



A nuts and bolts approach building futures

Demand for apprentices and trainees is a positive growth tactic, writes CareerOne Editor Jessica Leo.

THE take-up of trades and apprenticeships in our state continues to escalate, with businesses in these sectors also reporting a sustained level of work.

Despite a shrinking job market, evidence exists to show businesses - where possible - are still making a commit-

ment to taking on apprentices and trainees.

Employment, Training and Further Education Minister Michael O'Brien says recent statistics show an optimistic outlook. "The latest data on apprentice and trainee numbers from the National Centre for Vocational and Education Research (NCVER) is very encouraging," Mr O'Brien says.

An estimated 4600 apprentices and trainees started their training in SA in the December quarter last year, 10.4 per cent higher than the commencements for the same quarter in 2007 and higher than the national increase of 4.6 per cent.

Mr O'Brien says since 2006 the State Government has spent \$14.5 million to fund an additional 2927 apprentices and trainees in areas of strategic importance to the state's economy.

"Creating a highly skilled workforce in South Australia is crucial to developing a globally competitive economy, and one of the key economic forecasters is apprentice and trainee figures," he says.

At the school-based level, demand is mixed, according to Adelaide Technical College Northern Adelaide industry relations manager Jim Montgomery. He says the college has experienced some downturn in vacancies for school based apprenticeships in the electro-technology and metals and engineering industry sectors.

On the upside, there has been a consistent demand for school-based apprenticeships in the automotive, building and construction and commercial cookery sectors.

"Demand has certainly been consistent with previous trends prior to the global financial crisis," Mr Montgomery says. He also adds that salaries aren't a driving force for aspiring tradespeople. The selection of a trade is primarily driven by a student's interest in performing the type of work and the job satisfaction gained from doing the job," he says. "It must be remembered that an apprentice salary is very low anyway," he says. »



» THERE'S no denying our economic outlook has changed dramatically in the past 12 months.

But despite the global economy's suffering, economists and experts have also ascertained Australia has been insulated somewhat from the toppling of both the U.S. and UK economies.

However, this doesn't mean we have escaped a rise in unemployment levels.

While our jobless rates haven't peaked into double figures - as was the experience in the recession of the 1990s - signs of respite are not yet in view.

The most recent ABS jobs data - for the month of June 2009 - reports national unemployment is at 5.8 per cent while here in SA, our rate held steady month on month, remaining at 5.4 per cent.

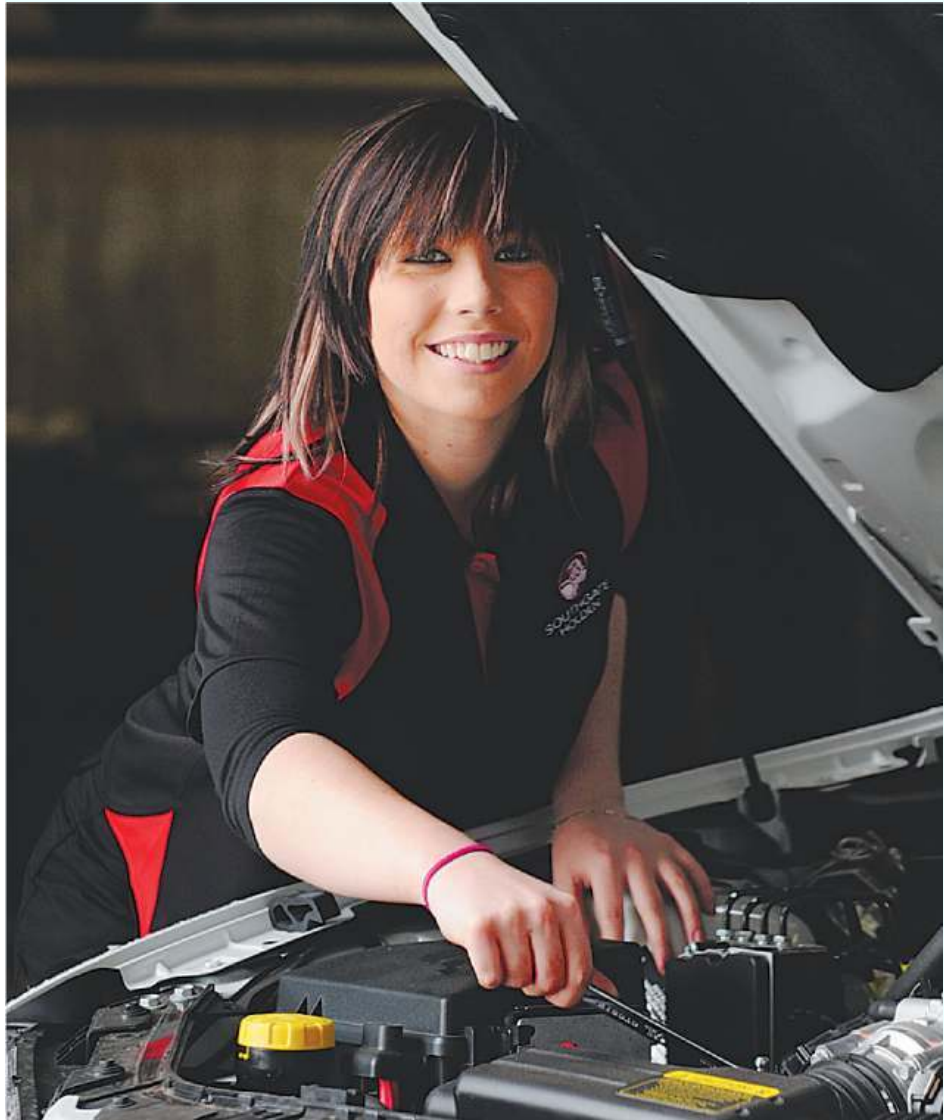
Economists have tipped this figure will rise in the near future but consistent reports of returning consumer confidence points to a glimmer of hope on the horizon.

