

## Australian Apprenticeships Mentoring package

### Mentoring Program Guidelines

The *Building Australia's Future Workforce* package, announced by the Australian Government on 10 May 2011 in the 2011-2012 Budget, provides a \$3.02 billion investment for a new approach to deliver the skilled workers the economy needs and ensure more Australians have the opportunity to share in the nation's prosperity.

The package has four components:

- Putting industry at the heart of the training system
- Modernising apprenticeships
- Skills to support increased participation
- Reforming the national training system

The Government's \$201 million Australian Apprenticeships Reform package is an initial direction setting response to the *Apprenticeships for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Expert Panel's* report. Around \$101 million is for the Australian Apprenticeships Mentoring Package, which comprises two grant programs – the Australian Apprenticeships Advisers Program and the Australian Apprenticeships Mentoring Program. These Program Guidelines relate to the Mentoring Program under the Mentoring Package.

The Mentoring Program also forms part of Skills Connect, announced by the Government on 21 September 2011, which is designed to consolidate funding processes for a range of skills programs and better target industry and worker training. Skills Connect also aims to ensure workers are assisted to make the transition from sectors in our economy which are experiencing structural adjustment to sectors in which skilled labour is in strong demand.

#### Purpose

These Guidelines outline the procedural and contractual requirements of the Australian Apprenticeships Mentoring Program (Mentoring Program). They address the funding arrangements, eligibility requirements, application process and criteria against which applications will be assessed.

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) reserves the right to amend the Guidelines at its discretion from time to time, including prior to the execution of the Funding Agreement. This is not a stand-alone document and does not cover the entire obligations of applicants and funding recipients under the Mentoring Package.

Eligibility requirements may be waived by the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations (the Minister) in exceptional circumstances. Any proposals considered outside the standard eligibility requirements and application processes must be consistent with the policy objectives agreed by the Australian Government and set out in these Guidelines.

The Australian Apprenticeships website [www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au) will provide up to date information on the Mentoring Package and highlight any amendments to these Guidelines.

#### Objectives and Overview

The Mentoring Package is part of the Australian Government's *Building Australia's Future Workforce* package. The Mentoring Package comprises two grants programs, the Mentoring Program (approximately \$80 million, 2011-12 until 2014-15) and the Australian Apprenticeships Advisers Program (around \$21 million, 2011-12 until 2012-13). These are also identified as the

'Trade Apprentice Mentoring' and 'Right Trade for You' Initiatives under the Portfolio Budget Statements 2011-12. These Guidelines refer to the Mentoring Program under this package only.

The overarching aim of the Mentoring Package is to increase the retention rates of Australian Apprentices, particularly in the first 12 months of training, in order to improve completion rates and support the supply of skilled workers in sectors and occupations where there is a current or emerging skills need.

Under the Mentoring Program, funding will support targeted mentoring to help Australian Apprentices successfully progress through their Apprenticeships. Mentoring may also involve support to their employers or supervisors to encourage a positive employment relationship and better support for Australian Apprentices. The Mentoring Program is targeted to Australian Apprentices who may face barriers to participation. It is anticipated that Mentoring Projects may focus on the first year of training when Australian Apprentices are most at risk of withdrawing from their Apprenticeships, however this will depend on the needs of the cohorts targeted for support.

The length of Mentoring Projects will be dependent on the nature of the Project and the target cohort of Apprentices to be supported under the Project, and will be approved at the discretion of the Department. It is anticipated that generally Projects will support about 12 months of mentoring for the nominated target cohort. Projects must be completed no later than 31 May, and all funding acquitted no later than 30 June, in the financial year following the one in which the project is approved, unless otherwise agreed by the Department.

Industry-led partnerships to deliver Mentoring Projects are encouraged. Applications for funding under the Mentoring Package must demonstrate how the proposed project would link to and support workforce planning and development goals.

Projects which link the Advisers Program and the Mentoring Program are also encouraged. Program Guidelines for the Advisers Program can be found at [www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/MentoringPackage/AdvisersProgram.asp](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/MentoringPackage/AdvisersProgram.asp)

At any time during the life of the Mentoring Program the Minister may nominate industries or sectors for prioritisation of funding. Decisions regarding the prioritisation of funding may be informed by advice from the National Workforce and Productivity Agency (including its interim Board).

