

Strategic Review of the AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICESHIP INCENTIVE SYSTEM

2024



Final report – Fact sheet for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Apprentices

Many people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds appreciate the opportunities an apprenticeship provides. However, they experience challenges with racism, navigating Australian work culture, barriers related to their English skills, and transport. They need better support with language skills and travel subsidies.

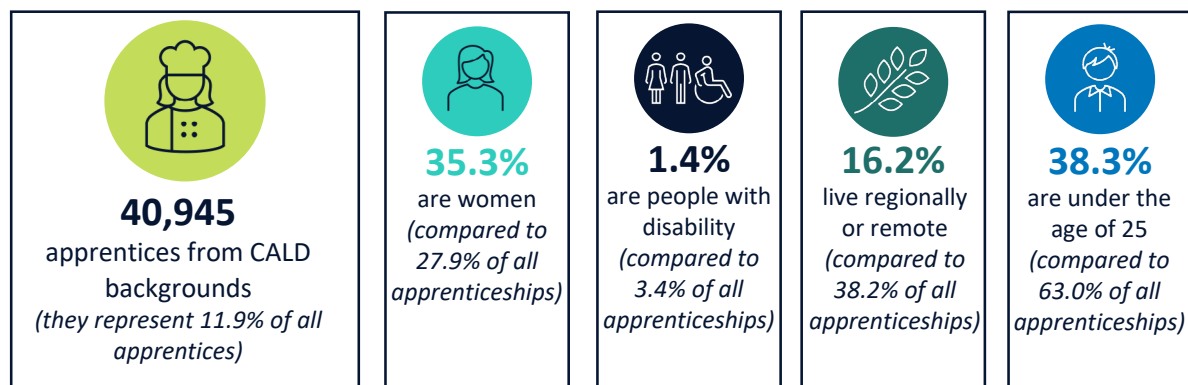
Background

The Strategic Review of the Australian Apprenticeship Incentive System, led by Dr Iain Ross AO and Ms Lisa Paul AO PSM, considered the effectiveness and efficiency of the current incentive system in supporting the uptake and completion of Australian apprenticeships. In particular, it considered the incentive system with regard to addressing Australia's skills needs and its ability to deliver on economic priorities and social equity objectives.

For more details on the review as a whole, please refer to the Overview fact sheet.

Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) is a term used to refer to 'people from a range of countries and ethnic and culture groups.' Australians from CALD backgrounds comprise approximately 12% of apprentices (NCVER 2024) lower than the 22.8% of Australians who report using a language other than English at home (ABS 2021), and the 28% of Australians born overseas (AIHW n.d).

CALD apprentices



Source: Review analysis based on NCVER (2024) apprentices and trainees data.

Key Issues

The review identified the following issues that affect CALD apprentices:

- Many people from CALD backgrounds see apprenticeships as less valuable than university education.
- Many CALD people experience racism in the workplace and those who are newer to Australia often experience challenges navigating the Australian work culture.
- CALD people who are newer to Australia often face challenges with English and difficulties using digital technology.
- CALD people who have arrived recently often lack a driver's licence impacting their ability to get to a worksite.

Recommendations

The final report made 34 recommendations that aim to address the key issues identified through the review. The following is a summary of recommendations relevant to CALD apprentices:

- Address the behaviour of employers who are not providing an appropriate working environment for their apprentices.
- Provide more financial support to apprentices through subsidies for their travel expenses, purchasing tools, and reforms to apprentice support payment to increase the amount and frequency of payment.
- Deliver a national campaign to promote apprenticeships and improve information about apprentices provided in schools and to the general public.
- Use existing apprentice data systems to better connect apprentices with support services.
- Work with industry stakeholders to address workplace culture issues and improve the working environment for apprentices.
- Improve the assessment of apprentices language, literacy and numeracy skills, to better assist apprentices who may experience challenges with coursework.
- Develop ways to recognise previous experience and fast-track apprenticeships to make apprenticeships more appealing to those entering an apprenticeship later in life.

For details on recommendations that are beneficial to all apprentices, please refer to the Apprentice fact sheet.

References

ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) (2021) *Cultural diversity of Australia*, ABS.

AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) (n.d.) *Culturally and linguistically diverse Australians: overview*, AIHW website, accessed 8 September 2024.

NCVER (National Centre for Vocational Education Research) (2024) *Apprentices and trainees 2023: December quarter*, NCVER.