

# OVERVIEW OF THE AUSTRALIAN VET SYSTEM


May 2024

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Skills for Business  
Jobs for Youth







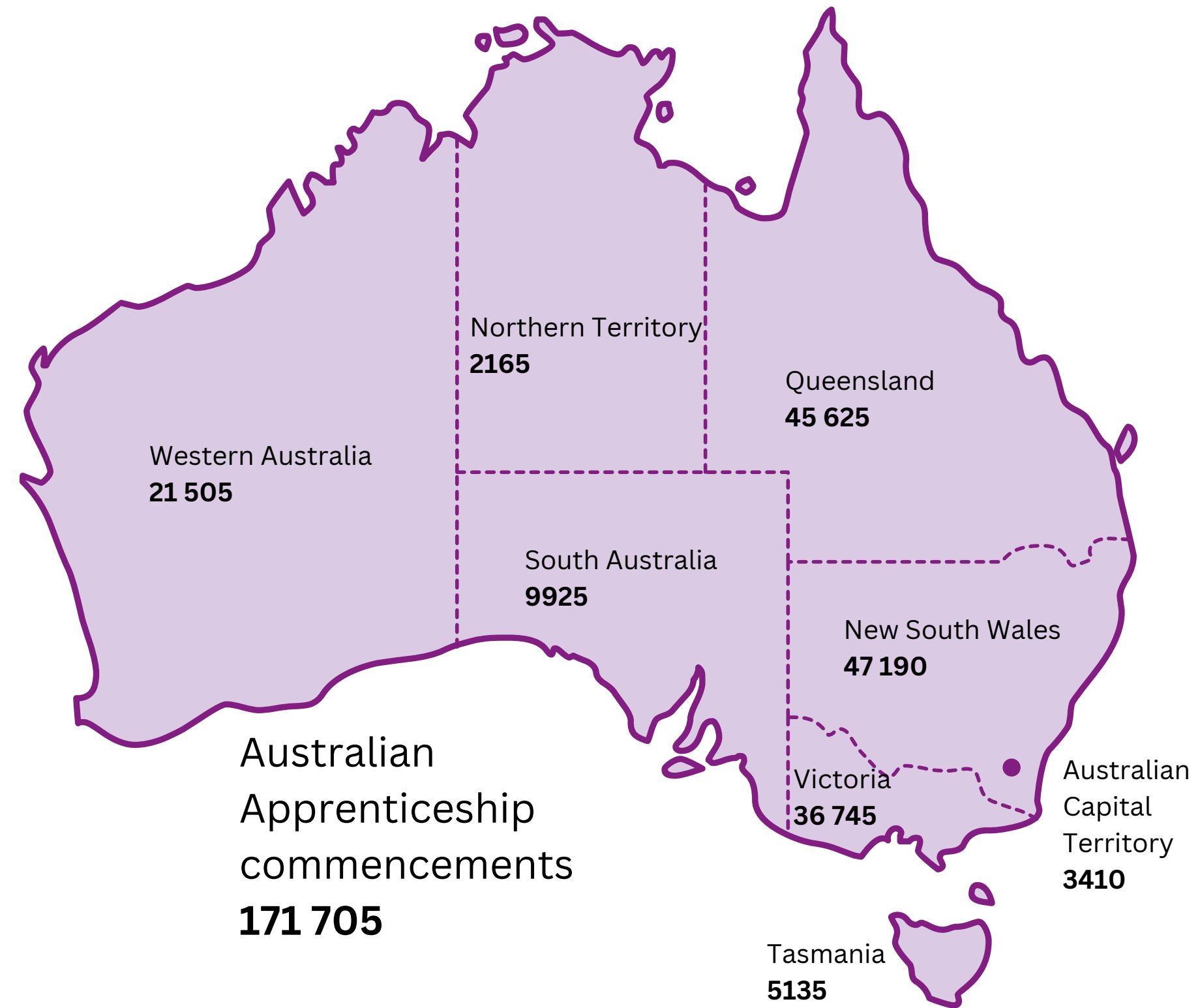
GAN Australia pays respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the traditional owners of the lands on which we live and work. We acknowledge Elders past and present, and recognise the long history of cultural and educational practices of Australia's First Nations people.

