



Aboriginal Traineeship Program

A guide for candidates

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Published by the Public Sector Commission, January, 2018.

This publication is available on the Public Sector Commission website at www.publicsector.wa.gov.au

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About the traineeship

The State Government of Western Australian has a long history of undertaking initiatives to improve employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (respectfully referred to in this guide as Aboriginal people).

The Aboriginal Traineeship Program commenced in 2012 as an initiative to improve employment outcomes for Aboriginal people under the commitment of the [Attract, appoint and advance: An employment strategy for Aboriginal people](#). The program is a combination of an employment, training, mentoring and support service and is centrally coordinated and funded by the Public Sector Commission.

Since the program started, it has provided training and employment opportunities for more than 300 promising young Aboriginal people to undertake a public sector traineeship and begin a career in the public sector.

The program is offered to Aboriginal people across the metropolitan and regional area in WA and provides the opportunity to develop the skills and competencies of young Aboriginal people through accredited training. The possibility also exists for ongoing employment across the WA public sector. Under the program, all trainees will:

- be employed by the Commission for a period of 12 months
- earn a trainee wage, based on age and final year of schooling completed
- be hosted by a public sector agency
- receive agency support, including mentoring through the Commission to complete the traineeship
- develop relevant public administration skills
- work towards the completion of a nationally recognised qualification, entitled Certificate III in Government (Public Administration).

Eligibility

To be considered for the program, applicants must:

- identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- be aged 24 years of age or younger
- have completed a minimum of Year 10 of schooling or equivalent
- have a current residential address in Western Australia
- be committed to working full-time for 12-months in an office environment within a public sector agency.

Program outline

The program is comprised of the following four phases.

1. Attraction, selection and recruitment

The Commission will:

- seek expressions of interest from agencies to participate in the program and select those that are best able to meet the needs of trainees as host agencies
- undertake a recruitment process to select and appoint successful candidates to the program.

2. Induction program

Prior to commencing employment in a host agency, trainees will participate in an induction session coordinated by the Commission. This induction session will focus on workplace readiness and preparing trainees to work in the WA public sector¹ environment.

3. Traineeship commencement

Upon completion of the induction session, trainees will be appointed to a host agency and commence their traineeship for a period of up to 12-months. All trainees must complete the requirements for the qualification in public administration, entitled Certificate III in Government (Public Administration).

4. Traineeship completion

On successful completion of the program, trainees will be presented with the Certificate III in Government (Public Administration) and the Commission will liaise with host agencies and others to negotiate ongoing employment opportunities.

¹ The term 'public sector' refers broadly to the agencies that exist and people employed for public services to the community broader sector.

Phase 1: Attraction, selection and recruitment

The Commission will undertake a recruitment process to select and appoint successful candidates to the program.

Potential applicants will need to register their interest by visiting www.jobs.wa.gov.au and selecting 'Target groups', then 'young people (17-24)' and 'Stream for Aboriginal youth'. After selecting the 'Apply for job' button at the bottom of the page applicants must enter their details and provide a current resume.

Once registered, applicants will be referred to the Commission for consideration. The Commission will be in contact and require applicants to fill out a vacancy cover letter. Should they be shortlisted, candidates will be contacted to undergo a selection process.

The selection process, facilitated by the Commission, will include:

- phone interviews
- attending an assessment session to undertake written and verbal assessment activities (those in regional areas will be required to undertake this assessment session via a video conference at an appropriate venue).

All candidates will be notified of the outcome of the selection process. Depending on individual agency requirements, the candidate may be required to undergo employment screening. These candidates will be advised prior to induction as processes can be lengthy. Screening may include:

- medical screening
- National Police Certificate
- Working with Children Check.

Any negative findings that may occur will **not** preclude trainees from being part of the program. The host agency HR Manager and the Commission team will undertake an assessment of any perceived impact on the trainee's role.

Information sessions

Candidates registered in the metropolitan area will be sent an invite—via email—to attend an information session prior to selection. Information session dates can be found by visiting the Commission's [website](#). Candidates are advised to register their attendance early to secure a spot.