### **Funding Available through the *Australian Apprenticeships Mentoring Program***

The funding available to support Projects under the Mentoring Program over the next four years is outlined in the 2011-12 Portfolio Budget Statements as follows:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Funding committed</b>
2011-12	\$20 million
2012-13	\$19.8 million
2013-14	\$19.8 million
2014-15	\$19.8 million

## Funding Prioritisation

In line with a focus on targeting funds to areas of current and emerging skills need, and to respond to the changing needs of the economy, prioritisation may be given to proposals from industries and sectors nominated by the Australian Government. As such, the Minister, on the advice from the National Workforce and Productivity Agency (including the interim board), may prioritise certain industries, sectors and regions for funding. Targeting of industries with identified skills needs will be announced on the Australian Apprenticeships website at [www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au).

## Partnerships - Roles and Responsibilities

Partnership arrangements are encouraged under the Mentoring Package. Partnerships enable Projects to be delivered by organisations which individually might not have all of the required expertise, but in partnership with another specialised organisation could meet the requirements to more effectively deliver Projects under the program. Partnerships can mean financial partnerships or the network of organisations supporting or participating in the Project (including employers receiving mentoring support for their apprentices).

Partnerships, depending on the nature of the Proposal, may span across multiple jurisdictions. Proposals that demonstrate multi-jurisdictional coverage are encouraged. The governance arrangements (including number of organisations in the partnership and management of the partnership) are the responsibility for the Lead Organisation.

## Lead Organisation

Lead Organisations will have a central co-ordination role for Projects and will be the primary entity responsible for coordinating and submitting the Application, which may be made on behalf of multiple entities to form a Partnership. Lead Organisations will be responsible for receiving and distributing funding on behalf of the Partnership and for monitoring and reporting to DEEWR on the implementation of successful Projects.

Lead Organisations must be an incorporated entity (e.g. a company or incorporated association), with Australian Business Number or Australian Company Number. Only Lead Organisations can submit Applications, and only Lead Organisations can receive funding directly under a Funding Agreement.

For successful projects, Lead Organisations will enter in to a Funding Agreement with DEEWR that will outline the terms and conditions of funding for Projects.

Lead Organisations will need to consider the governance of their Partnership arrangements and the role of potential partners and stakeholders.

## Employer(s)

Participating Employers are employing or contracting organisations (including both profit and non-profit organisations and sole traders) that have agreed to participate in the Project (and could be a financial Partner and/or recipient of mentoring support).

It is expected that employers will generally participate in industry-led projects rather than act as a Lead Organisation, however it is possible for employers to act as the Lead Organisation in applying for funding under the program. This is likely to be supported only where the employer acting as the Lead Organisation has either partnered with other employers and stakeholders to deliver a project, or is a very large employer with a significant workforce of apprentices to be supported through a Mentoring Project.

## Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)

Organisations registered by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) or a relevant state training authority to deliver training, conduct assessments and issue nationally recognised qualifications in accordance with the Australian Quality Training Framework.

## **Recruitment Organisations**

Recruitment Organisations can be any business providing recruitment and employment related services, and may include Job Services Australia, Australian Apprenticeships Centres, and Disability Employment Services providers.

## **Industry Skills Councils (ISCs)**

Industry Skills Councils are not-for-profit companies governed by industry-led boards that provide independent skills and training advice to industries and enterprises. They can help integrate skill development with economic and business goals, and assist in matching identified training needs with appropriate training solutions. ISCs also prepare industry intelligence and advice on workforce and skills development, and support the development and continuous improvement of high quality training and workforce development products and services, including training packages in the Australian Qualifications Framework. ISCs may be Lead Organisations.

## **State Industry Training Advisory Boards**

State Industry Training Advisory Boards (ITABs) provide advice on training priorities and skills formation. They can support Lead Organisations, Participating Employers and RTOs.

## **Peak industry bodies**

A peak industry body represents the interests of a particular industry and provides a voice for members on industry issues. They also provide members with information and advice in relation to training, occupational health and safety, legal services, industrial relations and industry standards. Organisations such as peak industry bodies can be Lead Organisations or Partner Organisations, or provide advice and expertise on workforce development needs.

## **Employer and employee associations**

These can include organisations such as trade unions, chambers of commerce, local business development bodies and local government.

## **Advisory bodies**

A range of advisory bodies can also support Partnerships and Partner Organisations. Group Training Organisations, State Training Authorities and consulting human resources (HR) professionals can also provide advice on skills development solutions.

## **Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)**

DEEWR is responsible for implementing and administering the initiative. DEEWR will be required to:

- Ensure the assessment process of each Application is fair and meets the priorities of the initiative and is in accordance with these Guidelines
- Prepare funding recommendations for the Minister's consideration
- Enter into a legally binding agreement with successful Lead Organisations in relation to the Mentoring Package
- Manage Funding Agreements with Lead Organisations and the distribution of Australian Government Funding
- Evaluate program outcomes and monitor the performance of Lead Organisations and Partner Organisations in relation to the initiative

## **Who Can Apply?**

Industry led partnerships are encouraged under the Mentoring Program.