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# Key points

- Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Australian Apprenticeships sit under joint responsibility of the Federal, State and Territory governments.
- Australian Apprenticeships cover what we refer to as both *apprenticeships* and *traineeships*.
- Most VET qualifications can be undertaken as either a course (i.e. as an enrolled student) or as an Australian Apprenticeship.
- Australian Apprenticeship commencements and completion rates have been steadily declining over a number of years.
- Ongoing reviews and reforms aim to address the status and perception of VET and Australian Apprenticeships, encouraging increased uptake of both.



# MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS

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# VET stakeholders

## Government



### Australian Parliament

Sets national legislation for Vocational Education and Training and Australian Apprenticeships.

### Skills Ministers

The Federal, State and Territory Skills Ministers have responsibility for VET and apprenticeships policy within their jurisdictions.

Skills Ministers collaborate on items of national priority through the Skills and Workforce Ministerial Council, reporting to National Cabinet.

### Australian Government Department for Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR)

Oversees and implements legislation, contracts and services, incentives and funding arrangements. Works with State and Territory governments on implementation. Undertake and fund research.

### State Training Authorities

State and Territory government departments responsible for VET and apprenticeships in their jurisdiction. Undertake some regulatory functions for apprenticeships.

## Regulation



### Australian Skills Quality Authority

ASQA is the national regulator for the VET sector, with oversight of training products and providers, they ensure national standards are met.

### State based regulators

The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) and Training Accreditation Council Western Australia (TACWA) have some regulatory functions for delivery in their jurisdictions.

### Workplace and industrial relations regulation

There are national, state and territory regulators for workplace safety. There is a national regulator for industrial relations including wages and work conditions.

## Qualifications



### Jobs & Skills Councils (JSCs)

10 industry based JSCs undertake workforce planning, training product development, industry stewardship, and implementation support. Training product development includes creating and maintaining units of competency and qualifications.



## Training



### Registered Training Organisations

Training providers who are registered by the relevant regulator to deliver VET qualifications. RTOs can be public (primarily TAFEs) or private (including community based and not-for-profit).

### Schools

Provide career guidance to students. Some schools offer VET courses as part of high school. Some schools facilitate school-based apprenticeship and traineeship arrangements for students.

### Students

Students, including apprentices and trainees, undertake training towards VET qualifications at an approved training provider.

## Implementation



### Australian Apprenticeship Support Network

Free services for employers and apprentices that: support career advice, recruitment, suitability of the workplace and apprentice, check eligibility requirements, and complete and lodge the Training Contract. They also provide ongoing support throughout the apprenticeship.

## VET stakeholders cont.

## Employment



### Employers

Creates a position for an apprentice or trainee. Recruits into the role, provides on-the-job training and access to off-the-job training, pays the wages and entitlements, and support the apprentice or trainee to completion.

### Group Training Organisations

GTOs are the employer of the apprentice or trainee, but place them with a 'host employer' to undertake the on-the-job training and work. Support the employer and apprentice or trainee from recruitment through to completion.

### Host employers

Work with a GTO to provide a suitable workplace for the apprentice or trainee to undertake the work and on-the-job training element of the apprenticeship or traineeship.

### Apprentice or trainee

Work for the employer, developing their skills and experience. Attend an RTO for training towards their qualification.



# QUALIFICATIONS



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# Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

- Provides a policy framework for post-school education and training, from Certificate I to Doctoral level.
- VET qualifications: Levels 1 to 4 relate to Certificate I to IV qualifications, and Levels 5 and 6 to Diploma and Advanced Diploma qualifications.
- University qualifications: Levels 7 and 8 relate to undergraduate Bachelor and Honours degrees, and Levels 9 and 10 to Masters and Doctoral degrees.
- Australian Apprenticeships are predominantly done in Certificate III qualifications, but depending on the location and industry can range from Certificate I to Bachelor degree qualifications.





# Jobs & Skills Councils



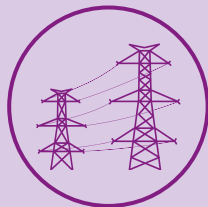
## Skills Insight

Agribusiness, Fibre, Furnishing, Food, Animal and Environment Care. Emerging industries include natural resources security and environmental management.



