



# Employer guide

## Training and assessment requirements

### Competency based completion (CBC)

Plumbing, Electrical, Air-Conditioning & Refrigeration,  
Motor Rewinding. Hospitality, Hairdressing,  
Landscaping and Sports Turf

### Competency based progression (CBP)

Fabrication and Mechanical Engineering, Automotive,  
Carpentry, Painting & Decorating

## Table of contents

Introduction.....	3
Traditional off the job training.....	3
On the job training and assessment.....	4
Characteristics of competency based training .....	4
Obligations of the employer .....	4
Obligations of Bendigo TAFE.....	5
Understanding the individual training plan .....	5
Monitoring training progress and deciding on assessment.....	6
What is competency based completion (CBC).....	7
Competency based wage progression (CBP).....	9
Communication methods.....	10
Supporting your apprentice.....	10
Issue resolution.....	10
Information for employers of electrical apprentices.....	11
Related links .....	13

**Please note: Every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this guide is accurate at the time of printing and is subject to change (01/10/2013).**

**Please read this guide – it contains important information for employers.**

## Introduction

This employer guide is designed to help you better understand your role as an employer/supervisor in the training and assessment process required for your apprentice.

Please read this guide carefully and ask your Bendigo TAFE teacher/assessor if you need help in understanding its contents.

## Training options

1. **Traditional off the job training** is carried out by Bendigo TAFE, delivering offsite to training to apprentices. The duration of training may vary depending on how quickly the apprentice acquires the required competencies. The apprentice is required to attend this training and assessment at Bendigo TAFE. Timetables may vary but may include a day, a week, or blocks of weeks throughout the apprenticeship.
2. **Blended on the job training** (This option is only available to, carpentry, painting and decorating and hospitality) is carried out in the workplace with you providing the appropriate training and taking part in the assessment process in partnership with the Bendigo TAFE teacher/assessor. With onsite training and assessment you will be required to play a much greater part in the training of your apprentice. This may also involve some traditional training at Bendigo TAFE

Please consider the following: Training for your apprentice will need to be structured in accordance with the following details. Please read them carefully before making your final decision on what style of training best suits your business and apprentice.

## Traditional off the job training

- Apprentices attend off the job training to learn the theory behind trade skills, and to start developing and honing their practical skills.
- An apprenticeship is a full time job. Apprentices may attend training one or more days in a week or in blocks of weeks, but the rest of the time they are learning how to apply that training in the workplace.
- It is when the theory and skills learnt at Bendigo TAFE are supported by workplace practice, repetition of tasks and guidance from supervisors that competence is most likely achieved.
- Competence is being able to perform to the standard expected in the workplace.
- Tradespeople are so highly valued in the labour market because of the confidence that industry has in the training they have undertaken with Bendigo TAFE and supported by workplace learning and application over time. This important aspect of apprenticeship training has not changed.
- Apprentices continue to undertake formal training and they will continue to apply their training in the workplace. The change is that they can progress according to their ability, rather than time served.

## On the job training and assessment

- You (or supervisor/mentor) will need to spend more time with your apprentice than compared to traditional training.
- You (or supervisor/mentor) will need to be available when the teacher/assessor visits the site to check on progress. This could be up to one hour per visit (all site visits will be prearranged and agreed to).
- During this visit you will be asked to verify information that has been recorded by your apprentice and then sign off the appropriate paperwork for competencies achieved.
- Your apprentice will be with you (or supervisor/mentor) each day of the working week (except school based apprentices). Your apprentice may be required to attend some training at Bendigo TAFE when it cannot be delivered onsite. This will be negotiated in the individual training plan. Your assessor is available to assist you in all matters relating to training and assessment.
- You will have a much greater say as to when your apprentice will be considered competent, as you are party to the signing off of each competency.

## Competency based training and assessment has certain characteristics

Apprentices can now progress according to their ability rather than the time they serve. This means that when your apprentice has achieved competency in all of the required units, they are deemed to be a qualified tradesperson. The amount of time taken to become competent will vary from person to person. This will depend on several factors:

- age and maturity
- previous experience in the trade or another trade
- how quickly they learn and apply that learning
- what opportunities they have to learn
- the quality and quantity of the training they receive
- exposure to all of the selected competencies
- attitude and motivation of the apprentice
- attitude and motivation of the employer
- accurate and clearly written assessment guidelines and tasks
- the quality and quantity of support from their employer, their teacher/assessor and their work colleagues
- effective communication between all parties
- timely resolution of disputes.