Organisations eligible to apply for funding include:

- Professional associations, industry bodies and other lead agents representing a consortia of employers
- Enterprises
- Employment-related service providers such as Australian Apprenticeships Centres

In the case of Partnerships, only Lead Organisations are required to apply for funding. If submitting an Application on behalf of a partnership, a Letter of Commitment for each organisation must be attached plus a Legal Authorisation Form is to be completed by the lead Organisation.

## Use of Funds

Australian Government funding will be provided through a Funding Agreement which sets out the terms and conditions of the funding in accordance with standard Australian Government requirements.

## Who is Eligible to Receive Mentoring?

Under the Mentoring Program, priority Australian Apprentices are eligible to receive mentoring support. An Australian Apprentice is a person who is:

- Employed under an Apprenticeship/Traineeship Training Contract; and
- Involved in paid work and structured training which commonly comprises both on and off the job training; and
- Undertaking a negotiated training program responsive to client choice that involves obtaining a nationally recognised qualification.

In some states and territories, Australian Apprentices may be referred to as apprentices, trainees or trainee apprentices.

Funding will be targeted to priority groups of Australian Apprentices; these are outlined in the following section. As noted above, funding will also be targeted to areas of current and emerging skills need.

Consistent with the aim of the Program to develop a more skilled Australian workforce, to be eligible to receive mentoring, Australian Apprentices must be:

- An Australian Citizen; or
- A foreign national with permanent residency status; or
- A New Zealand passport holder who has resided in Australia for at least six months; or
- A foreign national with a Trade Skills Training Visa (subclass 471),

at the date of commencement or recommencement of the Australian Apprenticeship.

## What Mentoring support will be funded?

Projects funded under the Mentoring Program should take a risk-based approach to identifying Australian Apprentices who are most likely to benefit from additional support to participate in the Program. The Mentoring Program is targeted at Australian Apprentices:

- In industries or occupations with current or emerging skills need, particularly those employed in small to medium enterprises; and
- Who may face additional barriers to participation, including those impacted by structural adjustment and may need additional support as they undertake their training.

Australian Apprentices who may face additional barriers to participation include one or more of the following priority groups:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian Apprentices;
- Australian Apprentices from regional and remote areas
- Australian Apprentices with disability

- Australian School based Apprentices (i.e. an Australian Apprenticeship which is undertaken part-time while the Australian Apprentice is at school)
- Female and male Australian Apprentices in non-traditional occupations;
- Australian Apprentices who have experienced long term unemployment (e.g. stream 4 under Job Services Australia classification)
- Australian Apprentices who are mature workers (e.g. those aged 45 years and older);
- Australian Apprentices who are considered vulnerable youth (e.g. young people 25 years and under with identified barriers to participation) and, as noted above,
- Australian Apprentices who have been impacted by structural adjustment and may need additional support as they undertake their training.

Mentoring projects could target other priority groups not identified on the above list where a clear and compelling need is established.

To deliver effective, personalised mentoring support, it is expected that funded organisations will design a Project that will target the specific identified workforce development needs and target apprentice cohorts, drawing on research and information on better practice approaches.

To support the overarching objective of the Mentoring Package, funded Mentoring Projects will support the provision of personalised mentoring for Australian Apprentices (and support for their employers as required), who are undertaking their Apprenticeship in industries experiencing skill shortage, and who also face additional barriers to participation.

It is anticipated that mentoring Projects will likely target support to the first year of training where Australian Apprentices are most at risk of withdrawing, although this will depend on the needs of the cohort to be supported by the Project.

### Characteristics of Effective Mentoring

It is expected that the following characteristics will be incorporated into the delivery of an effective Mentoring Project:

