skills and Workforce Development Agreement will see \$6.7 billion invested in skills training. It will deliver up to 1.15 million VET courses across Australia by 30 June 2013.

There will be more funding certainty for states and territories, with funds distributed based on working age population levels.

State and territory governments will have clear roles and responsibilities and will be able to focus on meeting the needs of their jurisdiction.

The new approach taken in the National Skills and Workforce Development Agreement encourages innovation and flexibility, and reduces administrative costs.



*Note that the 2009–2012 funding includes elements to be transferred from the IETA and funding for the Productivity Places Program



BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS

Through the agreement:

- the Australian workforce will be equipped with the skills it requires
- more people will gain foundation skills, preparing them to fully participate in employment and society
- the national training system will improve its response to the changing needs of the labour market
- skills will be used effectively, increasing efficiency, productivity and innovation
- the number of Australians aged 20–64 years who do not have a qualification at certificate III and above will be halved by 2020
- the number of people with higher qualifications (diploma and advanced diploma) will be doubled by 2020.

Productivity Places Program National Partnership

The new National Partnership for the delivery of training under the Productivity Places Program will target areas experiencing skills shortages and identify emerging skills needs. The program will be flexible and responsive to the needs of industry, employers and individuals.

The partnership between the federal, state and territory governments and industry started on 1 January 2009 and will end on 30 June 2012. During this time, the states and territories will deliver an additional 506 750 training places to job seekers and existing workers.

The Productivity Places Program is part of the Australian Government's Skilling Australia for the Future initiative. Funding will go to nationally-recognised qualifications, ranging from certificate II to diploma levels for job seekers, and certificate III to advanced diploma levels for existing workers.

Under the Productivity Places Program:

- all working age Australians will have opportunities to develop the skills and qualifications they need to participate in the workforce
- individuals will overcome barriers to education, training and employment
- industry and businesses will further develop and better use the skills of the workforce
- areas of skills shortages will be addressed
- Australia's workforce will become more globally competitive.



Skills Australia will work with the Australian Government to identify areas experiencing skills shortages and establish a priority skills and training list. Industry Skills Councils will have an important role in brokering the training effort. A national data portal will be created by 2012 and will encompass reporting requirements and track individual student progress.

The Australian Government will fund 100 per cent of places for job seekers and 50 per cent of places for existing workers. The states and territories will fund 40 per cent of places for existing workers, with the remaining 10 per cent to be funded privately.

The TAFE fee waiver for child care qualifications

To help provide a high quality early childhood education and child care workforce, the Australian Government is working in partnership with the states and territories to waive TAFE fees for students of diploma and advanced diploma child care qualifications. Since 1 January 2009, a fee waiver for child care qualifications has been available to students studying at TAFE and other public training providers.