Information sessions will not be conducted in regional areas. However—if required—further information about the program can be obtained by contacting the Diversity and Employment team on (08) 6552 8864 or emailing aboriginalemployment@psc.wa.gov.au

Phase 2: Induction session

Prior to commencing employment at a host agency, successful candidates for the program will participate in a three-day induction session run by the Commission. The induction session will focus on workplace readiness and preparing candidates to work in the public sector environment. At this induction program candidates will:

- receive and sign a training and employment contract, along with other relevant documents
- learn about the WA public sector working environment, their roles and responsibilities as a trainee and the public administration skills that will need to be developed during the traineeship
- receive an outline of the units required to be completed in order to satisfy the requirements for the qualification in public sector administration—Certificate III in Government (Public Administration)
- be advised of the allocation of the host agency and meet their host agency supervisor and the Commission mentor.

Phase 3: Traineeship commencement

Following the induction, trainees will commence the following week in their host agency. It is planned that the 2018 intake will commence in May 2018, across both metropolitan and regional areas.

Trainees will be employed on a fixed-term contract by the Commission (as the employer) for a period of 12-months. This means trainees are a full-time employee for a specific period of time (which will be outlined in their employment contract). Trainees are entitled to the same benefits as a full-time permanent employee but on a pro-rata basis, meaning they can only access particular incentives as they accrue it.

As part of the program trainees are then seconded to a host agency in line with Section 66 of the [Public Sector Management Act 1994](#). The host agency allocation will take into account the trainees location preference and career aspirations.

Through the duration of the program, the Commission is responsible for the trainee's salary and maintaining their leave entitlements. Trainees will be undertaking a nationally recognised industry qualification through a combination of theory based as well as on-the-job learning and can look forward to:

- introductory knowledge in government administration and practical work experience in an exciting government agency
- undertaking tasks such as administration duties, working as part of a team and using a range of technology
- undertaking training with support to build valuable work and personal life skills and confidence
- receiving support from the commission staff and allocated aboriginal mentors
- receiving a wage for the hours worked.

The trainee's mentor will conduct workplace visits to support the trainee and their host agency throughout the duration of the program, and are readily available for any queries or issues they may face.

Phase 4: Traineeship completion

To complete the requirements for the qualification, trainees must:

- successfully complete all core and elective units
- complete all workplace tasks allocated by the host agency supervisor, aligned with the competency and assessment requirements for the qualification to industry standards
- complete a portfolio of evidence based on daily work aligned with the assessment requirements
- undertake workplace assessment by the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) assessor.

On successful completion, trainees will be awarded a Certificate III in Government (Public Administration), and will be supported in securing ongoing employment. Should the host agency be unable to offer ongoing employment, trainees will be offered the option to register with the [Trainee Transition to Employment, Recruitment and Referral Service](#) (TTERRS).

The program is an intensive 12-month program and the Commission hosts a graduation ceremony to celebrate the achievements of each trainee. Special guest speakers, family members and a host agencies representative are all invited to attend where trainees will also receive their qualification.

Roles and responsibilities

The program is an integrated collaboration between trainees, the Commission, host agency and the RTO. Each party has its own role and responsibility that contribute to the success of the traineeship.

Trainees

The trainee's commitment and hard work is the foundation for success in this program.

Trainees will be responsible for:

- committing to a full-time traineeship for a period of up to 12-months
- undertaking relevant and meaningful training and learning opportunities
- completing core and elective units to meet the requirements for the qualification, work to be assessed by an RTO through regular assessment visits
- undertaking required training and assessments as per the training plan
- attending all meetings, training sessions, information sessions and assessment visits
- submitting timesheets and leave forms on time and according to specified policies and deadlines
- notifying the host agency if running late or absent from workplace
- raising any issues that may impact upon their traineeship progress with their mentor or supervisor
- adhering to the Commission's and host agency's policies
- abiding to workplace health and safety rules and standards
- attending and performing work as directed by the supervisor
- behaving in a professional manner and act with integrity
- notifying the Commission, host agency and RTO of any changes to personal details (e.g. home address, bank details).