## Service & Creative Skills Australia

Arts, Personal Services, Retail, Tourism and Hospitality. 'High street' human services along with the creative economy. Emerging industries such as online sales.



## Powering Skills Organisation

Energy, Gas and Renewables. Emerging industries include hydrogen.



## Future Skills Organisation

Finance, Technology and Business. Emerging industries include cyber security, financial technologies, artificial intelligence and the internet of things.



## Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance

Manufacturing. Emerging industries include defence and space technologies.



## Mining & Automotive Skills Alliance

Mining and Automotive. Emerging industries include driverless automotive technologies.



## Industry Skills Australia

Transport and Logistics. Emerging industries include omnichannel logistics and distribution and air and space transport and logistics.



## Public Skills Australia

Public Safety and Government. Covering industries directly involved in public service.



## HumanAbility

Aged and Disability, Children's Education and Care, Health, Human Services, Sport and Recreation. Covering industries that offer community services and support.



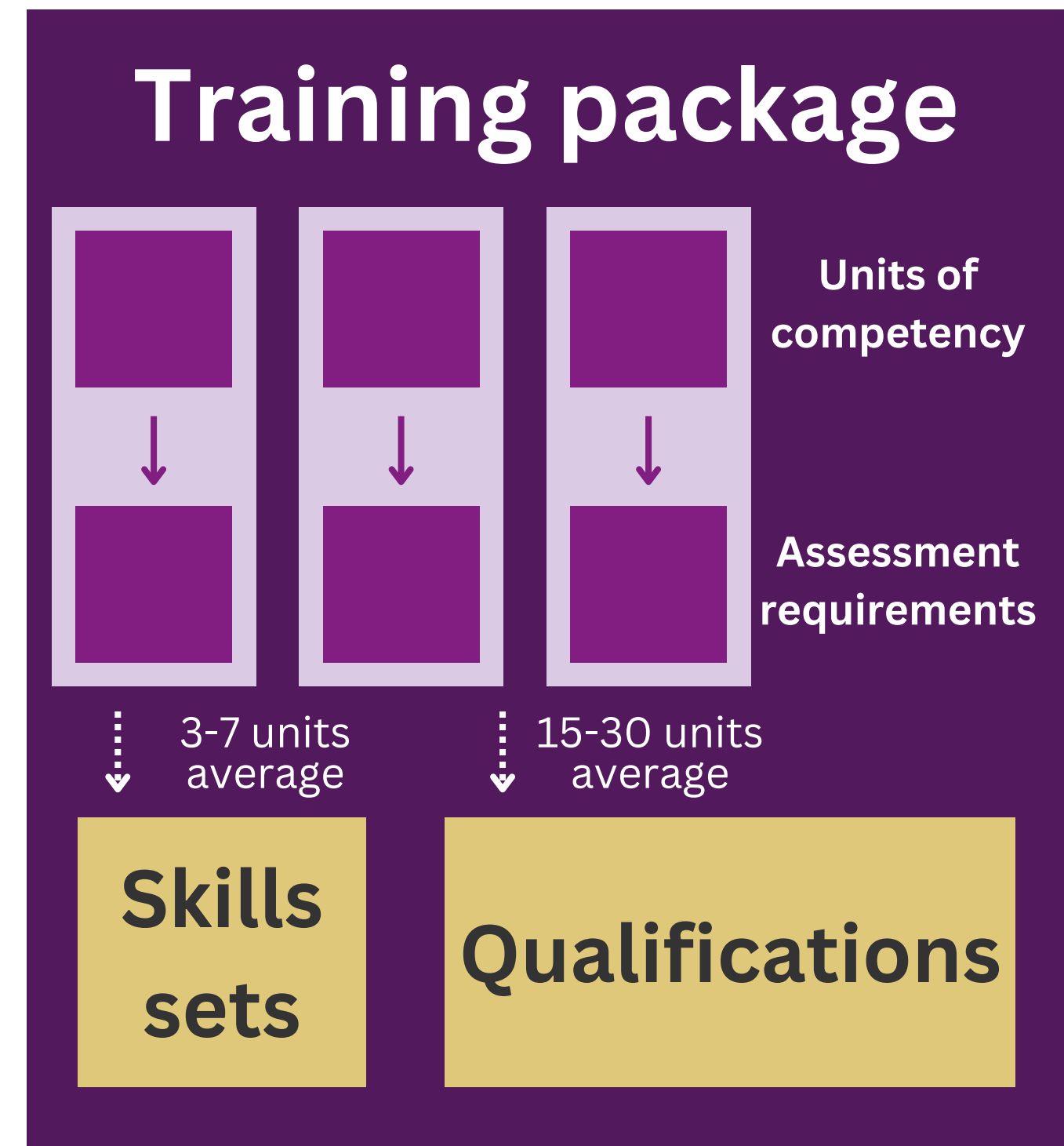
## BuildSkills Australia

Building, Construction, Property and Water. Covering industries that provide property, construction and building services, civil construction, and water infrastructure.



# VET qualifications system

- Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs) are industry owned and operated, tripartite organisations.
- **The JSCs are responsible for training packages, including the planning and development of units of competency and related assessments, and for creating skills sets and qualifications from these units.**
- Qualifications must be aligned to an occupational outcome, or to a small group of related occupations.
- Qualifications include *core units* (i.e. mandatory units) and *elective units*. Elective units may relate to *streams* within the qualification, resulting in different occupational outcomes.
- RTOs deliver units and qualifications in line with the requirements of the training package.





# AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICESHIPS

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# Australian Apprenticeships

Combine **paid employment** with a nationally accredited qualification.

An Australian Apprenticeship **must** include a Training Contract, administered by an AASN provider and approved by the STA. They must also include a Training Plan, outlining the qualification and units of the apprenticeship or traineeship.

## Apprenticeships

Typically trade qualifications with a full-time duration of 3-4 years. Often in 'traditional' apprenticeship industries such as construction, energy and mining.