## Obligations of the employer

- You must have signed a training contract with your apprentice and the Apprenticeship Commission (organised by your Australian Apprenticeship Centre).
- You must have signed an individual training plan with your apprentice and Bendigo TAFE.
- Identify the units in the individual training plan that you are unable to confirm competency on in your workplace for your apprentice.
- Ensure your apprentice is enrolled with Bendigo TAFE within three months of the date of commencement of the training contract.
- If your apprentice is not attending off the job training you must release the apprentice from routine work duties for a minimum of three hours per week averaged over a four week cycle. This time is to be spent for completion of theory components or extra training in specified areas.
- If your apprentice is training on the job, provide training with appropriate facilities and experienced people in tasks identified in the individual training plan, and assist the Bendigo TAFE teacher/assessor in verifying competence in those tasks.
- Allow your apprentice to attend off the job training (if applicable) to learn the theory behind trade skills, and to start developing and honing their practical skills.

## Obligations of Bendigo TAFE

- Conduct a pretraining review. Identify recognition of prior learning (RPL) opportunity and assess numeracy and literacy levels to determine if assistance is required.
- Negotiate and develop a customised individual training plan signed and dated by all parties.
- Identify assessment strategies to assist you in measuring your apprentice's competence in identified tasks.
- Undertake a minimum of four contacts per training year with the employer either in person, via phone or in writing to discuss the apprentice's progress.
- For on the job training – maintain monthly contact by fax, letter, phone or email with the apprentice and employer regarding the progression of the training.
- For off the job training – maintain a minimum of four contacts per annum with the employer to discuss the apprentice's progress.
- Sign all eligible employer incentive claim forms.
- Maintain records of all communication, visits, training and assessment.
- Provide to the employer, written reports on the apprentice's progress at least twice a year.
- Negotiate and agree with the employer the units of competencies for which each party will confirm the apprentice for competency.
- Liaise with the employer to confirm apprentice competencies as required.

## Understanding the individual training plan

The individual training plan is a negotiated means of delivering all the training and assessments that your apprentice needs to satisfactorily complete their apprenticeship. The employer, Bendigo TAFE and apprentice negotiate and agree about the training and assessment that will take place during the apprenticeship.

Negotiation means that both you and your apprentice, along with the teacher/assessor will make decisions on where, how and when the training and assessments will take place.

Each unit will be considered and decisions will be made how it can be delivered and/or assessed.

Bendigo TAFE will tailor an individual training plan to meet the needs of the apprentice's workplace. Sometimes there will be situations where you are not able to offer the full range of experiences for an apprentice to properly learn the trade, or where you want the apprentice to learn skills in new technologies not yet introduced to your workplace. In these situations you will need to rely on the Bendigo TAFE training assessment of the apprentice's competence.

The individual training plan outlines some of the major areas that you as the employer need to focus on in negotiations with Bendigo TAFE. Key areas include:

- competencies selected
- expected starting and completion dates for each competency and the delivery and assessment methods chosen
- how competency based completion or progression will be applied.

Upon negotiation of the individual training plan, the employer can nominate which units they would like to confirm the apprentice's assessment for competency on, during the training. Regardless of these selections, for all Victorian apprentices who commenced training from 1 January 2011 (engineering apprentices who commenced training from 1 January 2008), the apprenticeship will be completed when Bendigo TAFE assesses the apprentice as competent and has gained confirmation from the employer that they have demonstrated the competencies necessary to complete their qualification, and by doing so complete their training contract.

## **Monitoring training progress and deciding on assessment**

Consider the following points before agreeing to, or organising an assessment:

- The apprentice has undertaken the tasks several times and can do them independently
- The apprentice has good knowledge of the theory relating to the task
- The apprentice understands how to plan, organise and sequence the task for a quality outcome
- The apprentice can work at a reasonable rate expected by industry and in a safe manner
- The employer, the apprentice and the teacher/assessor have all agreed that the apprentice is ready for the assessment and a suitable time has been organised
- The assessment may take place either onsite or at Bendigo TAFE, depending on arrangements determined in the individual training plan.

## **Attendance and class standards**

As per the agreed training contract and individual training plan, it is expected that your apprentice attends 100% of scheduled classes.

In the event that classes are missed due to illness or other personal reasons, you must inform the teacher(s) concerned on the day of the absence. Messages may be left on the teacher's voicemail or via email, or you can contact the apprenticeship and traineeship coordinator on 03 5434 1563 or email [apprenticeships@bendigotafe.edu.au](mailto:apprenticeships@bendigotafe.edu.au).

In the case of illness over extended periods, a doctor's certificate is necessary. This will not automatically cover the lack of attendance, but will enable staff to arrange alternative training and assessments if appropriate.

