

Dear Prospective Employer/Trainee

Thankyou for your inquiry about the Tocal Traineeship Program. I hope the following information is useful to you and might encourage you to join us.

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. Our qualifications come from the National Agriculture, Horticulture and Conservation and Land Management Training Package and are 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. These qualifications are commonly undertaken as School Based Apprenticeships & Traineeships. Tocal encourages entry of new trainees directly into Certificate III where appropriate.

Certificate III graduates are considered able to undertake many tasks without constant 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 WHS, QA, environmental and animal welfare considerations. Training at Tocal supports this as well as providing knowledge and skills in other core areas of pasture and livestock production.

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 undertake many tasks without supervision and also to participate in development and planning of farm programs. Graduates at this level are commonly able to assist in management of specific areas of the farm.

For those interested in pursuing their Rural Studies further the Tocal *Diploma* in Agriculture, on-line, home study course is available. Tocal College also has articulation arrangements 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 and attempt a higher qualification. There are a number of pathways for new enrolments. For example:

A newly enrolled trainee with reasonable industry experience (or ability to quickly gain basic experience on the job) may be eligible for direct entry to the regular Certificate III program including some basic Cert II OHS related units. Reasonable experience may be gained growing up on a farm and from involvement in farm activities, from extended periods of part time or casual farm work, from short periods of fulltime farm work 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.

How Long Should the Traineeship be Expected to Take? (I.e. Anticipated “Length of Term”)

Vocational Training Orders set nominal length of terms according to trainee entry level.

Base entry students and those continuing on to the next level will have a 1 year *nominal* term.

A trainee directly entering Cert III or IV (i.e. without completing the previous level) will automatically be given a 2 year *nominal* term although earlier, competency based completion is possible.

The Tocal Traineeship Program recognises the need for flexibility and so in 2019 will offer a Certificate III program for Direct Entry students that can be completed between 12 to 24 months.

Trainees with extensive farm experience, exposure to a broad spectrum of work and with good support may be eligible to complete all their residential training and their Traineeship, within 12 months.

Tocal strongly advises Trainees without the above benefits to plan around a longer term of 18-24 months. This will allow more experience on farm and greater time to practice techniques and principles trained at Tocal College before final assessment is required. There is also the advantage that an extended term allows greater, valuable experience for those choosing to continue onto the Cert IV course.

Selecting a full term also allows those farms wishing to spread the residential component the opportunity to do so.

Trainees and their Supervisor’s should discuss with Tocal their most suitable length of term.

What Is Studied At Tocal And How Often?

Please look over the 2019 timetable 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.

Cert III Trainees are asked to attend an initial block of mostly OHS related training which includes critical units from Cert II.

Overall, trainees are requested to attend 6, week long blocks spread over between 12 to 24 months depending upon their anticipated “Length of Term” (see above). The Timetable indicates which blocks are best suited to attempting in the first or second year of a full term Traineeship.

If unable to attend a block(s) then alternative Training & Assessment may exist but must be negotiated to make completion possible.

It should also be noted that the 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 needed or desired. (NB If they have previously completed Cert III it is possible that replacement units are unnecessary in order to meet qualification requirements).

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 the above 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/apprenticeships_traineeships/index.html and help reimburse both travel and accommodation costs. Tocal assists in the application for these at the completion of each block. Accommodation and travel allowances paid by the state government can only be made directly to eligible trainees. Employers should consider this if they choose to assist their trainee with accommodation or travel expenses.

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 will be similar to those 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 website. 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 a calendar year. However, enrolment during the year 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. 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,

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