Most apprenticeships are Certificate III qualifications.

After the probationary period is complete, cancellation of the contract must be approved by the STA.



## Traineeships

Typically non-trade qualifications with a full time duration of 1-2 years. Often in less traditional industries such as animal management, business, retail, and care professions.

Include the full range of qualification levels from Certificate I to Advanced Diploma.

Traditional trade qualifications at lower or higher levels are often traineeships, as they are considered labourer roles (lower level) or supervisory roles (higher level).



Qualification developed by JSC with input by industry.

Consultation by STAs to determine qualification suitability as an apprenticeship or traineeship.

**Qualification is approved by the STA as an apprenticeship or traineeship, along with a nominal full-time duration.**

Apprenticeships and traineeships vary from state to state.

Employers can hire a job seeker or existing worker into an approved apprenticeship or traineeship.



**Apprentice**

**Pre-commencement**

- School including VET in schools
- Career education & advice
- Pre-apprenticeships
- Employment services support
- Employment and work experience
- Job hunting

**Commencement**

- Sign up: Training Contract administered by the AASN provider
- Understanding rights and responsibilities
- Development of the training plan

**In-training 1-4 years**

- Paid employment
- Maintaining the training plan
- On-the-job training to develop skills relevant to training plan
- Off-the-job training towards the qualification
- Support services available

**Completion**

- Gain a qualification
- Become licensed (if relevant)
- Consider next steps

**Post-completion**

- Employment as a qualified worker
- Ongoing professional development

**Australian Apprenticeship Journey**

**Employer**

**Pre-commencement**

- Workforce planning
- Preparation for hiring an apprentice
- Connecting with a GTO
- Supporting work experience and pre-apprenticeships
- Advertising or recruitment

**Commencement**

- Sign up: Training Contract administered by the AASN provider
- Understanding rights and responsibilities
- Development of the training plan

**In-training 1-4 years**

- Supervision & management
- Maintain the training plan
- Provide work appropriate to skill level and training plan
- Support services available

**Completion**

- Sign off the apprentice
- Hire as qualified worker or provide job hunting support

**Post-completion**

- Continue employment of qualified workers
- Offer professional development



# Other models

## School based apprenticeships & traineeships



School based apprenticeships and traineeships (SBATs; also referred to as Australian School-based Apprenticeships, ASbAs) are offered to school students.

