



Dear Prospective Trainee or Employer

Thankyou for your inquiry about the traineeship program run at Tocal Agricultural College. I hope the following information about the Course is useful to you and might encourage you to join us in 2012.

Tocal College has a long history of agricultural training in New South Wales. We work closely with rural industries to ensure outcomes are relevant and highly valued. There is the reassurance that our qualifications are backed by the Rural Training Package and therefore recognised under the Australian Qualifications Framework.

What Responsibilities Are Expected Of Trainees At Each Qualification Level?

Certificate II entry level is designed for beginning farm workers with limited experience. They are trained to competently undertake general rural activities; usually under close supervision.

Certificate III graduates are considered able to undertake many tasks without regular supervision, particularly routine tasks within their specified role on the farm. They may however require initial instruction and regular monitoring. They should be aware of general OHS, QA, environmental and animal welfare considerations. Training at Tocal supports this as well as providing knowledge and skills in other core areas.

During Certificate IV, trainees are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to allow independent work across a range of activities. They are expected to not only undertake many tasks without supervision but also to be able to participate in development and planning of farm activities and programs. Graduates at this level are commonly able to assist in management of specific areas of the farm.

For those who are interested in pursuing their Rural Studies even further the Tocal Diploma in Agriculture, home study course is available. From this it is also possible to take advantage of the articulation programs that the College has with a number of Universities.

At What Level Is Entry Possible?

Each year of the traineeship results in a separate qualification with entry level determined by previous experience and skill level. On successful completion trainees may either leave with that qualification or choose to return for another year and attempt a higher qualification. There are a number of pathways for new enrolments. For example:

A newly enrolled trainee without reasonable industry experience is eligible for entry into the Certificate II program. Training is offered in OHS related units (e.g. Tractors, Bikes, Quads, FEL's, Chainsaws, First Aid, Chemicals, etc) as well as Soils and Ground preparation, Fencing and others during the Teambuilding unit. Assessment of the remainder needed for the qualification is attempted by Skills Recognition near the end of their traineeship. During this process any training gaps identified are responded to and supported by resources including relevant AgSkills books. As such this course normally has a reduced residential requirement. Usually this includes 1 compulsory block and the option of four others over the year.

A newly enrolled trainee with reasonable industry experience may be eligible for direct entry to the regular Certificate III program but will be asked to include basic Certificate II OHS related units in their training plan if not already obtained. Reasonable experience may be gained growing up on a farm and from involvement in farm activities, from extended periods of part time or casual work on a farm, from short periods of fulltime work on a farm and/or completion of HSC Primary Industries/Agriculture.

A newly enrolled trainee with considerable industry experience (and preferably HSC Agriculture/Primary Industries or equivalent) may be eligible for direct entry into the Certificate IV traineeship program. Mature age enrolments are usually eligible for entry at this level.

What Is Studied At Tocal And How Often?

Please look over the 2012 timetable which is included at the back of the accompanying Guidebooks for either Trainee or Employer. This gives an indication of the units offered at each level.

Individual students may have adequate skills in some units to allow Recognition of Prior Learning. This may reduce the attendance required at Tocal further.

The Cert II program, as mentioned, only requires 1 weeklong, block at College to enable training of principally OHS related units. These, plus any of the optional blocks they might choose to undertake are trained alongside *Direct Entry* Cert III trainees. (This potentially, significantly reduces the residential requirements of trainees continuing on from Cert II to Cert III).

Continuing Cert III trainees (i.e. those who have completed Tocal's Cert II course) do not need to attend any of the timetabled blocks of training they attended in Cert II (unless they were unsuccessful at completing parts of them the previous year). These will contribute to their Cert III qualification and as a result they may need to attend as few as 3-4 blocks during their Cert III year. The third and fifth blocks, which include Teambuilding and either Co-ord. Milking or Vertebrate Pests, among others, are however strongly encouraged as they are difficult to substitute for.

Direct entry Cert III Trainees are asked to attend an initial block of mostly OHS related training which includes critical units from the Cert 2 course. Overall, trainees are requested to attend 6, week long blocks spread over the year. If unable to attend a block(s) then other Training & Assessment alternatives normally exist but must be negotiated to make completion possible. It should also be noted that the 5th block in September is split into "Dairy" & "Non dairy" streams and that each stream includes a "compulsory" unit.

The Cert IV program is more straightforward with only six weeks of training timetabled.

Dairy trainees are encouraged to attend all six weeks of timetabled training.

Non dairy trainees usually choose to omit the block which contains "Manage milking". A number of alternatives exist if a replacement block is needed or desired. (If they have previously completed Cert III it is possible that a replacement block is unnecessary).

Please note that opportunities to undertake **optional AI, pregnancy testing and welding courses** (as will be shown on the timetable) are provided during the year but are at the trainee's own expense. These courses are available at a discount to Tocal trainees. **L4 chemical training** is also shown on the timetable. Provided it is taken at Tocal when scheduled there is no additional charge for this. Various **PROfarm courses** are also offered through Tocal.

Finally, there is a major **study tour of New Zealand** planned for 2014. This event normally takes place every 3 years and is open to all participants of the Tocal Traineeship Program. This includes present and past trainees and employers. Providing your contact details are kept up to date you will receive an invite as it approaches.

What Incentives Are Available To Trainees And Employers And Can An Australian Apprenticeship Centre Help?

Significant incentives are available to both employer and trainee. Financial incentives for employers can be found on-line at www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au. However, as these subsidies and allowances are constantly changing and have specific eligibility criteria, it is recommended that you contact your local Australian Apprenticeships Centre (AAC) for more detail. They will also visit you on farm to help with sign up and initiation of the traineeship. A list of AAC's closest to you can also be accessed from this site and if requested has been included. Alternatively the Australian Apprenticeship's referral line number is 13 38 73. State government incentives for trainees can be found at https://www.training.nsw.gov.au/aacs/advice_instructions/govt_incentives.html and help reimburse both travel and accommodation costs. Tocal assists in the application for these at the completion of each block.

Where Can I Find Additional Information About A Tocal Traineeship?

Both levels of Government assistance are available to help offset the costs of attending training. Fees for 2011 are described in both the Trainee's and Employer's Guidebook's. Information about the College including both full and part time courses can be found at <http://www.tocal.nsw.edu.au/future-students>. This also opens to a copy of the College's prospectus. Should you choose to join us then please complete and return the Traineeship Application form, either enclosed or available on our web site. Proof of identity (e.g. copy of birth certificate) and payment of the administration fee is also required before attendance.

Does It Matter When A Traineeship Is Started?

Most new trainees would start at the beginning of 2012. However, enrolment during the year (even prior to the last block) is common, with students simply continuing on into the following year until all necessary units have been completed. Starting date should be discussed with your chosen AAC rep to ensure it will not affect your access to incentives. From a training perspective the College is very flexible and will work hard to accommodate the starting date that suits you and your business.

Please take the time to read our Employer and Trainee Guidebooks for 2012. Feel free to call me on the number indicated below to discuss the course. If I cannot answer your call directly then please leave a return call number and a suggested time and I will endeavour to call you then. Especially please call if you would like help contacting an Australian Apprenticeship Centre or would like a hard copy of any of the information referred to.

Thanks again for your interest, yours sincerely

James Hooke

Traineeship Coordinator
Tocal College
PATERSON
NSW 2421

Phone: (02) 4939 8960
Fax: 4939 8922
E-mail: james.hooke@industry.nsw.gov.au