- A. *Frequent contact*: Mentoring Projects will include regular one-to-one contact between skilled mentors and targeted Australian Apprentices. The primary method of delivering mentoring support should be face-to-face; however other communication strategies (for example, Skype, telephone, social media, text messaging, email) could be used as supporting tools for communication. In order for Mentoring Projects to support the Apprentice to maintain a positive employment relationship, it is also expected that effective mentoring will require an effective personal relationship between the mentor and the employer, and potentially support for the employer where appropriate.
- B. *Skills of mentors*: funding recipients will need to consider the required skill set of mentors in order to effectively meet the aims of Mentoring Projects, and in particular, the needs of the target industry and cohort/s to be supported. This could include, for example, experienced tradespeople, youth or social workers (who have an appropriate level of industry experience and knowledge) and/or other individuals who have undertaken, or will undertake, appropriate training to support the effective delivery of Mentoring support. In some cases, peer mentoring (e.g. third or fourth year Apprentices) may also be considered an appropriate strategy.
- C. *Recruitment and training of skilled mentors*: to ensure mentors have an appropriate level of training and/or skills to deliver personalised mentoring support for Apprentices, funded organisations should develop a clear recruitment and training strategy. It is expected that this will include a focus on mentors' knowledge and/or experience of the relevant industry/Apprenticeship, as well as skills in providing mentoring support. In some cases,

specific qualities, skills or training relevant to the priority group will be needed (such as cultural awareness). Mentors under this program will also need appropriate working with children clearances (as per jurisdiction legislation) where relevant.

- D. *Identification, selection and matching of Apprentices:* funded organisations will develop a strategy for identifying and selecting Australian Apprentices to participate in Mentoring Projects. This should provide a clear rationale for the cohort being targeted, how the Australian Apprentices will be recruited into the Mentoring Project, and a strategy for matching them with a Mentor. It is envisaged that funding recipients will provide training or 'orientation' for participating Apprentices (and where appropriate, their employers) under the Mentoring Project. This may include the development of a Mentoring Agreement between the Mentor and the participating Apprentice which sets out roles and responsibilities, goals and agreed strategy for mentoring.
- E. *Support for mentors:* procedures and policies (for example, regarding mentors' duty of care and confidentiality obligations) must be developed under the Project to ensure adequate and ongoing support for Mentors. This support should include monitoring of mentoring relationships and assisting mentors and Apprentices to reach closure when appropriate. In particular, Mentors must have clear avenues for referring Apprentices to more intensive pastoral and mental health care when needed. As well as the provision of initial training to develop appropriate skills for the mentoring role (where required), it is envisaged that ongoing training would be made available to the Mentor to support this role. This is particularly important where a Mentor may be supporting Australian Apprentices with specific barriers (e.g. Apprentices with disability).

## Aims of Mentoring Support

It is expected that Apprentice Mentors engaged through funded Projects will seek to:

- Motivate and build the confidence of the Australian Apprentice to reach their full potential in their apprenticeship
- Be a point of contact for the Australian Apprentice when issues or potential issues arise in relation to their Apprenticeship
- Empower the Australian Apprentice with the knowledge and capacity to identify and resolve issues autonomously when they arise
- Encourage the Australian Apprentice to develop their independence and self-reliance in the workplace
- Identify and assist the Australian Apprentice to rectify problems at the earliest opportunity to ensure that they are resolved before they pose a threat to the employment relationship
- Be a positive role model (i.e. particularly for younger Apprentices) and facilitate the development of the Australian Apprentice's skills and capabilities to handle issues impacting on work effectively.

In achieving the aims of the Mentoring Program it is expected that mentors will:

- Build rapport and trust with the Australian Apprentice in order to engage with them and help the Australian Apprentice to develop the skills necessary to successfully complete their Apprenticeship
- Identify and address the specific needs of the Australian Apprentice being mentored and to refer to appropriate specialised support services where required
- Modify approaches specific to the needs of each Australian Apprentice being mentored recognising that the level, type, and frequency of engagement necessary will depend on the Australian Apprentice's specific identified barriers and the impact these may have on their employment and the ability to adjust as required

- Provide constructive and practical advice to the Australian Apprentice in relation to the workplace and encourage independence and self reliance through modelling or providing guidance on best practice strategies
- Assist the Australian Apprentice in accessing additional resources and further support if required
- Build relationships with employers/supervisors, particularly those who may be new to supervising Australian Apprentices, to provide information and guidance where appropriate to help maintain a positive relationship between the Australian Apprentice and their employer.

### Project Targets

Funded organisations are required to identify project targets based on the demonstrated workforce development needs, including:

- The number of Australian Apprentices to be supported across the priority groups and specific occupation or industry
- The number of Mentors to be engaged to provide this support; and
- The target retention rate for participating Australian Apprentices (this includes identifying an initial 'benchmark' for retention, drawing on evidence on retention levels for similar cohorts, against which improvement will be monitored).

Project targets identified by organisations, and agreed to by the Department, will be written into Funding Agreements and will be used to measure project performance across the life of projects. Funded organisations will be required to report against project targets throughout the project, as part of reporting requirements outlined in the Funding Agreement.