Public Sector Commission

As the trainee's employer, the Commission will be responsible for:

- recruiting trainees and assigning host agencies
- meeting costs associated with the program including funding the trainees' wages
- engaging a RTO to deliver the requirements of the qualification
- delivering information sessions for candidates and agencies
- providing trainees with an induction prior to commencement of their traineeship
- providing mentoring and support to trainees through allocated Aboriginal mentors
- providing consultation, advice and support to agencies
- coordinating relevant training sessions for trainees and supervisors
- assisting trainees to identify ongoing employment opportunities within the public sector upon successful completion of their traineeship
- hosting a graduation ceremony for trainees who successfully complete their traineeship.

Host agency

The trainee's host agency will be responsible for:

- providing trainees with an agency-specific induction
- nominating a supervisor to allocate tasks and provide support to trainees
- liaising with the mentors of progress and any identified workplace issues
- identifying ongoing employment opportunities within the agency if the trainee successfully completes their traineeship.

Registered Training Organisation

The Commission will engage with an RTO to provide the formal qualification of the program. The RTO will be responsible for:

- drafting a training plan to specify the competencies the trainee will be required to achieve during the traineeship
- allocating an assessor for each trainee who will assess competencies in the workplace and provide relevant support/guidance to trainees and agencies
- monitoring trainee progress towards completing their qualification
- issuing trainees with their qualification upon successful completion.

Working in the public sector

The Commission recognises that trainees may be new to the workforce and more specifically the public sector. The following provides details on what to expect during the program and the trainee's responsibilities and employee benefits. Further information or any queries can be directed to the trainee's mentor.

The employer

The Commission envisions a high performing public sector that can service the needs of the WA community now and in the future. The program aligns to the Commission's role to provide leadership and expertise as well as increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the public sector through the promotion of public administration training and diversity groups. More information on the Commission's role can be found on the Commission's [website](#).

The Commission's work is also guided by its [Our LIVED values and strategic priorities 2017-2020](#). The values are:

- Leadership – professional, adaptable, strategic, authentic and proactive
- Integrity – honest, accountable, transparent and impartial
- Vision – aware, influence, connect and enable
- Excellence – high quality, accurate and rigorous
- Diversity – inclusion, respect and equality.

Trainees are encouraged to familiarise themselves and uphold the values as a representative of the Commission in their host agency.

Code of Conduct

As a Commission employee, trainees must uphold the highest standards of integrity and accountability across the sector. The Commission's Code of Conduct assists trainees to understand the standards of conduct expected of them as a Commission employee. It builds on the Commission's core values and the three principles contained in the [Western Australian public sector code of ethics](#), that is, 'Accountability', 'Relationships with others' and 'Personal integrity'.

Working conditions

Salary

The Commission is responsible for the payment of the trainee salaries, paid fortnightly on alternate Thursdays. These days are identified on the [Intersector calendar](#). The [Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety](#) is responsible for setting the rates of pay for trainees. These rates are published in [No. 01 of 2018 – Rates of Pay for Public Sector Trainees](#). The weekly wage for a trainee ranges between \$312.37 - \$634.87 (subject to change).

Wage level A

Wage level	Highest year of schooling completed		
	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
School leaver	8.33	9.17	10.93
Plus 1 year out of school	9.17	10.93	12.72
Plus 2 years	10.93	12.72	14.78
Plus 3 years	12.72	14.78	16.93
Plus 4 years	14.78		
Plus 5 years or more	16.93		

The rate of pay trainees receive is dependent on:

- highest year of schooling completed
- age
- number of years the trainee has been out of school.

Please note that trainees will be required to provide original evidence of the above—to be sighted by a Commission—prior to commencement to ensure the trainee is paid the correct rate.

Regional trainees may be eligible for regional allowance (dependent on their location). Trainees can contact their mentor for further information.

Hours of work

Standard working hours are 7.5 hours a day as set out in the [Public Service and Government Officers CSA General Agreement 2017](#). Commonly, hours of work are between 8.30am – 4.30pm however this may change pending agency requirements. Trainees are entitled to a 30-minute lunch break during the day between 12.00pm and 2.00pm. Trainees should ensure that they do not work more than five hours without taking a lunch break.

