Victorian Employer Skills Survey 2021 Western Metropolitan 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 Western Metropolitan employers adapted to maintain or grow their workforce. Employers had a mostly positive outlook for the year ahead.** Workforce

One in five Western Metropolitan employers reported growing their workforce in 2021. This was the highest rate reported among all metropolitan areas.

**Grew**

Western Metropolitan Region 20%

Vic Avg 19%

**Contracted**

Western Metropolitan Region 22%

Vic Avg 19%

**Remained the same**

Western Metropolitan Region 57%

Vic Avg 61%

**Don’t know**

Western Metropolitan Region 1%

#### Outlook

Employers in the Western metropolitan region are optimistic about their future growth potential. Predicted growth in the region was higher than the state average

**Predict growth**

Western Metropolitan Region 37%

Vic Avg 33%

**Remain about the same**

Western Metropolitan Region 50%

Vic Avg 56%

**Predict contraction**

Western Metropolitan Region 5%

Vic Avg 5%

#### Impacts of COVID-19

COVID-19 skills-related challenges experienced by employers in the Western Metropolitan region were higher than the state average.

**Skills-related challenges**

Western Metropolitan Region 61%

Vic Avg 57%

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

Western Metropolitan Region 48%

Vic Avg 45%

**Staff retention challenges**

Western Metropolitan Region 30%

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

Almost one in five of employers in the Western Metropolitan region expect to face skills shortages in 2022. This was less than the state average.

**Last 12 months**

Western Metropolitan Region 17%

Vic Avg 16%

**Next 12 months**

Western Metropolitan Region 19%

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**

Western Metropolitan Region 50%

Vic Avg 47%

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

Western Metropolitan Region 48%

Vic Avg 45%

**Finding job-ready candidates**

Western Metropolitan Region 35%

Vic Avg 37%

#### Skills needs

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

**Technical/job-specific skills**

Western Metropolitan Region 73%

Vic Avg 73%

**The right attitude/mindset**

Western Metropolitan Region 44%

Vic Avg 50%

**Job-ready skills**

Western Metropolitan Region 45%

Vic Avg 47%

## Recruitment

Most Western Metropolitan 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.   
Western Metropolitan Region 65%

Vic Avg 62%

Recruitment challenges

More employers reported difficulties recruiting for particular roles compared to the state average.   
  
Western Metropolitan Region 78%

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**

Western Metropolitan Region 59%

Vic Avg 63%

**Candidates lacked relevant experience**

Western Metropolitan Region 53%

Vic Avg 50%

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

Western Metropolitan Region 44%

Vic Avg 47%

## Training

More than half of Western Metropolitan employers engaged in some form of training

**Engagement in training**

More employers in the region used internal training, fewer used external training and more used both (42% compared to 37% state average).  
 **Internal training**

Western Metropolitan Region 20%

Vic Avg 17%

**External training**

Western Metropolitan Region 38%

Vic Avg 45%

**Satisfaction with training**

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

**Helped staff do their job better**

Western Metropolitan Region 84%

Vic Avg 81%

**Trainers had good industry knowledge**

Western Metropolitan Region 80%

Vic Avg 80%

**Training was high quality**

Western Metropolitan Region 82%

Vic Avg 76%

**Training was reasonably priced**

Western Metropolitan Region 75%

Vic Avg 71%

**Skillsets**

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

Western Metropolitan Region 63%

Vic Avg 61%

## Apprentices, trainees and work placements

Western Metropolitan 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**

Western Metropolitan Region 20%

Vic Avg 24%

**Traineeship**

Western Metropolitan Region 17%

Vic Avg 18%

**Challenges**

Lower proportions of employers in the Western Metropolitan region cited lack of suitable applicants and cost as barriers.

**Lack of suitable applicants/people**

Western Metropolitan Region 15%

Vic Avg 20%

**There are no barriers/challenges**

Western Metropolitan Region 17%

Vic Avg 17%

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

Western Metropolitan Region 13%

Vic Avg 14%

**Work placement students**

More employers in the region took on work placement students (23% compared to 21% for Victoria). The most common type of work placement students were:   
  
**University student**

Western Metropolitan Region 61%

Vic Avg 49%

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

Western Metropolitan Region 29%

Vic Avg 41%

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

Western Metropolitan Region 11%

Vic Avg 22%

**A VET student**

Western Metropolitan Region 19%

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)