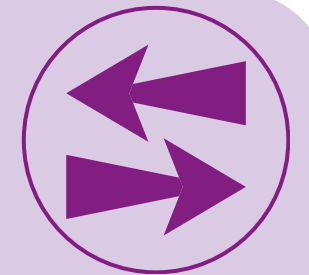
They combine an apprenticeship or traineeship with the high school certificate for the State or Territory of their school.

SBATs are done part-time, with the student undertaking the on-the-job employment along with the qualification training and their schooling. If the student has not completed the SBAT prior to finishing school, they can move into this as a full-time or part-time apprenticeship.

SBATs are not offered by all schools, and uptake varies significantly by State and Territory.

Qualifications that can be undertaken as an SBAT are determined by the STA, and are typically limited to those suitable for school student under 18 years of age.

## Pre-apprenticeships



There is no nationally agreed definition of a pre-apprenticeship. Some qualifications are specified as pre-apprenticeships, e.g. C II in Plumbing (pre-apprenticeship).

Pre-apprenticeships are generally understood as accredited or non-accredited courses that lead into an apprenticeship. They may include general *employability skills* alongside skills related to the apprenticeship they lead to.

Pre-apprenticeships are not required before starting an apprenticeship, but in some industries it is common for employers to limit their recruitment to candidates who are in or completing a pre-apprenticeship.

Some pre-apprenticeships provide units of competency that are then credited off the apprenticeship qualification.

## Higher & degree apprenticeships



Higher apprenticeships refer to Diploma and Advanced Diploma level qualifications. These are 'regular' Australian Apprenticeships.

Degree apprenticeships are approved under legislation in South Australia as Australian Apprenticeships, and are run as pilots in other States and Territories. This is a developing space.



# VET DATA

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# Australian Apprenticeships

973

Qualifications on offer as an apprenticeship or traineeship.