## Competency based completion (CBC)

What is CBC? It applies to all apprentices except engineering and automotive. Previously, apprentices and employers have entered into an apprenticeship agreement for a nominal amount of time (three to four years) to achieve their trade papers. As a result of the new policy established by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), apprentices can now complete their apprenticeship once the competencies from the qualification have been successfully completed and confirmed by the employer.

Victorian apprenticeships now operate under competency-based training which places emphasis on the workplace application of attained knowledge and skills - not how long is spent or the amount of knowledge acquired in a formal learning environment.

Competency-based training allows apprentices to move through their apprenticeship efficiently while maintaining an emphasis on quality of work.

Once all parties agree, that all competencies outlined in an individual training plan have been achieved, the apprentice can complete their apprenticeship before the nominal completion date on the training contract.

Competency based completion impacts on apprenticeships in many ways:

- improved training delivery strategies, through improved integration between on and off-the job training
- increased participation rates through a more attractive training option
- increased retention and completion rates
- demonstrated quality training outcomes, through effective strategies to gauge workplace performance.
- May reduced nominal training terms where competency has been achieved

Formal training for apprenticeships is 'competency-based'. This means that apprentices are assessed on the skills they can demonstrate, the tasks they can perform and the underpinning knowledge they have gained that allows them to effectively perform their work. Employers can progress their apprentice through the apprenticeship as they reach milestones in their competence.

For successful completion of the apprenticeship, two things are required:

- Bendigo TAFE must confirm that the apprentice has successfully completed their formal training, and
- the employer must confirm in writing to Bendigo TAFE that the apprentice has successfully completed the on-the-job training.

The nominal term of an apprenticeship is specified in the training contract and indicates a period in which the apprenticeship is expected to be completed.

As all apprenticeships are competency based, the actual completion date may be significantly different to the expected completion date indicated in the Training Contract. When the competencies from the individual training plan have been taught and assessed by Bendigo TAFE, we seek periodic confirmation with the employer that the apprentice is competent of performing that competency in the workplace. The method and the intervals/stages of confirmation will be discussed when the individual training plan is being negotiated.

Once all the competencies have been confirmed by the employer, the apprenticeship and qualification are completed simultaneously and the apprentice will be certified as competent by the State Training Authority. There is no longer a need to make special application for early release or to serve the nominal completion date as per the training contract.

Bendigo TAFE is required to seek final employer confirmation of competency in the workplace in writing. The method of receiving the confirmation will be made clear to the employer when the individual training plan is being developed

The employer will confirm the competency of the apprentice to Bendigo TAFE.

It is important for employers to understand that the date of confirmation will conclude the apprenticeship and your apprentice therefore trade qualified.

For employers of electrical apprentices only – due to the eProfiling system currently in operation for electrical apprentices and employers, Bendigo TAFE recommends using this system as a CBC system also, thus eliminating another authorisation process. You can elect this one step procedure at the individual training plan negotiation stage.

Wages are not affected by competency based completion.

For information on terms and conditions, contact Fair Work on 13 13 94 or [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au) or your relevant industry organisation.



## Competency based progression (CBP) and wage progression (engineering, automotive and construction industries apprentices only)

The Manufacturing and Associated Industries and Occupations Award 2010 and the Building and Construction General on-site Award 2010 allows for an apprentice's wage to progress through each of the four stages (formerly years) of the apprenticeship on achievement of 25% of the total competency points in the training qualification, and for the apprenticeship to be fully completed when 100% of competencies are achieved.

Competency based pay progression and completion means that unless employers fully understand the implications of signing off competencies, they may mistakenly authorise an increase in pay levels or early completion of the apprenticeship.

For further clarification refer to Clause 25.6 (a) of the Manufacturing and Associated Industries and Occupations Award 2010

For further clarification refer to: Building and Construction General on-site Award 2010 (12/12/2013) <http://www.fwc.gov.au/awardsandorders/html/PR545521.htm>

Stage of apprenticeship	Entry, exit and progression requirements
Stage 1	Entry, nil requirements.
Stage 2	An apprentice enters Stage 2. On attainment of 25% of the total competencies for the relevant qualification specified in the individual training plan: or 12 months* after commencing the apprenticeship; whichever is earlier.
Stage 3	An apprentice enters Stage 3. On attainment of 50% of the total competencies for the relevant qualification specified in the individual training plan: or 12 months* after commencing Stage 2: whichever is earlier.
Stage 4	An apprentice enters Stage 4. On attainment of 75% of the total competencies for the relevant qualification specified in the individual training plan: or 12 months* after commencing Stage 3: whichever is earlier.  <b>Exit</b> - Upon the attainment of 100% of the total competency for the relevant qualification specified in the individual training plan.  *Subject to clause 15.17 - Lost time (Manufacturing and Associated industries and Occupations Award 2010)

Previously, apprentices and employers have entered into an apprenticeship agreement for a nominal amount of time (three to four years) to achieve their trade papers. Now, for all apprenticeships, the apprentice can complete their apprenticeship once the competencies from the qualification have been successfully completed and confirmed by the employer.

