

Eligible Apprentices, Trainees and Cadets

This guidance note answers a range of frequently asked questions about apprentice, trainee and cadet (ATC) eligibility under the Major Projects Skills Guarantee (MPSG).

Context

The MPSG under Local Jobs First is designed to ensure job opportunities for apprentices, trainees and cadets (ATCs) on Victorian Government construction projects valued at or over \$20 million. The MPSG creates entry-level employment opportunities for ATCs, to grow the next generation of skilled workers.

General guidance on ATC eligibility under MPSG

This guidance is provided to assist agencies to understand ATC eligibility under the policy. The definitions for ATCs are included below and in the *Local Jobs First Agency Guidelines* and *Supplier Guidelines*, which can be found on the [Local Jobs First website](#).

Do ATC opportunities have to be paid?

Yes, ATCs must be paid opportunities to be eligible to contribute to the MPSG requirement on a project.

What stages of a project can ATCs contribute to and be counted under the MPSG?

ATCs can contribute to any stage of a MPSG project that is covered by the Local Jobs First requirements. This can include design, planning, construction and ongoing maintenance.

Can ATC training hours be counted towards MPSG requirements?

Yes, hours spent offsite for training and education that are part of the training contract can be counted towards the 10 per cent requirement. This allows the time ATCs spend away from the project at TAFE or university to still be counted.

Can ATC labour delivered away from the main construction site be counted towards MPSG requirements?

Yes, the MPSG applies to all aspects of a construction project. The requirement can be met through the services and goods procurement aspects of the construction project, including project inputs such as prefabricated or modular components. However, only labour that directly contributes to the overall MPSG commitment of labour hours may be counted. For example, work associated with the general administration of a business cannot be counted towards MPSG requirements. Bidders should be encouraged to contact their off-site suppliers to understand ATC use on the project.

Does the ATC's tertiary education have to relate to their work on the MPSG project?

Yes, the work the ATC is doing on the MPSG project must be directly related to the tertiary education they are completing as an ATC.

Do ATCs need to have a training contract?

Apprentices and trainees must have a training contract as evidence of their applicability. Cadets do not have this requirement. A training contract is a formal agreement to train the

apprentice or trainee and sets out the legal obligations binding the employer and the apprentice or trainee. Please see the [Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority \(VRQA\) website](#) for further details regarding managing apprentices and trainees.

What is an entry level role?

An entry level role is an opportunity where the worker is employed on a MPSG project as an ATC in a role that aligns with their ongoing education, the education course is being undertaken in a relevant field, and in the case of apprentices and trainees is also registered with the VRQA. It is the delivery agency's responsibility to ensure that MPSG opportunities are being provided to entry level roles.

Can a Higher Apprentice count as an apprentice under MPSG?

Higher Apprentices are completing a Higher Education Diploma and do not align with the apprentice definition as they are not on a training contract. They can, however, be counted as a cadet.

Can an intern count as a cadet under MPSG?

No, internships are generally shorter in length than cadetships and are a temporary employment role with the aim of obtaining a graduate position, with the employer similarly looking for potential graduates, rather than the full-time longer employment of a cadetship.

Can a graduate architect be considered a cadet when their formal studies are complete but they are not yet a qualified architect until they finish their work placement?

Yes, a recent graduate (within 2 years) completing mandatory work placement or hours to meet professional registration requirements may be counted as a cadet.

Can professional development programs count towards MPSG?

As employees must be in entry level jobs to be eligible under the MPSG, professional development programs do not count.

Can I vary the numbers of apprentices, trainees and cadets to what was committed in the project Local Industry Development Plan (LIDP)?

Yes, the LIDP is an estimate and numbers can vary to meet project needs. However, the overall hours performed by ATCs must meet the MPSG labour hours commitment made in the LIDP. If the project scope or duration is varied this may also lead to a variation in the number and/or mix of ATCs.

Can MPSG ATC opportunities also count towards Social Procurement Framework reporting?

Where ATC opportunities provided under the MPSG also align with the Social Procurement Framework objectives of the project, then the opportunities may count towards both targets / requirements.

Can secondments from agencies count towards MPSG?

Secondments of cadets from government agencies to contractors can only be counted if the contractor is hosting the cost of the cadet for the period they are working on the project with the contractor.

Can cadets on course deferrals count towards MPSG?

Yes, cadets that have deferred their course but are still enrolled in Australian tertiary education can be counted under the MPSG, provided they meet all other conditions to qualify as a cadet. If they are early career workers and the course is aligned to the field they are employed in, this demonstrates an intention to continue the study.

Definitions

Apprentices

Apprenticeships are entry-level roles undertaken under a Training Contract between an employer and an apprentice that combines structured training with paid employment. Apprenticeships are generally at Certificate III level and above and extend across a range of trades. Apprenticeships typically have a duration of three to four years and are competency based. For an apprentice to be counted towards the MSPG requirement for a project they must be:

- *undertaking a course that relates directly to their role on a LJF Project and is consistent with the Training Contract; and*
- *registered with the Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority (VRQA).*

Trainees

Traineeships are entry-level roles undertaken under a Training Contract between an employer and a trainee that combines training with paid employment. Traineeships are undertaken at Certificate II level and above including Diploma and Advanced Diploma. Traineeships typically have a duration of one to two years and are competency based. Traineeships can be in areas including civil construction, design, business services, information technology, human resources and community services. For a trainee to be counted towards the MSPG requirement for a project they must be:

- *undertaking a course that relates directly to their role on a LJF Project and is consistent with the Training Contract; and*
- *registered with the Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority (VRQA).*

Traineeships are different from professional traineeships (an employee who is not in an entry level role and is undertaking professional development training), which cannot count towards MSPG.

Cadets

Cadetships are entry-level roles that combine formal tertiary training with paid practical work experience. There are many types of cadetships offered across different industries. Cadetships can vary in length but are generally 18 months to 2 years. A cadetship does not fall under a Training Contract. For a cadet to be counted towards the MSPG requirement for a project they must be:

- *enrolled in Australian tertiary education;*
- *receiving learning opportunities as part of their engagement on a LJF project (e.g. cadets in architecture, quantity surveying, and engineering); and*
- *undertaking work that is directly tied to their associated tertiary qualification.*

Cadetships are different to professional traineeships (an employee who is not in an entry level role and is undertaking professional development training), which cannot count towards MSPG.

Need more assistance?

If you have further questions about eligibility, please contact DJPR at LocalJobsFirst@ecodev.vic.gov.au.



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