

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

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| Portfolio:            | Skills and TAFE              |
| Witness:              | Lill Healy, Deputy Secretary |
| Committee Member:     | Jade Benham                  |
| Page/s of transcript: | 9                            |

**Relevant text:**

Jade BENHAM: If we can move on to the cert III, I think it was Ms Healy that mentioned the 91 programs that were removed from the skills needs list last year. One of those was the cert III in outside-hours school care. Has demand for before and after school care reduced, do you know, in the last year?

Gayle TIERNEY: Is that correct, Craig?

Lill HEALY: I will kick off, Craig. Again, at a general level, the courses that were adjusted for the 2025 allocation were based on the provision being really strong in the fee-for-service market, primarily because they are low cost; them not being a high-priority course in terms of where government wants to put its effort and in terms of its priorities; and also where we can see that TAFEs have got adequate provision across the state. So for a number of the courses, and early childhood is a good one, TAFEs are effectively providing about 90 per cent of that provision through 2025, which is the goal.

Jade BENHAM: Of early childhood education?

Lill HEALY: Broadly. Let me let me take that number of 90 per cent on notice, because I am not looking at my notes, so I will come back on that number. But the principle here is that where we have a footprint across the state of high-quality TAFE provision, supplemented by really strong community-based and Aboriginal community controlled registered training organisations and really solid privately owned niche providers who have a fantastic track record in delivery, it is that managed system that will serve us best. As we remove a course from subsidy we appreciate that that is not well received by those who have provided it in the past, but it is done on the basis.

**Answer:**

Through the Victorian Skills Plan, the Victorian Skills Authority provides advice about Victoria's skills needs and employment demand. The Victorian Skills Plan projects that jobs for child carers, which includes Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) workers, are expected to grow by 2 per cent per year from 2024 to 2027. Almost 40 per cent of new workers needed are due to expected retirements.

In Victoria, there are over 30 different vocational and higher education qualifications that allow someone to work as an OSHC worker in Victoria. One of these qualifications is the Certificate III in Outside School Hours Care.

In 2023, following a request from industry, the Certificate III in Outside School Hours Care was added for Skills First funding. However, training providers did not take up delivery of the course and it was subsequently removed for Skills First funding for 2025.

Removing the course from Skills First funding is not expected to impact the OSHC workforce given the lack of training delivery and the number of alternative qualifications in Victoria. Alternative qualifications include the Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care, Certificate III in School

Based Education Support, Certificate IV in School Based Education Support, Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care, and Diploma of School Age Education and Care, all of which remain available for Skills First funding in 2025.

The Alban Labor Government is supporting Victoria's child carer and educator workforce training, with the Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care, Certificate III in School Based Education Support, Certificate IV in School Based Education Support and the Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care all available through the game-changing Free TAFE initiative. More than 90% of funded TAFE delivery in these programs is through Free TAFE.

Free TAFE removes financial barriers and provides a pathway to a reliable job that leads to a rewarding career. Already over 206,000 Victorians have saved on average \$3,000 per course.

People wishing to gain a qualification in early childcare are also able to access subsidised training at a number of RTOs, including community providers.

We are aligning subsidised training places with industry training needs, including for the early learning and childcare industry.

This alignment also includes prioritising regional training providers, so Victorians can access training opportunities closer to home.

Skills First funding is determined by a stand-alone independent area of Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR). An independent panel makes decisions on what is funded according to skills shortages, and training needs.

The Department will also continue to monitor course demand and delivery, reviewing its settings as needed to make sure it prioritises funding to key areas.

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| Witness:              | Lill Healy      |
| Committee Member:     | Aiv Puglielli   |
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**Relevant text:**

Aiv PUGLIELLI: Great. I am just going to home in on a particular certification if I can. Can I ask: how many institutions are currently offering the cert III in beekeeping in Victoria?

Gayle TIERNEY: Can I take that on notice? I know BKI was. I am not sure if they still are, but I will check.

Aiv PUGLIELLI: If that is coming on notice, can I also ask how many Victorians have completed a cert II in beekeeping since 2020?

Gayle TIERNEY: Yes.

Aiv PUGLIELLI: That is alright?

Gayle TIERNEY: Easy.

**Answer:**

The Certificate III in Beekeeping was funded prior to 2017 and was included in the Funded Course List (now the Training Needs List) with the implementation of Skills First in 2017. While the program has been available for subsidised delivery by any provider contracted with the Victorian Government under Skills First, only Melbourne Polytechnic has delivered it since 2023, with no reported government funded enrolments before then.

In 2023, there were 20 government funded commencements in Certificate III in Beekeeping, and 80% completed (16 completions) within 2 years.

In 2024, there were 34 government funded commencements in Certificate III in Beekeeping, but reliable completions information is not yet available as the program typically takes 12-24 months to complete.