55.8%

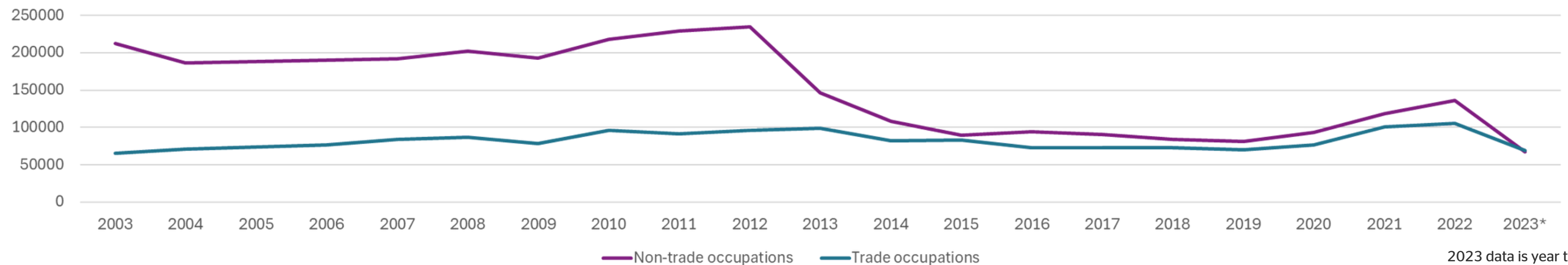
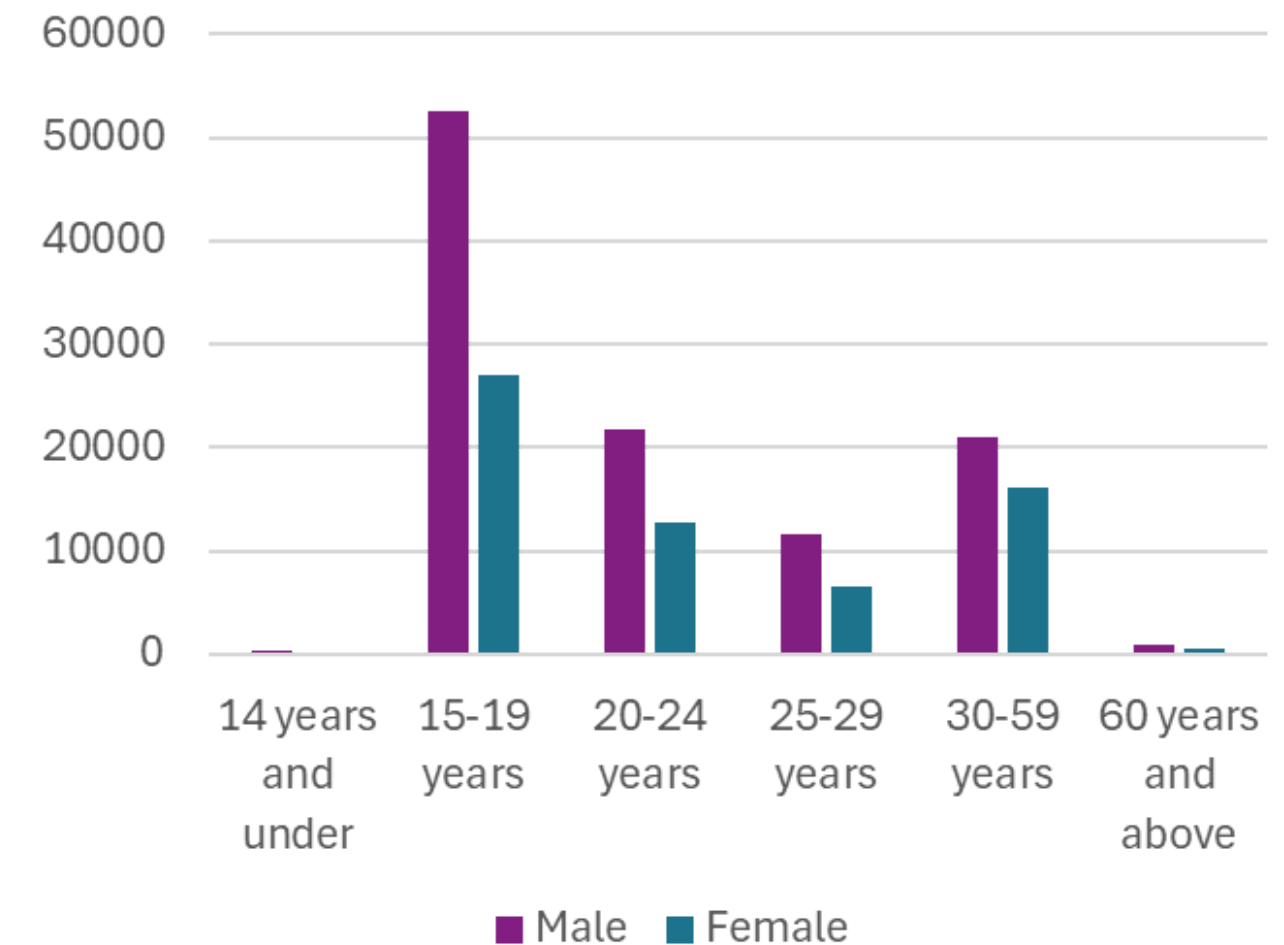
Individual completion rates for Australian Apprentices who commenced in 2017.

387,825

Australian Apprentices in-training in the March 2023 quarter.

95.6%

Of trade completers and 86.1% of non-trade completers were employed after completion.

