

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

Inquiry into the 2022-23 Budget Estimates – 23 May 2022 10:20-11:50

Training and Skills and Higher Education

Responses to questions on notice

S1.

Portfolio:	Training and Skills and Higher Education
Witness:	Hon. Gayle Tierney
Committee member:	Mr Newbury
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Mr NEWBURY: Thank you. If I can pick up a point that you were raising, to either yourself or the minister: in terms of skills and training, how many TAFEs are implementing micro-credentialled courses?

Ms TIERNEY: I think, Mr Newbury, the best person to possibly answer this is Dr Booth.

Mr NEWBURY: Oh, thank you. Sorry.

Ms TIERNEY: In terms of skill sets, a lot of work has been done over the last 18 months.

Mr NEWBURY: Yes. It was a genuine question, I can assure you.

Ms TIERNEY: Yes, yes. No, I take that. Dr Booth?

Dr BOOTH: Thank you, Minister. The Victorian government has a funded skill sets list, which includes a broad range of, effectively, accredited micro-credentials. In 2021 we had a bit over 10 000 commencements on that list. There has been a significant growth in activities. If you look back to the levels of activity in those short forms of accredited training, back a couple of years, we have seen growth of over 100 per cent. Now, I do not have the breakdown of, by TAFE, who is doing what in front of me, but we have seen—

Mr NEWBURY: Would you mind taking that on notice if possible?

Dr BOOTH: Yes, I will check if that data is available. But as I say, we have got over 10 000 skill set commencements in the last year. They have all been validated through industry engagement processes, and I suppose just to make what I think is an important point for the committee: we have been very careful to test which short courses the government will fund and provide advice on that with industry to ensure there are meaningful and genuine employment opportunities at the end of it. So we have got an approach there which is really about validating and leveraging—making sure we have got strong quality assurance mechanisms wrapped around those skill sets to ensure that students are getting good outcomes, it is genuinely meeting employer need and the providers are going about it in the right way.

Response to the question:

The official term for micro-credentials in the Victorian funding system is accredited skill sets.

All TAFEs and Dual Sector providers have delivered skill set programs in 2021.

In 2021, there were 4,873 funded enrolments.

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Witness:	Hon. Gayle Tierney
Committee member:	Mrs McArthur
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Mrs McARTHUR: Okay, thank you. How will you evaluate the success of the officers and the program, and what improvement in completion rates do you expect with that \$12 million worth of funding?

Mr BAKER: The program has an evaluation built into the budget implementation approach, so we will be evaluating the program close to its conclusion from that two-year funding program. We have introduced compulsory professional development processes for the group of 28. So we have standardised the ASO offering, and that enables us to benchmark performance across the ASOs as well.

Mrs McARTHUR: Okay, good. You need \$12 million to do it. So perhaps you could continue on. What are the completion rates for Indigenous people?

Mr BAKER: I do not have that information to hand, Mrs McArthur.

Mrs McARTHUR: Could you take it on notice?

Mr BAKER: Yes.

Dr BOOTH: We will see if it is available.

Mrs McARTHUR: You are indicating that they may not be available, the completion rates?

Dr BOOTH: No, we certainly have completion rates, as of course you will be aware, in the performance statement. But it just depends how that data can be disaggregated. So that is what I will need to get some technical advice on.

Mrs McARTHUR: Okay, so if you would like to take that on notice, and while you are at it perhaps you can give us the completion rates for women in trade apprenticeships. You will take that on notice too?

Response to the question:

The Budget Paper No.3 performance measure “Six-year completion rate for apprentice commencements in government subsidised AQF qualifications” disaggregated for the two cohorts are as follows:

BP3 measure: Six-year completion rate for apprentice commencements in government subsidised AQF qualifications					
BP3 measure disaggregated by Cohorts:	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Indigenous	45.2%	45.0%	46.4%	53.8%	45.3%
Women	53.3%	53.9%	55.8%	55.0%	55.1%

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Committee member:	Mrs McArthur
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Mrs McARTHUR: Well, we are going to invest in \$12 million worth of officers to ensure that there are completion rates, so surely you must know what completion rates you currently have.

Dr BOOTH: Yes, sorry. So as you will note on budget paper 3, the six-year completion rate for apprentices is 62.8 per cent, which is—

Mrs McARTHUR: So can we have that completion rate split by industry—how many women completing trade apprenticeships in plumbing versus electrical, for example?

Dr BOOTH: So to return to my earlier answer, subject to that being technically feasible it is something the department can look at. I do not have that department here, and I will need to get advice from the data team on how that data can be disaggregated.

Response to the question:

BP3 Completion rate data are available for the following Fields of Education as listed below for Women (where there are sufficient numbers of students to provide statistically valid results). They are not readily available by industry.

BP3 Measure: Six-year completion rate for apprentice commencements in government subsidised AQF qualifications (Women) for each Field of Education	2021
Personal Services	54%
Food and Hospitality	53%
Building	38%
Civil Engineering	70%
Automotive Engineering and Technology	48%
Electrical and Electronic Engineering and Technology	76%

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Portfolio:	Training and Skills and Higher Education
Witness:	Hon. Gayle Tierney
Committee member:	Mr Hibbins
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Mr HIBBINS: Okay, terrific. Thank you. Finally, Minister, do you have information in terms of what the current recurrent hourly VET funding rate is across the entire sector?

Ms TIERNEY: I will defer to one of my colleagues, but I know that it was increased in the previous budget, the hourly rate. Dr Booth.

Dr BOOTH: So there are a range of hourly rates. They are published as part of those tax-funded course lists. So there are slightly under 700 courses on that list, and they all have a published hourly rate. Those rates vary quite significantly according to the cost of delivery, so I would refer you in the first instance to that funded course list, which shows the range of rates. Because VET is a competency-based completion system, each individual student can take either a little or quite a long period of time to finish, based on their existing level of skills. So that needs to be read—

Mr HIBBINS: Do you have one for the entire state? Do you have it all put together in terms of—

Dr BOOTH: Yes. The funded course list has the hourly rate, and then there is the purchasing guide that specifies the maximum payable hours for any given course. So they are all publicly available. We are happy to provide you information on where you can access those rates.

Mr HIBBINS: Right

Response to the question:

The Funded Course List contains the courses and associated hourly subsidy rates which are funded under Skills First. The Victorian Purchasing Guides set the maximum number of hours which will be funded for each course.

The Funded Course List is published on the Department's website here:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/training/providers/funding/Pages/fundedcourses.aspx>

The Victorian Purchasing Guides are published on the Department's website here:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/training/providers/rto/Pages/purchasingguides.aspx>