Competency based progression means that as an apprentice completes a progression point, they may be entitled to a wage increase.

Progression points are triggered at 25%, 50% and 75% of completion of the apprenticeship.

When the competencies from the individual training plan have been taught and assessed by Bendigo TAFE to the progression point listed above, we seek confirmation with the employer that the apprentice is competent of performing those competencies in the workplace. Employers will be sent a confirmation letter which is prompted at each stage of progression for every apprentice.

Once all of the competencies have been confirmed by the employer, the apprenticeship and qualification are completed simultaneously and the apprentice will be certified as competent by the State Training Authority. There is no longer a need to make special application for early release or to serve the nominal completion date as per the training contract.

For all queries regarding wages or other terms and conditions, contact Fair Work on 13 13 94 or [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au) or your relevant industry organisation.

### **Communication methods**

- We will contact you via mail, email, phone or text messages.
- All site visits will be prearranged and agreed to.
- You are welcome to visit Bendigo TAFE. Please contact Bendigo TAFE to arrange an appointment.
- You will be provided with progress reports and results information.
- Our Apprenticeship and traineeship coordinator is available Monday to Friday, from 8.30am to 5.00pm for all your apprenticeship needs.

### **Supporting your apprentice**

- Your apprentice is commencing a competency based training and assessment process that will lead him/her to becoming a qualified tradesperson.
- Competency is when an apprentice can consistently demonstrate the skills and knowledge, to industry standard, as outlined in your apprentice's assessment. The number of times needed to prove this will vary from apprentice to apprentice. Signing off a competency is very important as it cannot be revoked. For this reason it should be clearly understood exactly who within your company has the authority to sign off on competency related paperwork and communicate this clearly to Bendigo TAFE. If practical, to help eliminate confusion, this task should be allocated to only one person in your organisation.
- Competency standards are written by industry experts and are kept current by the Industry Skills Council.
- You can assist your apprentice in gaining the experience he/she needs by providing the opportunity to work on numbers of varied tasks with other qualified staff.

### **Issue resolution**

Sometimes things go wrong. If you find that issues are not being resolved and tension is increasing, try some of the following suggestions:

- Find the cause of the problem and talk it through.
- If the matter is to do with training and/or assessment, call your teacher/assessor.
- If it is about terms and conditions of the apprenticeship, call 1300 722 for your nearest apprenticeship field officer (AFO) Busy at Work.
- For wage information, contact Fair Work Ombudsman on 13 13 94 or at [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au)
- If you have concerns about the level of service from your teacher/assessor, call the apprenticeship and traineeship coordinator at Bendigo TAFE on 03 5434 1563 or at [apprenticeships@bendigotafe.edu.au](mailto:apprenticeships@bendigotafe.edu.au)
- The opportunity to discuss any matters about training and assessment is always available to you and your apprentice and a disputes resolution process is available.

## Information for employers of electrical apprentices – profiling and CBC

### What is profiling?

Profiling is an innovative approach to gathering information about the on the job work experiences of apprentice electricians. It is used by Bendigo TAFE, championed by employers, to gain evidence of an apprentice's competence for the award of a national electrical qualification.

Specific workplace information is systematically gathered and collated into informative reports for the above mentioned parties. This is one component of a three part training program to develop competence of apprentice electricians. These components are:

- on the job training
- off the job training
- a final “capstone” assessment (known as LEM/LEA in Victoria).

Typically, the off the job component requires the successful completion of technical modules by attending training at Bendigo TAFE. The on the job component requires the development of a profile of workplace experience/exposure for each apprentice. A final assessment is conducted to meet licensing requirements.

### Profiling and CBC

Due to the eProfiling system currently in operation for electrical apprentices and employers, Bendigo TAFE recommends you using this system as a CBC system also; thus eliminating another authorisation process. You can elect this one step procedure at the training plan negotiation stage.