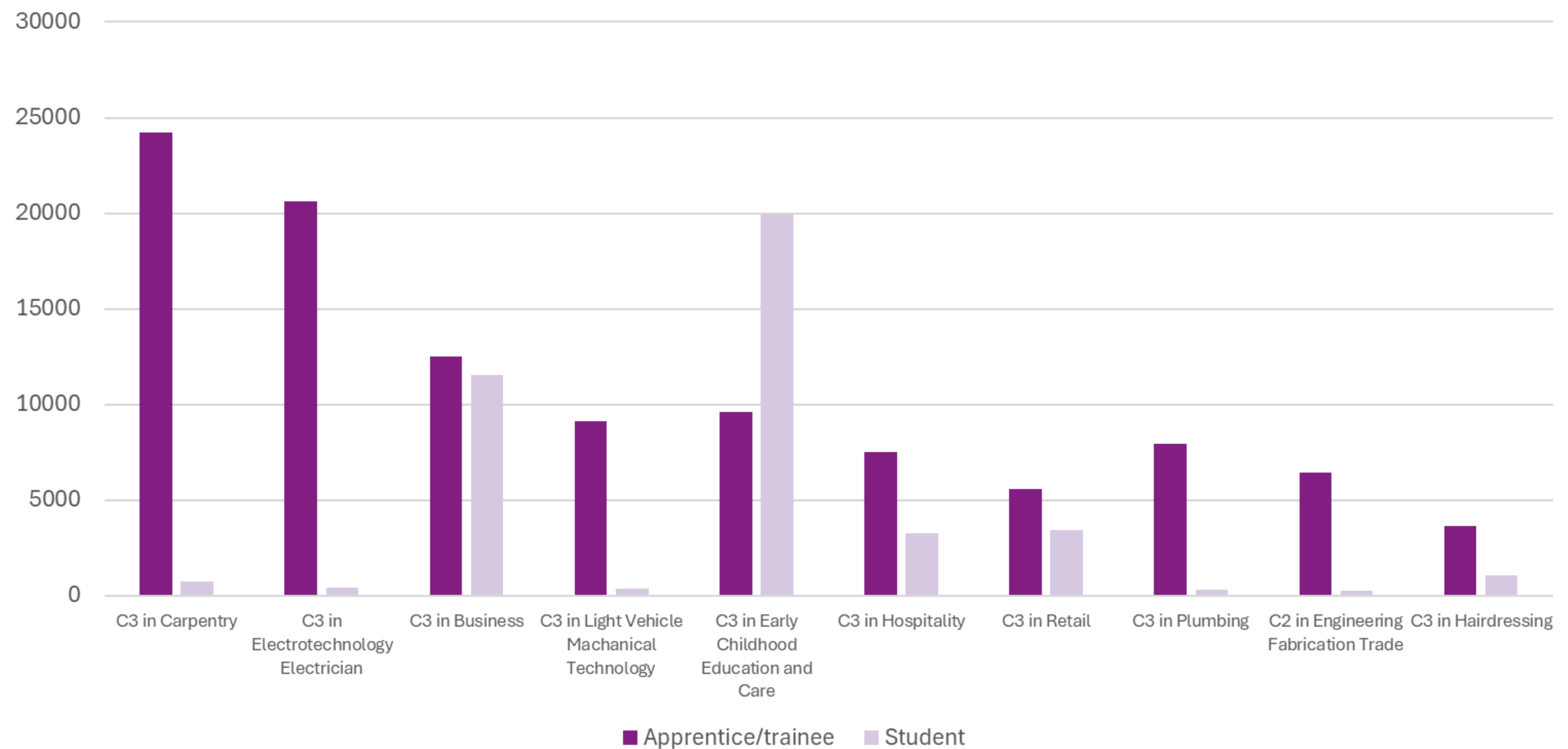


2023 data is year to September

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# Qualification enrollments



Qualification enrollments for apprentices/trainees, and non-apprentice/trainee students, 2022.  
Top 10 qualifications for apprentices/trainees.

# NATIONAL SKILLS AGREEMENT

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# National Skills Agreement (NSA)

- A 5-year joint agreement between the Commonwealth, states and territories to strengthen the vocational education and training (VET) sector which commenced 1 January 2024.
- Provides states and territories with access to additional Commonwealth funds of up to \$3.7 billion over 5 years. This takes total Commonwealth investment in state and territory training systems to up to \$12.6 billion over 5 years.
- *“Australia needs a VET sector that provides high-quality, responsive and accessible education and training to boost productivity and support Australians to obtain the skills they need to participate and prosper in the modern economy. Recognising the key role the VET sector plays in providing strong economic and social outcomes for Australians, all governments commit to working in partnership to negotiate a National Skills Agreement.”*