Timesheets

All trainees are required to fill out a timesheet with the hours worked and submit it to the Commission at the end of the settlement period (four weeks). The Commission will supply trainees with a copy of the timesheet and explain how to complete at induction. It is the trainee's responsibility to complete the timesheet accurately and submit to their

mentor. The trainee's supervisor will also be required to approve the timesheet and ensure its accuracy before submission. If trainees are close to—or have exhausted—all of their leave entitlements the Commission may place the trainee on a timesheet arrangement to avoid an overpayment. This means that the trainee's pay is based on the hours actually worked as documented on the timesheet.

Leave provisions

The Commission operates under the [Public Service and Government Officers CSA General Agreement 2017](#) and the [Public Service Award 1992](#). As a public sector employee, trainees are entitled to:

- four weeks paid annual leave (accrued portion only accessible)
- two days bereavement leave (per occasion)
- up to ten days family and domestic violence leave
- two days paid leave in lieu of repealed public service holidays each year
- up to five days paid personal leave each year (which includes sick leave, carer's leave and other forms of unplanned leave).

Other benefits

Other benefits include:

- access up to six free counselling sessions for trainees or immediate family members through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The EAP provides confidential professional counselling service and meetings can be done via phone or in person.
- corporate fund discount for private health.

Day-to-day work

The induction session provides trainees with an overview of working in the sector and an office environment. The host agency will also conduct an induction session—as with any other new employee—so that they can familiarise themselves with the workplace and be welcomed to their team. Throughout the program, trainees will have access to the Commission's mentors and Diversity and Employment team who are able to discuss and provide further consultation should any issues be raised.

The first day may include a:

- tour of workplace facilities and getting a security pass
- overview of the basic work rules and conditions (e.g. hours of work, use of mobile phones, who to contact if trainees are running late or not able to make it to work)
- health and safety processes including emergency procedures
- overview of the host agency
- information on the agency's policies, where to locate them and signing acknowledgement

- introduction to team members and staff across to agency.

It also provides trainees with an opportunity to introduce themselves. Trainee's should share with their host agency their skills, aspirations and what they hope to get out of the program.

Dress standard

Each workplace has different guidelines for what is considered an appropriate dress standard. Generally, it is recommended that trainees adhere to smart casual wear, presentable and neat.

Tasks trainees will complete

Each agency has different operational requirements therefore tasks trainees are asked to complete may vary. General tasks trainees are expected to complete include:

- administrative tasks including processing, stationary orders, checklists, reception support
- research tasks including gathering quotes for activities
- occupational health and safety including maintain first aid register, conducting audits of first aid boxes, workplace checklist
- writing tasks including simple memos

When undertaking tasks trainees should ensure they:

- understand the task and ask questions if need be
- complete all the steps involved
- quality check their work for any errors
- advise their supervisor when they have completed the task.

Dealing with workplace issues

The Commission acknowledges that sometimes situations may occur that can cause issues and impact their work performance. Therefore, trainees should discuss issues with their supervisor and mentor impacting their work performance. Similarly, a trainee's supervisor may identify an issue with their performance that they wish to address.

When meeting with supervisors and mentors, trainees should be:

- open – supervisors are there to support trainees
- clear on the issue they wish to address – sometimes making notes prior to meeting helps
- prepared on their feedback and guidance – supervisor and mentors are there to help trainees to succeed. As they have been in the workplace for longer than trainees, they may be able to provide a perspective on lessons learnt.

Should the supervisor need to raise a significant problem, trainees need to ensure they inform their mentor and invite them to any meetings.

The qualification

Training contract

Along with the employment contract, trainees will also enter a training contract with the [Department of Workforce Training and Development](#) who are responsible for the State Government's investment in vocational education and training. This contract ensures the Commission and host agency expose trainees to meaningful and relevant government administrative tasks during the program. The Commission will coordinate off-the-job training to compliment the on-the-job training conducted by the host agency.