For those South Australians currently employed, this year may have held less salary movement than hoped - particularly federal minimum wage workers who have their rate of pay frozen for the first time in more than a decade - but the good news is some growth still exists.

Now in its second year, The Advertiser's Salary Review magazine is a definitive guide aiming to give readers a valuable resource regarding the state's labour market. While there are far too many specific jobs and industries to cover and data is limited in some areas, the magazine offers a substantial snapshot of trends and offers an outlook for the industries featured.

Specialist editorial writers have gathered data from the associated industry bodies, individual awards and recruitment surveys to present a snapshot of South Australia's job market and average rates of pay.

More than 25 industries are covered with an salary examples and expert predictions plus, a guide to trades is also featured. This year we've extended our graduate section to assist thousands of studying South Australians, including data not just for universities but also TAFE and Vocational Education and Training (VET) graduates.



Apprentice mechanic Larissa Purdie at Southgate Holden, Reynella. "For me it's about family background - I grew up around mechanics and so some day would like to own a workshop" Larissa, 17, says.



Students trading up on options

Both the state and federal governments are pouring money into trade schools. CareerOne Editor **JESSICA LEO** and Education Reporter **LAUREN NOVAK** look at what is on offer to students.

THE pathways that lead from school to university or traditional trades are increasingly blurred with a growing number of specialised schools and programs attempting to put students on the right career track.

Outside of traditional schools, there are also Trade Schools for the Future, technical colleges and trades training centres, all with the goal of placing secondary students in meaningful employment, though their methods of execution differ.

A requirement of students to be “earning or learning” until at least age 17, skills shortages in trade areas and the lure of high-paying jobs in industries such as engineering and mining, are boosting the popularity of vocational education or apprenticeships at school.

While technical colleges – of which there are three in Adelaide – cater to students who want an accelerated trade pathway but also to complete their schooling, Trade Schools for the Future allow individuals to try a mix of trades and traditional schooling to ascertain what path they want to take.

Technical colleges started in 2006 as a federal government in-

itiative, but have since been taken over in SA by the Catholic Education Board. The Rudd Government has, instead, committed funds to build trades training centres in existing schools.

The State Government has spent \$29.5 million establishing the now-operating Trade Schools for the Future, of which there are 10 across the state.

These public schools act as “lead” schools attracting students from surrounding schools who are interested in trades such as manufacturing, electrotechnology, engineering and mining.

Trades training centres will operate in a similar fashion when they are up and running, complementing and effectively extending the state scheme.

SAGE Didactic provides work-ready and industry-approved training systems to each of these institutions and chief executive officer Peter Dawson says while all target the same age group – namely later secondary school students – there are key differences.

“They are all catering to the same age group (but) what they are doing is producing a slightly different output or slightly different planning path,” Mr Dawson said.



“My understanding is an Australian Technical College is looking more at people having less of a school environment and more of an apprentice environment.

“And then Trade Schools For the Future have more of a school environment and less of an apprentice environment.

“That being said, most are still doing the same activities ... the student is doing an apprenticeship (but) it will take a little longer.”