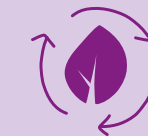
## NSA priorities



Gender equality



Closing the Gap



Supporting the net zero transformation



Sustaining essential care services



Developing Australia's sovereign capability and food security



Ensuring Australia's digital and technology capability



Delivering reforms to improve the regulation of VET qualifications and quality

# CONTACT US



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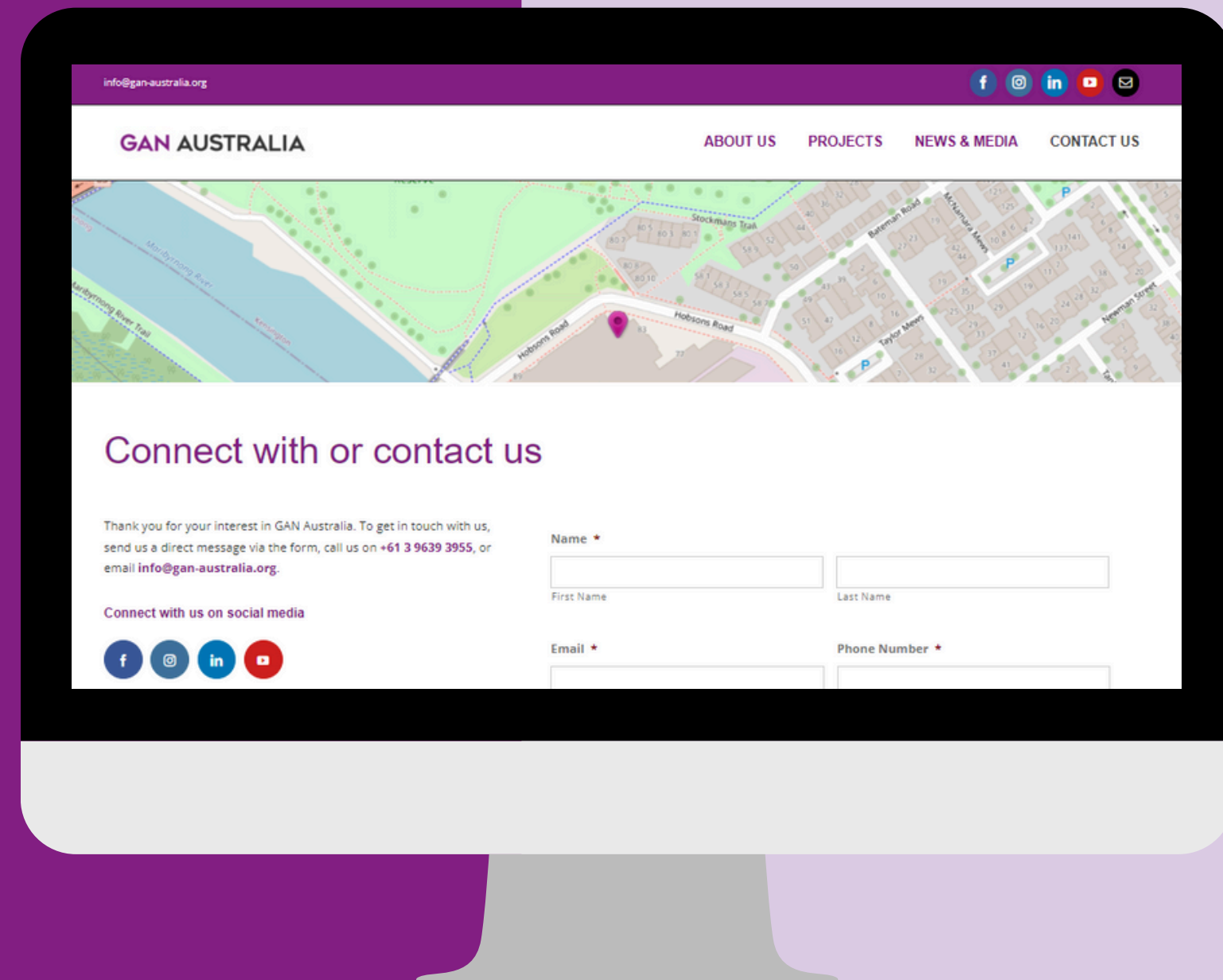
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