



Overhaul work-integrated learning to tackle skills investment challenge

A parliamentary committee has recommended a universal framework for work-integrated learning such as internships and placements, in a bid to help alleviate skill shortages.

The Legislative Assembly Economy and Infrastructure Committee has made 31 recommendations after assessing Victorian universities' ability to meet workforce priorities.

As part of developing the standard work-integrated learning system, the State Government has been urged to work with Victorian universities, industry and other peak bodies to:

- Incentivise industry participation in work-integrated learning
- Centralise management of work-integrated learning opportunities
- Create an online platform to meet work placement demand and supply
- Raise awareness of work-integrated learning benefits for both industry and students
- Explore new and flexible models of work-integrated learning to increase opportunities
- Address barriers to participation for disadvantaged and underrepresented students

“A more systemic and comprehensive work-integrated learning framework can enhance the ability of students to acquire the skills and aptitudes required by industry,” Committee Chair John Eren said.

“Promoting the job-readiness of graduates can be further boosted by co-designing course curricula with industry experts. Career counselling and guidance that is embedded in university courses can also promote job-readiness.

“Additionally, universities can improve the promotion of priority skills courses, beginning in secondary schools, and support enrolments from marginalised student groups to increase the workforce diversity of in-demand sectors.”

Several regional Members of Parliament are on the Committee, which has made further recommendations relating to tertiary providers and skill shortages in regional and rural areas.

“This includes improving student work placements in regional areas, responding to skill demands in regional economies by developing innovative upskilling opportunities and supporting regional students to enrol in priority skill courses,” Mr Eren said.

The report also made 34 findings arising from 26 public submissions and three days of public hearings involving 38 witnesses from 24 organisations, including nine Victorian universities.

“On behalf of the Committee I thank the universities, industry groups, government bodies, education providers and individuals who wrote submissions and attended public hearings,” Mr Eren said.

“The Committee greatly appreciates the time and effort that stakeholders made to inform the findings and recommendations of the report.”

The State Government has until March 2023 to respond to the recommendations.

To read the report go to the Committee's [website](#).

Watch video snapshots of evidence provided at public hearings on YouTube.