At Trade Schools for the Future, apprenticeship brokers match students with industry shortages and openings, and also liaise with industry to report back to schools about what is happening in the trades market.

While their “core business” is public school students, those at private schools also can apply. Unlike the technical colleges, students remain at their original school, where they attend classes and leave to clock hours at their workplace or training organisations such as TAFE.

“Instead of being in a school workshop doing carpentry, the student is out with an employer doing the real thing, not a take-home project,” apprenticeship broker Harry Moate said.

“Some students can do all of their training on the job and by correspondence, other students will be required to attend TAFE.

“The rest of the time students are seated in a mainstream class-

room.”

Mr Moate said the “survival rate” of apprentices had been “quite high” and the trade schools were constantly attracting more students.

“Sometimes it will be an employer contacting me and saying they’re interested in putting on a school-based trainee,” he said.

“Other times I’ll have been at a school and come across a student who’s indicated that they’d like to do a school-based apprenticeship.”

South Australian Secondary Principals Association vice president Jan Paterson – who is also principal of Trade School for the Future, Windsor Gardens Vocational College – says the advantage is in allowing students to choose their pathway gradually through experiencing both traditional schooling and trades.

“There isn’t that situation where students are caught in a bind and are making decisions too early,” Ms Paterson said.

She adds that after just 18 months, Windsor Gardens and Trade Schools for the Future partner school Charles Campbell Secondary College have success figures that speak for themselves.

“Apprentice broker figures after 18 months of work show 63 school-based apprenticeships developed and, of that, 17 students are in full-time apprenticeships,” she said.

At the other end of the spectrum are technical colleges – located at

Christie Downs, Elizabeth West and Port Augusta/Whyalla – which are seeing 100 per cent of students vie for a career in trades with many in employment before they leave the college.

At the Adelaide South Technical College, principal Jim Fenoughty says the focus is on “higher end” qualifications – Certificate III as opposed to Certificates I or II.

“The end result is that the employer ends up with an apprentice who is work-ready both in skills and attitude,” he said.

Similarly, Adelaide Technical College Northern Adelaide marketing and development manager Mark Priddle says one advantage of trade schools is their close connections with industry.

“These links allow us to have industry provide direct input into our curriculum and ensure that what our students learn is at the cutting edge of what is happening in the workplace,” Mr Priddle said.

Either way, whichever pathway students choose, each are being enthusiastically taken up.

For example, since opening its doors in January 2007 the Australian Technical College Northern Adelaide has worked with more than 400 students helping the vast majority find apprenticeships and complete their schooling, and similar numbers and results have been reported from the remaining two trade colleges.

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WHAT'S ON OFFER



FOR Ben O'Shaughnessy, 16, attending a trade college rather than regular school all came down to finding a learning model which suited him.

The electronics student at Adelaide Technical College South said the opportunity to complete his SACE, get hands-on work experience and look for employment proved an irresistible combination.

"At school I distracted myself and distracted others, coming in here (to the college) you mature and you're treated as adults."

Meanwhile, his classmate Brandon Walczak, also 16, said he saw the future career path that a trade college could offer when his brother went through the college two years ago.

"It's a lot different to normal school, you don't have fixed lessons like science and English."



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TECHNICAL COLLEGES

Adelaide South (Christie Downs)
Northern Adelaide (Elizabeth West)
Spencer Gulf and Outback (Port Augusta/Whyalla)

HOW TECHNICAL COLLEGES DIFFER FROM MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

A combination of:

- Education (SACE) ■ Training (Certificate III) ■ Paid work
- Year 11 and 12 only
 ■ No bells and workplace uniform instead of traditional school uniform
 ■ Qualified tradespeople on staff
 ■ OH&S training and a six-month preparatory phase which features a "try-a-trade program" to determine their skills
- Subjects such as English, maths and science are taught in the context of Vocational education and training (VET)
 ■ Employability skills feature heavily in the curriculum
 ■ On graduation, students will be part-way through an apprenticeship with an employer

TRADE SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE

Glossop High School (Riverland)
Grant High School (Limestone Coast/South East)
Christies Beach High School (Southern Adelaide/Fleurieu)
Murray Bridge and Heathfield high schools (Hills Murraylands)
Charles Campbell Secondary College and Windsor Gardens Vocational College (East/North East)
Hamilton Secondary College, Thebarton Senior College and Urrbrae High School (Inner South)
Kadina Memorial High School (Barossa, Lower North and Yorke)
Parafield Gardens and Craigmore high schools (Northern Adelaide)
Le Fevre High School (Western Adelaide)
Edward John Eyre and Peterborough high schools (Eyre and Upper Spencer Gulf)