Qualification and competencies

The RTO will develop a training plan to specify competencies trainees will need to complete the qualification. A total of 11 units grouped together is clustered over the course of 12-months. Trainees cannot complete the program earlier than 12-months as it completion terminates employment under the contract. Assessment guides will be provided linked to learning outcomes of the competencies in the workplace.

Competencies are the units of work which need to be completed, assessed and recognised in order to achieve the qualification. The program is based on learning and development from a combination of structured learning and on-the-job experience. Trainees will be required to complete a portfolio of evidence which will be gathered from their daily work.

Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes on the other hand, are statements that describe significant and essential learning that trainees should achieve or understand at the end of a unit or program.

Completing the program will prepare trainees for a career in the public sector and develop their administration skills and enhance their foundational knowledge in government. Host agencies should ensure trainees are working toward achieving the learning outcomes.

To complete the program, trainees need to be able to:

- uphold the values and principles of public service
- work effectively in the organisation
- contribute to workgroup activities
- work effectively with diversity
- use workplace communication strategies
- comply with legislation in the public sector
- contribute to workplace safety
- address client needs
- compose workplace documents
- build and maintain internal networks
- provide first aid.

Working with the RTO

The RTO will schedule a meeting with the agency and trainee at the beginning of the program in order to ensure all parties understand the requirements of the qualification. It is important that the supervisor attends as this will assist in the allocation of work tasks to ensure alignment with learning outcomes.

Frequently asked questions

The program

What is the Aboriginal Traineeship Program?

The Aboriginal Traineeship Program is an exciting employment-based training program that offers young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, 24 years of age or younger, entry level employment with an opportunity to develop public administration skills and competencies through a government traineeship.

Trainees will be employed by the Commission and hosted in a WA public sector agency. Where they will be expected to complete a nationally recognised qualification - Certificate III in Government (Public Administration). This provides trainees with the opportunity to develop public and administrative skills and equip them for a career public sector.

How long does the program go for and when does it start?

Trainees will be employed full-time on a fixed-term contract for 12-months.

The recruitment process commencing in January 2018 with the intake due to start in May.

Why should I apply for a government traineeship?

The program provides an excellent way to enter the public sector, kick start your career and the opportunity to gain a qualification at the same time.

If you are new to the workforce—or have not had much experience in an office based environment—the program can benefit your ability to gain employment or gain employability skills. It also enables trainees to be part of a team environment.

Am I eligible to apply?

To be eligible to apply for the program, you must meet the following criteria:

- Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- 24 years of age or younger
- Minimum completion of year 10 or equivalent
- An Australian citizen or permanent resident
- Committed to working full-time for 12-months in an office environment.

Depending on individual agency requirements, the candidate may be required to undergo employment screening. Any negative findings that may occur will **not** preclude trainees from being part of the program. The host agency HR Manager and the Commission team will undertake an assessment of any perceived impact on the trainee's role.

Can I apply if I'm still in school?

Trainees need to have a minimum completion of Year 10 (or equivalent) to participate in the program. Please note that you cannot undertake both school studies and participate in the program at the same time as you are required to work full-time in a public sector workplace. It is recommended that you speak to your school VET coordinator, family and friends in making a decision on which pathway is best suited to yourself.

Where will I work?

WA public sector agencies provide a range of interesting and challenging jobs. Trainees are placed within an agency and the program offers apply in for metropolitan and regional placements. During the recruitment process, the panel will discuss with you to determine your career aspirations are and try to match these to an appropriate agency.

How much do I get paid?

The weekly wage for a trainee ranges between \$302.25 - \$692.90 (subject to change). The [Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety](#) is responsible for setting the rates of pay for trainees.

The rate of pay you receive is dependent on:

- highest year of schooling completed
- your age
- number of years you have been out of school.

Is there a cost to participate?

No, you do not need to pay any fees to participate in the program. The Commission will cover your training costs and pay your wage. All we ask is for your commitment to the program and to work hard for the duration of the program.

What support do I have during the traineeship?

The Commission has allocated Aboriginal mentors to support you during the program and will conduct workplace visits to make sure you settle in and are tracking well. In addition, the RTO will provide guidance as you undertake your qualification and will also conduct workplace visits. We understand that entering the workplace for the first time, or re-entering after a break, can be daunting. Within your workplace, your agency will also dedicate a supervisor to support you on a day-to-day basis.

