



AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT
PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION

**BUILDING A SKILLED AND ADAPTABLE
WORKFORCE**

SEPTEMBER 2025

INTRODUCTION

[1] The Restaurant and Catering Industry Association of Australia Incorporated (R&CA) are pleased to provide a submission with respect to the interim report for *Building a Skilled and Adaptable Workforce*.

ABOUT THE RESTAURANT & CATERING ASSOCIATION

[2] R&CA is the national industry association representing the interests of more than 57,000 restaurants, cafés, and catering businesses across Australia. The café, restaurant, and catering sector is vitally important to the national economy, generating over \$35 billion in retail turnover each year as well as employing 580,000 people.

[3] R&CA delivers tangible outcomes to small businesses within the hospitality industry by offering evidence-based solutions to various industry challenges. Our aim is to improve regulations and policies that impact the sector's operating environment to foster robust and prosperous businesses across Australia.

[4] We work to ensure the industry is respected for its integrity, professionalism, and dedication to excellence. This includes advocating the broader social and economic contribution of the sector to industry and government stakeholders, as well as highlighting the value of the industry to the Australian way of life.

[5] Given our remit, footprint, engagement with the sector, and ongoing advocacy, we provide you with the following submission and speak with authority.

OUR POSITION

[6] The Restaurant and Catering Industry Association (R&CA), provide the following for the draft recommendations:

[7] R&CA support draft recommendation 2.1.



Draft recommendation 2.1

Move toward a national system of credit transfer and recognition of prior learning (RPL)

To better enable credit transfer and RPL, the Australian Government should:

- enforce the right to have credit transfer or RPL assessed before the deadline for accepting an offer
- develop a national database of academic credit decisions
- develop a model of coordinated assessments of prior learning, and possibly of credit transfers.

Students could draw on the database to better understand possible tertiary education pathways, making decisions about the allocation of credit more transparent and providers more accountable.

The Government should consider a staged approach to establishing the database that begins with compiling credit transfer decisions, before including credit granted from different types of learning, such as microcredentials, informal learning or work experience, including international work experience.

The Australian Tertiary Education Commission, as steward of the tertiary education system, should play a role in establishing the database and enforcing consistent and accurate data collection from providers.

[8] R&CA support draft recommendation 2.2.



Draft recommendation 2.2

Better target incentives to lift work-related training rates in small and medium enterprises (SMEs)

The Australian Government should trial:

- financial incentives (such as a tax credit) to increase work-related training for SMEs
- SME advisory services to support work-related training.

The measures should be evaluated to determine cost-effectiveness as well as to better understand how SME advisory services and other supports can aid implementation and improve take-up. Data collection to establish a baseline and evaluate the measures should be embedded into the program design.

[9] R&CA support draft recommendation 3.2.



Draft recommendation 3.2

Expand entry pathways and streamline qualification requirements for occupations

Australian, state and territory governments should assess whether current regulated qualification requirements for occupations are proportionate to identified risks, and implement alternative entry pathways where feasible while maintaining quality and safety standards.

To begin, the Australian Government should consider revising qualification requirements for registered company auditors by introducing a tier of licensing for lower-risk assurance activities.

Australian, state and territory governments should also address skills shortages in trades occupations by investigating opportunities for alternative approaches to acquiring competencies in trade-based occupations and expanding non-apprentice pathways.

[10] R&CA support draft recommendation 3.4.



Draft recommendation 3.4

Incentivise occupational entry regulation reform through National Competition Policy

Australian, state and territory governments should use the National Competition Policy process to incentivise reform of occupational entry regulations at the state and territory level.

[11] R&CA thank the Productivity Commission and welcome engagement on 1300 722 878 or policy@rca.asn.au.