Victorian Employer Skills Survey 2021 Administrative and Support Services

The Victorian Skills Authority (VSA) asked businesses about their skills, recruitment and training needs for the Victorian Employer Skills Survey 2021.

Findings from the survey will help the Victorian government identify areas of skills demand, drive innovation across the VET sector and better plan for Victoria’s future training needs.

The VSA conducted the survey between August and December 2021. It approached 70,000 businesses and achieved a response rate of 20.5%, with coverage across all industries, business sizes and regions in the state.

*The statistics below reflect the experience of employers across the five key survey domains:*

#### Business climate | Skills | Recruitment | Training | Apprentices, trainees and work placements

## Business climate

#### **Despite the global pandemic, many employers adapted to maintain or grow their workforce. Employers had a mostly positive outlook for the year ahead.**

#### Workforce

Employers reported growth in their workforce over the past 12 months was similar to the Victorian average.

**Grew**

Administrative and Support Services 19%

Vic Avg 19%

**Contracted**

Administrative and Support Services 30%

Vic Avg 19%

**Remained the same**

Administrative and Support Services 49%

Vic Avg 61%

**Don’t know**

Administrative and Support Services 2%

#### Outlook

Employers in the industry are cautiously optimistic about their business outlook, with nearly a half of employers expecting their workforce to remain the same size.

**Predict growth**

Administrative and Support Services 39%

Vic Avg 33%

**Remain about the same**

Administrative and Support Services 45%

Vic Avg 56%

**Predict contraction**

Administrative and Support Services 7%

Vic Avg 5%

#### Impacts of COVID-19

COVID-19 skills-related challenges experienced by employers in the industry were higher than the Victorian average.

**Skills-related challenges**

Administrative and Support Services 63%

Vic Avg 57%

**Adopted new ways of working related to COVID-19**

Administrative and Support Services 49%

Vic Avg 45%

**Staff retention challenges**

Administrative and Support Services 35%

Vic Avg 26%

## Skills

#### **Finding candidates with the right skills presented the most common skill challenge in the past year. More employers are expecting skill shortages in 2022 than in 2021.**

#### Skills shortages

One in five employers in the industry expect to face skills shortages in 2022. This was similar to the state average.

**Last 12 months**

Administrative and Support Services 17%

Vic Avg 16%

**Next 12 months**

Administrative and Support Services 20%

Vic Avg 21%

#### Skills challenges

The top skills challenges reported by employers were the same across all industries. They were:  
  
**Finding candidates with the right skills**

Administrative and Support Services 52%

Vic Avg 47%

**Adapting to the new ways of working due to COVID-19**

Administrative and Support Services 49%

Vic Avg 45%

**Finding job-ready candidates**

Administrative and Support Services 48%

Vic Avg 37%

#### Skills needs

Fewer employers in the industry reported needing workers with the right mindset or with job-ready skills compared to the state average.  
 **Technical/job-specific skills**

Administrative and Support Services 71%

Vic Avg 73%

**The right attitude/mindset**

Administrative and Support Services 41%

Vic Avg 50%

**Job-ready skills**

Administrative and Support Services 32%

Vic Avg 47%

## Recruitment

Most employers in the industry had undertaken some recruitment activity over the past year and the majority reported experiencing challenges.

Recruitment need

Fewer employers in the industry undertook some form of recruitment over the past 12 months, compared to the state average.

Administrative and Support Service 61%

Vic Avg 62%

Recruitment challenges

Over four in five employers reported having difficulties recruiting for particular roles. This was higher than the state average.

Administrative and Support Services 81%

Vic Avg 76%

Type of challenge

The most common challenges faced by employers were related to the number, experience and job-specific skills of candidates

**Few applicants**

Administrative and Support Services 64%

Vic Avg 63%

**Candidates lacked relevant experience**

Administrative and Support Services 44%

Vic Avg 50%

**Candidates lacked relevant technical/job-specific skills**

Administrative and Support Services 37%

Vic Avg 47%

## Training

More than half of employers in the industry engaged in some form of staff training

**Engagement in training**

More employers in the industry use internal training only. Fewer used external training or both internal and external training (33% compared to 37% state average).  
 **Internal training**

Administrative and Support Services 26%

Vic Avg 17%

**External training**

Administrative and Support Services 41%

Vic Avg 45%

**Satisfaction with training**

Satisfaction levels were higher than the state average for improved staff performance, training quality and price.

**Helped staff do their job better**

Administrative and Support Services 87%

Vic Avg 81%

**Trainers had good industry knowledge**

Administrative and Support Services 80%

Vic Avg 80%

**Training was high quality**

Administrative and Support Services 79%

Vic Avg 76%

**Training was reasonably priced**

Administrative and Support Services 78%

Vic Avg 71%  
 **Skillsets**

Almost two-thirds of employers said they would consider a skillset (microcredential or part qualification) rather than a full qualification to upskill their staff.

Administrative and Support Services 64%

Vic Avg 61%

## Apprentices, trainees and work placements

Employers continue to make use of apprentices, trainees and work placements to assist them in filling the skills pipeline.

**Apprentices and trainees**

Uptake of apprentices and trainees over the past 12 months was lower than the state average.

**Apprenticeship**

Administrative and Support Services 11%

Vic Avg 24%

**Traineeship**

Administrative and Support Services 16%

Vic Avg 18%

**Challenges**

Employers cited lack of suitable applicants, cost and need for apprentices and trainees as the most common barriers.

**Lack of suitable applicants/people**

Administrative and Support Services 17%

Vic Avg 20%

**There are no barriers/challenges**

Administrative and Support Services 15%

Vic Avg 17%

**Cost of taking on apprentice(s)/trainee(s)**

Administrative and Support Services 13%

Vic Avg 14%

**Work placement students**

Fewer employers in the industry took on work placement students (10% compared to 21% for Victoria). The most common type of work placement students were:

**University student**

Administrative and Support Services 57%

Vic Avg 49%

**Secondary school student as part of work experience**

Administrative and Support Services 18%

Vic Avg 41%

**Secondary school student as part of a VET qualification**

Administrative and Support Services 13%

Vic Avg 22%

**A VET student**

Administrative and Support Services 17%

Vic Avg 19%

**View the complete report here or visit** [Victorian employer skills survey | Victorian Government (www.vic.gov.au)](https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-employer-skills-survey)