HOW TRADE SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE DIFFER FROM MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

A combination of:

- Education (SACE) ■ Training (Certificate III) ■ Paid work
- Year 11 and 12 only
 ■ Ten "lead" schools attract students from surrounding schools to take up school-based apprenticeships
 ■ Twenty apprenticeship brokers (former tradespeople) liaise with employers to find work placements for students
- Students remain at their original school and work through the lead school and apprenticeship broker
 ■ They spend at least eight hours in the workplace each week and often attend TAFE or other training organisations for further study
 ■ On graduation, students will either have completed a traneeship or be part-way through an apprenticeship with an employer



Tech jobs in balance as college future still unclear

Integration with St Pat's and NW colleges a possibility

By MICHAEL LOWE

A DECISION is imminent on the future of the Australian Technical College at Inveresk but job losses seem likely.

The Catholic Church last year announced the takeover of the Australian Technical College Northern Tasmania from the Federal Government.

But a lack of detail since then has left staff concerned about their future.

Staff, who did not want to be named, questioned if the eight-month wait for takeover details meant the deal could fall over.

They say job losses were probably inevitable, as the college has small classes using expensive equipment and received extra Federal Government money, meaning costs were more than a normal school.

The college, with a newly-built Inveresk headquarters and a Burnie campus, has about 200 full-time students and 35 staff.

The Federal Government plans to give the college buildings, worth \$13.5 million, to the Catholic Church for free in return for the church operating the college for 20 years.

The Education Department said the Federal Government and the Catholic Archdiocese of Hobart were committed to the integration of the ATC Northern Tasmania into the Catholic School system in 2010.

The department said both groups were working to integrate the college into the Catholic school system.

College board chairman Carey McIver confirmed the takeover from January and promised details "within a couple of weeks".

Mr McIver could not promise all jobs would stay, however, or that the college would continue as a stand-alone entity.

Instead, he said integration with St Patrick's College in Launceston and Marist and St Brendan Shaw colleges in the North-West was an option.

Mr McIver said college staff worked under Australian workplace agreements, which expired this year.

He said he had spoken to staff and written to them twice and would give them more information when it was available.

Mr McIver said the transfer was taking many months because it involved difficult issues.

"It is correct that the funding that is currently provided to the ATC by the Federal Government will not be at the same level in 2010," Mr McIver said.

"As a result of that, the way in which the college has been resourced is being reviewed.

"In that context, we as Catholic Education Tasmania, are seeking to ensure that the programs that operate at the college continue in 2010, if they are financially viable."



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The future of the Australian Technical College at Inveresk is a matter of concern for staff



Learn the skills you need

Through recruitment, employment, administration management and pastoral care The Apprenticeship Company, a division of Downs Group Training, provides a quality and cost effective service to apprentices, trainees and employers in the community.

Apprenticeships and traineeships are available in either full or part time modes with the option to undertake a qualification while still in high school becoming increasingly popular.

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships are generally available to students in Year 10, 11 or 12.

The student normally spends one or two days per week (minimum of 48 days per year) in the workplace, with the opportunity of also working after school, on weekends and school holidays.

Instead of just an after-school job, students taking part in a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship complete a national-

ly recognised qualification while getting a head start on a career.

Full time and school based apprentices and trainees are currently being placed in many industries including engineering, construction, agriculture and horticulture, automotive, office administration, hospitality, information technology and retail.

The Apprenticeship Company aims to support local businesses in the recruitment and retention of full time, part time and school based apprentices and trainees.

Some of the services offered by The Apprenticeship Company include:

- Assistance with recruitment;
- Provision of a full induction for apprentices and trainees including workplace health and safety;
- Management of all administration duties including payroll, for the apprentice and trainee;
- Monitor and support during the placement;
- Arranging all on and off-the-

job training.

As well as assistance with the employment of apprentices and trainees with The Apprenticeship Company, Downs Group Training offers a full range of training courses such as:

- First aid;
- CPR;
- Forklift;
- Low voltage rescue;
- Approved traffic control;
- Certificate I in construction;
- Certificate I in resources and infrastructure;
- Certificate III in civil construction.

The Apprenticeship Company employs qualified, experienced field officers to best service each industry.

To find out more information about starting an apprenticeship, traineeship or finding the right apprentice or trainee for your business visit www.dgt.org.au or phone one of the three offices: Toowoomba: (07) 4639 2099, Chinchilla (07) 4669 1533 or Goondiwindi (07) 4671 0170.



