Victorian Employer Skills Survey 2021 Loddon Mallee Region

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 Loddon Mallee employers adapted to maintain or grow their workforce. Employers had a mostly positive outlook for the year ahead.**Workforce

Over a quarter of employers in Loddon Mallee reported growing their workforce over the past 12 months. This was the highest rate across the state.

**Grew**

Loddon Mallee Region 26%

Vic Avg 19%

**Contracted**

Loddon Mallee Region 15%

Vic Avg 19%

**Remained the same**

Loddon Mallee Region 59%

Vic Avg 61%

#### Outlook

Employers in the Loddon Mallee region are optimistic about their future growth. More expected their workforce to remain the same size compared to the state average.

**Predict growth**

Loddon Mallee Region 31%

Vic Avg 33%

**Remain about the same**

Loddon Mallee Region 61%

Vic Avg 56%

**Predict contraction**

Loddon Mallee Region 4%

Vic Avg 5%

#### Impacts of COVID-19

COVID-19 skills-related challenges experienced by employers in the Loddon Mallee region were lower than the state average.

**Skills-related challenges**

Loddon Mallee Region 54%

Vic Avg 57%

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

Loddon Mallee Region 42%

Vic Avg 45%

**Staff retention challenges**

Loddon Mallee Region 23%

Vic Avg 26%

## Skills

#### **COVID-19 presented the most common skills challenge in the past year. More employers are expecting skills shortages in 2022 than in 2021.**

#### Skills shortages

Over one in five employers in Loddon Mallee are expecting to face skills shortages in 2022. This was similar to the state average.

**Last 12 months**

Loddon Mallee Region 18%

Vic Avg 16%

**Next 12 months**

Loddon Mallee Region 22%

Vic Avg 21%

#### Skills challenges

The top skills challenges reported by employers were the same across all regions. They were:

**Finding candidates with the right skills**

Loddon Mallee Region 53%

Vic Avg 47%

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

Loddon Mallee Region 42%

Vic Avg 45%

**Finding job-ready candidates**

Loddon Mallee Region 42%

Vic Avg 37%

#### Skills needs

More employers in the region reported needing job-specific skills or workers with the right attitude or mindset compared to the state average.

**Technical/job specific skills**

Loddon Mallee Region 78%

Vic Avg 73%

**The right attitude/mindset**

Loddon Mallee Region 52%

Vic Avg 50%

**Job-ready skills**

Loddon Mallee Region 41%

Vic Avg 47%

## Recruitment

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

Recruitment need

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

Loddon Mallee Region 67%

Vic Avg 62%

Recruitment challenges

The majority of employers in the region reported having difficulties recruiting for particular roles. This was similar to the state average.

Loddon Mallee Region 75%

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**

Loddon Mallee Region 66%

Vic Avg 63%

**Candidates lacked relevant experience**

Loddon Mallee Region 50%

Vic Avg 50%

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

Loddon Mallee Region 49%

Vic Avg 47%

## Training

More than half of Loddon Mallee employers engaged in some form of training.

**Engagement in training**

More employers in the region used external training, fewer used internal training and 38% used both (compared to 37% state average).
 **Internal training**

Loddon Mallee Region 11%

Vic Avg 17%

**External training**

Loddon Mallee Region 51%

Vic Avg 45%

**Satisfaction with training**

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

**Helped staff do their job better**

Loddon Mallee Region 82%

Vic Avg 81%

**Trainers had good industry knowledge**

Loddon Mallee Region 82%

Vic Avg 80%

**Training was high quality**

Loddon Mallee Region 77%

Vic Avg 76%

**Training was reasonably priced**

Loddon Mallee Region 73%

Vic Avg 71%

 **Skillsets**

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

Loddon Mallee Region 57%

Vic Avg 61%

## Apprentices, trainees and work placements

Loddon Mallee 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 higher than the state average.

**Apprenticeship**

Loddon Mallee Region 29%

Vic Avg 24%

**Traineeship**

Loddon Mallee Region 22%

Vic Avg 18%

**Challenges**

Higher proportions of employers in Loddon Mallee cited lack of suitable applicants as a barrier.

**Lack of suitable applicants/people**

Loddon Mallee Region 21%

Vic Avg 20%

**There are no barriers/challenges**

Loddon Mallee Region 24%

Vic Avg 17%

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

Loddon Mallee Region 14%

Vic Avg 14%

**Work placement students**

One quarter of employers (25%) had taken on a work placement student (compared to 21% in Victoria). The most common type of work placement students were:

**University student**

Loddon Mallee Region 32%

Vic Avg 49%

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

Loddon Mallee Region 58%

Vic Avg 41%

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

Loddon Mallee Region 28%

Vic Avg 22%

**A VET student**

Loddon Mallee Region 18%

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)