What are the benefits?

- Corporate fund discount for private health.
- Access to various leave forms through the traineeship (only to be taken once accrued).
- Flexible working arrangements.
- On-the-job training and off the job training.
- Access up to six free counselling sessions for yourself or immediate family members through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The EAP provides confidential professional counselling service and meetings can be done via phone or in person.

What does the training contract involve?

As you begin your traineeship, you will enter into a training contract with the Department of Training and Workforce Development (DTWD) and the RTO. This contract runs concurrently with your fixed-term contract as part of the program. It also outlines the necessary on-the-job training and tasks to complete the qualification.

What other policies do I need to comply to?

As an employee of the Commission through the program, you are required to comply with:

- The WA Code of Ethics
- The Commission's Code of Conduct
- Your host agency's Code of Conduct and various other policies (e.g. ICT Acceptable Use Policy).

Will I automatically gain ongoing employment at the end of the program?

While there is no guarantee of ongoing employment, the Commission and mentors will provide support to trainees in identifying opportunities for longer term employment within the public sector. Host agencies are also shortlisted based on their possibility to provide ongoing employment.

What happens when I complete the program?

On satisfactory completion of program, you will receive a Certificate III in Government (Public Administration) and be offered one (or more) of the following options:

- Ongoing employment in a permanent or fixed-term capacity within an agency
- Higher qualification traineeship (e.g. Certificate IV in Government)
- Registration with the [Traineeship Transition to Employment, Recruitment and Referral Services](#) (TTERRS). This service provides opportunity for you to be referred to Level 1 vacancies within the sector.

What is involved in the traineeship?

As a trainee in the program, you can look forward to:

- gaining on-the-job experience and building a foundational knowledge and skills in government administration that could lead to future employment in the sector
- working towards a nationally industry recognised qualification
- receiving support from the Commission staff and allocated Aboriginal mentors;
- receiving income for the hours working during the traineeship
- undertaking training with support to build valuable work and personal life skills and confidence
- undertaking tasks such as administration duties, working as part of a team and using a range of technology.

Will I be required to travel during the traineeship?

Generally, the only travel you will be required to do is to and from the workplace. When agency allocations are decided, the Commission takes into account your preferred location of work and will do its best to accommodate. On occasions, you may be required to travel to [Dumas House in West Perth](#).

What hours am I expected to work?

Standing working hours across the sector are 7.5 hours a day as set out in the [Public Service and Government Officers CSA General Agreement 2017](#). Commonly, hours of work are between 8.30am – 4.30pm however this may change depending on the agency's requirement. You are entitled to a minimum 30-minute lunch break during the day between 12.00pm and 2.00pm (with trainees not expected to work more than five hours without taking their lunch break).

The recruitment process

For further information on the recruitment process, please view our *Aboriginal Traineeship Program – Recruitment process guide 2018*.

This provides details on the process and what to expect, as well as what you are required to submit.

Due to the large volume of applications, the recruitment process can take up to three months. Successful candidates are scheduled to commence work in May 2018. If you are interested in participating, please ensure that you are available to commence full-time work in May and available for the assessment session in April.

The current timeline (subject to change) for this intake is as follows:

1. Online Applications (close 5.00pm 16 February 2018)
2. Information Session (6 February 2018 onwards)
3. Phone Interviews (26 February 2018 onwards)
4. Assessment Centre (19 March 2018 onwards)
5. Referee Reports (26 March 2018 onwards)
6. Offers (mid April 2018)
7. Employment Screening (30 April 2018 onwards)
8. Information Session (Successful Trainees) (4 May 2018)
9. Commencement (9 May 2018 onwards)

Further information

Please contact the Diversity and Employment team at the Commission for any further queries on (08) 6552 8864 or aboriginalemployment@psc.wa.gov.au

Public Sector Commission
www.publicsector.wa.gov.au

Traineeship wages and conditions of employment
www.commerce.wa.gov.au

Copies of awards and agreements
www.wairc.wa.gov.au

Public sector training package
www.training.gov.au