Murgon's Brendan Sipple is a third stage carpentry apprentice with The Apprenticeship Company, Downs Group Training.



Get hands-on training

Swift Engineering Kingaroy considers training to be a vital part of its business.

The company has a strong involvement in the local community and is keen to get young people involved in the industry.

This is done through school-based traineeships, work experience and apprenticeships.

A spokesperson from the company said these training options helped provide long term career goals for students.

"We see training as an opportunity for

us to maintain our local employee content as well as providing an opportunity for young people to get involved in the industry," she said.

A range of demonstrations will be available at the careers market on Thursday August 6.

These include welding, machining and oxy cutting.

Staff from Swift Engineering will be on hand to answer any queries or questions you may have about the industry and provide a range of career paths, including boiler makers and fitters.



Swift Engineering is providing career opportunities for South Burnett residents with a series of school-based traineeships, work experience and apprenticeships available.



Apprenticeships work to OP goals

Have you dismissed the idea of undertaking a school based apprenticeship because your career dreams involve university?

You may want to re-consider your decision because by completing a school based apprenticeship or traineeship you can achieve your career dreams while working towards your OP.

Completing a school based traineeship can help you achieve your dream career be it in medicine, accountancy, law, engineering, the automotive industry or construction, the list is endless.

You can undertake a school based apprenticeship or traineeship in any field you desire.

There are many benefits of a school based traineeship however the most important is you can gain your OP plus a qualification.

The qualification you gain can be used while you are at university, working part time, to travel the world or to gain a jump start on your trade.

They also let you try before you buy the industry so you can make an informed decision.

If you want a career in medicine why not complete a Certificate II in Pharmacy, this will give you in-

sight into the medical industry.

It will also provide you with the skills to work part time in pharmacy while completing your university degree.

If your dream is to work in law, accountancy or finance a Certificate II in Business working for a solicitor's office, accountant or finance firm will provide you with experience in the industry and the ability to work part time while undertaking your university degree.

School based apprenticeships can assist you in making the crucial decision of what you want to do for a career and you can make an informed decision about the industry you want to enter.

Field officer Michelle Waters said school based apprenticeships are fantastic for students.

"As they can work in the industry they want to undertake tertiary education in, get paid for it and gain a qualification that is portable no matter where they go or what they do," she said.

Timothy De Caluwe is completing a school based apprenticeship undertaking Certificate III in Business and is employed by Wide Bay Group Training.

"Because of this traineeship and



Danielle Mantley from SQIT Kingaroy and school based trainee Tim De Caluwe from Wide Bay Group Training.

activities such as Young Achievement Australia, I am learning skills and qualities that will stick with me for the rest of my life such as patience, persistence, confidence and enthusiasm," he said.

"I see these skills as factors which will one day help me achieve my chosen career path in Accountancy."

Timothy was a finalist at the Wide Bay Sunshine Coast Queensland Training Awards School Based Trainee of Year.



Sudden end for a starter

OBITUARY PETER RICHARDS 1956-2009

PETER Richards was passionate about giving young south-west apprentices the best start to their careers.

A plumber by trade and former chairman of a major south-west employment agency, Mr Richards, 53, of Hamilton, collapsed and died while jogging on Sunday morning.

WestVic Staffing Solutions chief

executive officer Miles Coverdale yesterday described the death of the father of two as an "absolute tragedy".

"Peter was a dynamic contributor to our board of directors," he said.

Mr Richards, who sat on the board of the organisation (previously known as WestVic Workforce) for more than seven years, was chairman between 2002 and 2005.

He initiated moves to set up the agency's Portland office, Mr Coverdale said.

"He continued to support our organisation right up until the present through the employment of

plumbing apprentices (at his business Finchett's Plumbing).

"His focus on business development was very strong but he also had a very strong community focus as well."

If a young apprentice was having difficulty Mr Richards would always be on the phone to the agency to help them get back on track, Mr Coverdale said.

After leaving WestVic in 2005 Mr Richards helped establish the Hamilton branch of the Australian Technical College (Wannon) at Baimbridge College, ATC executive manager Tony Austin said.

Mr Austin was shocked to hear of

Mr Richards' sudden death yesterday and had even planned to contact him this week to get some help for a building project in Hamilton.

"He was definitely an important part of where we have been and what we have been able to achieve," he said.

Mr Richards had not been directly involved with the ATC for some time as he had returned to focusing on his business.

Mr Richards is survived by his wife, Jo, and children, Scott and Anna.