If you choose for profiling to operate independently of CBC, we will be periodically asking you to confirm your apprentice's ability to perform competencies in the workplace with regular correspondence. On completion of the Bendigo TAFE structured training, regardless of the way you choose to proceed with the above, you as the employer will be sent a final letter of completion with clear instructions that by us obtaining your written confirmation of the final units of competency being complete, your apprentice is fully qualified and this will signal the end of the apprenticeship.

### How is the profile created?

The on the job profile is created by capturing and reporting on an apprentice's work experience against industry determined competency standards. The information covers quality, breadth and range as well as supervision of the apprentice's workplace experiences.

The apprentice completes and submits a data card via the web each week to provide the required information. Reports on the apprentice's work experience (a profile) are then generated periodically.

### What does profiling do?

Profiling provides evidence for:

- monitoring the development and performance of competency required in producing quality work
- the assessment and attainment of a national qualification
- the attainment of an electrical workers licence
- the need (or otherwise) for job rotation
- allocating work.

### Why do we need profiling?

Bendigo TAFE needs evidence from the workplace/work site to help them monitor and assess an apprentice's competency development. They need a good quality, efficient and effective way of gathering this information. A specially designed web based electronic data capture system or profiling system has been developed to manage the process.

## What are the benefits of profiling?

Profiling as one part of the training program helps to ensure that:

- competent people that are critical to a company's competitiveness and long term survival are appropriately qualified
- qualifications awarded by registered training organisations (RTO's) across Australia are of a consistent and high standard
- Bendigo TAFE is provided with the critical workplace information needed to make good decisions
- employers are provided with good information about an apprentice's overall performance and competency development.

## Are there other advantages?

Profiling also has other advantages including:

- it is the singular industry approved national system of gathering evidence that is non-intrusive to the workplace
- it can improve bottom line profitability and productivity
- it helps improve safety outcomes
- it fosters the supply of good formal evidence for reporting against business quality assurance measures and other formal benchmarks or regulatory requirements
- it can ease recruitment and allocation of work both locally and nationally
- it enables appropriate work to be allocated to apprentices with confidence.

## What part does profiling play in assessment?

Assessment for a national qualification is now the responsibility of Bendigo TAFE, in partnership with the employer and apprentice. The profiling system:

- is not a standalone assessment tool in itself but part of the overall assessment process
- is a powerful tool that aids in the assessment process
- is a passive, almost non-intrusive system
- avoids the most intrusive aspects of other competency assessment approaches by relying on a partnership between the apprentice and the employer/supervisor to report on everyday workplace activities
- collects regular evidence of an apprentice's ability to: plan to carry out a range of jobs, carry out the jobs and complete the jobs to the performance standards set by industry (national competency standards).

## Do all apprentice electricians have to use profiling?

Yes, with the support of all key industry stakeholder bodies, profiling is the industry preferred and recommended method for the collection of the on the job evidence for assessments for apprentice electricians. It is intended that profiling will be adopted across the full range of the electrotechnology industry apprenticeship training programs including electrical, refrigeration, lifts, instrumentation and electronics, because it facilitates:

- a singular process for gathering workplace evidence
- formal workplace information and evidence
- limited intervention in the workplace of assessors
- improvements in safety and safe work practices.

## Useful links

### **Bendigo TAFE website**

[www.bendigotafe.edu.au](http://www.bendigotafe.edu.au)

### **Vocational Education and Training in Australia**

<http://training.gov.au>

### **Australian Apprenticeships**

[www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au)

### **Higher Education Skills Group**

[www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au)

### **Apprenticeship Administration Information Line (VRQA)**

t. 1300 722 603

### **Australian Apprenticeships and Traineeships Information Service**

[www.natinfo.com.au](http://www.natinfo.com.au)

### **Fair Work Ombudsman**

t. 13 13 94

[www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au)

### **VETASSESS**

t. 03 96554801

[www.vetassess.com.au](http://www.vetassess.com.au)

### **WorkSafe**

t. 1800 136 089

[www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au)

### **eProfiling**

t. 1300 477 808

[www.eprofiling.com.au](http://www.eprofiling.com.au)

### **Need an Apprentice – Find one Be found**

[www.needanapprentice.com.au](http://www.needanapprentice.com.au)

### **Alink**

[www.alink.org.au](http://www.alink.org.au)

### **Money Smart** – Simple guidance you can trust

[www.moneysmart.gov.au/life-events-and-you/under-25s](http://www.moneysmart.gov.au/life-events-and-you/under-25s)

## **For further details**

Please contact the Bendigo TAFE Apprenticeship and Traineeship Coordinator at the Charleston Road Campus.

t. 03 5434 1563 e. [apprenticeships@bendigotafe.edu.au](mailto:apprenticeships@bendigotafe.edu.au)