Victorian Employer Skills Survey 2021 Health Care and Social Assistance

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

More employers reported growing their workforce over the past 12 months (compared to the Victorian average).

**Grew**

Health Care and Social Assistance 24%

Vic Avg 19%

**Contracted**

Health Care and Social Assistance 13%

Vic Avg 19%

**Remained the same**

Health Care and Social Assistance 61%

Vic Avg 61%

**Don’t know**

Health Care and Social Assistance 2%

#### Outlook

Employers in the industry were optimistic about their business outlook. More expected to grow and fewer expected to contract over the coming year.

**Predict growth**

Health Care and Social Assistance 38%

Vic Avg 33%

**Remain about the same**

Health Care and Social Assistance 56%

Vic Avg 56%

**Predict contraction**

Health Care and Social Assistance 2%

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**

Health Care and Social Assistance 65%

Vic Avg 57%

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

Health Care and Social Assistance 53%

Vic Avg 45%

**Staff retention challenges**

Health Care and Social Assistance 31%

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

Almost one in five employers in the industry expect to face skills shortages in 2022. This was lower than the state average.

**Last 12 months**

Health Care and Social Assistance 12%

Vic Avg 16%

**Next 12 months**

Health Care and Social Assistance 18%

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**

Health Care and Social Assistance 55%

Vic Avg 47%

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

Health Care and Social Assistance 53%

Vic Avg 45%

**Finding job-ready candidates**

Health Care and Social Assistance 44%

Vic Avg 37%

#### Skills needs

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

Health Care and Social Assistance 53%

Vic Avg 73%

**The right attitude/mindset**

Health Care and Social Assistance 64%

Vic Avg 50%

**Job-ready skills**

Health Care and Social Assistance 54%

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

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

Health Care and Social Assistance 76%

Vic Avg 62%

Recruitment challenges

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

Health Care and Social Assistance 79%

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**

Health Care and Social Assistance 70%

Vic Avg 63%

**Candidates lacked relevant experience**

Health Care and Social Assistance 51%

Vic Avg 50%

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

Health Care and Social Assistance 41%

Vic Avg 47%

## Training

Over three-quarters of employers in the industry engaged in some form of staff training.

**Engagement in training**

More employers in the industry used both internal and external training (52% compared to 37% state average). Fewer used internal or external training only.

**Internal training**

Health Care and Social Assistance 14%

Vic Avg 17%

**External training**

Health Care and Social Assistance 34%

Vic Avg 45%

**Satisfaction with training**

Levels of satisfaction with training were higher than the state average.

**Helped staff do their job better**

Health Care and Social Assistance 84%

Vic Avg 81%

**Trainers had good industry knowledge**

Health Care and Social Assistance 85%

Vic Avg 80%

**Training was high quality**

Health Care and Social Assistance 83%

Vic Avg 76%

**Training was reasonably priced**

Health Care and Social Assistance 75%

Vic Avg 71%

**Skillsets**

Two-thirds of employers said they would consider a skillset (micro credential or part qualification) rather than a full qualification to upskill their staff.

Health Care and Social Assistance 67%

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 trainees over the past 12 months was the highest among all industries.  
 **Apprenticeship**

Health Care and Social Assistance 9%

Vic Avg 24%

**Traineeship**

Health Care and Social Assistance 35%

Vic Avg 18%

**Challenges**

Fewer employers in the industry cited lack of suitable applicants and not needing apprentices and trainees were a barrier.

**Lack of suitable applicants/people**

Health Care and Social Assistance 17%

Vic Avg 20%

**There are no barriers/challenges**

Health Care and Social Assistance 18%

Vic Avg 17%

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

Health Care and Social Assistance 14%

Vic Avg 14%

**Work placement students**

More employers in the industry took on work placement students (46% compared to 21% for Victoria). The most common type of work placement students were:

**University student**

Health Care and Social Assistance 74%

Vic Avg 49%

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

Health Care and Social Assistance 27%

Vic Avg 41%

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

Health Care and Social Assistance 18%

Vic Avg 22%

**A VET student**

Health Care and Social Assistance 29%

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)