### Application Process

The purpose of the application process is to ensure that the proposed project meets the eligibility requirements of the Mentoring Package, and to select Projects for funding support. The submission of a Proposal is not a guarantee of funding.

### Required Documentation

Applications must provide information about the proposed Project.

Applications should be submitted using the template form provided, unless otherwise agreed by the Department. There must be one completed form for each Application. All required questions need to be completed and include all relevant information. The Application form is available at: [www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/MentoringPackage/MentoringProgram.asp](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/MentoringPackage/MentoringProgram.asp)

Applicants should not assume the Department has any prior knowledge of Partner Organisations or the proposed Project.

Applications must include the following documentation to be considered for funding:

#### 1. A Workforce Planning Statement (the Statement)

The Statement should address the following:

*A: Evidence of current or emerging skills need*

This could be drawn from industry skills gap analysis, skill shortages data, and commencement and retention data for Australian Apprentices and should support the need for the proposed Project. This section should include information on workforce planning and development needs that the proposed project will support.

*B: Evidence of target group need*

This section should provide evidence of any existing support for target groups and how the proposed Project will be complementary, fill an identified need and not duplicate other existing activities.

Where the Applicant has already completed a Workforce Planning document relevant to the Application for funding under other Australian Government programs, this document can be provided in response to this requirement and referred to when appropriate. For Applicants who have not previously (or recently) completed a Workforce Planning document, a statement against the requirements listed above will suffice for the purposes of the application process.

## **2. A Completed Application Form:**

The form should not be altered in any way without first seeking written approval from DEEWR and should include:

A: *Claims against the Assessment Criteria.*

B: *Project Budget.*

A detailed breakdown of income and expected expenditure by item, and funding sought from the Mentoring Program. Applicants should also describe:

- All sources of funding for the Project
- Details of all relevant government funds that they, and Partner Organisations, currently access and how these link with the Project.

## **3. Contributions from other sources**

Co-contribution is encouraged to deliver Projects under the Mentoring Program but not required. Where applicable, details of financial contributions that will be made to the Project from sources other than funds under the Mentoring Program need to be provided and reflected in the Project Budget. The applicant must identify any conditions or limitations on that other funding.

## **4. Evidence of Support from Partner Organisation(s)**

The Lead Organisation and all Partner Organisations must be clearly identified in the Application, and evidence of commitment to the Partnership provided in the Application.

## **5. Financial Viability documentation**

Lead Organisations and Partner Organisations are required to provide documentation to allow the Department to assess their financial viability and credentials as part of the Application process. A Financial Viability and Credentials Information Form must be submitted electronically along with the completed Application Form.

### **Submitting Applications**

Applications for funding can be submitted to the Department at any time. Early applications are encouraged to ensure availability of funding. The Department may also, at its discretion, call for applications through formal Funding Rounds.

Lead Organisations must submit a completed Application form and Financial Viability Questionnaire to the Department electronically at: [mentoringpackage@deewr.gov.au](mailto:mentoringpackage@deewr.gov.au).

Lead Organisations must also submit one original signed hard copy of the completed Application form to the Department, together with original signed supporting documentation to:

Australian Apprenticeships Mentoring Package  
C50MA7  
Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations  
GPO Box 9880

## CANBERRA ACT 2601

Information on application processes will also be published at [www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au) and at [www.deewr.gov.au/Department/Pages/GrantOpportunities.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/Department/Pages/GrantOpportunities.aspx).

If you have trouble accessing documents, contact the Department at [mentoringpackage@deewr.gov.au](mailto:mentoringpackage@deewr.gov.au).

Requests for further information or questions about the Mentoring Package can be sent to [mentoringpackage@deewr.gov.au](mailto:mentoringpackage@deewr.gov.au).

Note that questions asked, and DEEWR's responses, may be made public through a Frequently Asked Questions page on the Australian Apprenticeships website at [www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au). Identifying information will not be included.

### Acknowledgement by Applicants

By submitting an Application and signing the declaration an Applicant acknowledges and agrees that they:

- Have not relied on any sources of information about the Mentoring Package other than that which DEEWR has made available
- Have not used improper assistance from any DEEWR employee, or information unlawfully obtained from the DEEWR
- Complies, and will comply, with all conditions set out in these Guidelines

### Alternative Application Process – Skills Connect

Organisations wishing to access funding under a range of skills programs to meet their workforce development and training needs can consider applying through a single, streamlined application process under the Government's Skills Connect initiative. Further information will be available via the Australian Apprenticeships website at <http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/MentoringPackage/MentoringProgram.asp>

### Selection Process

Only the Proposals that provide best value for money in achieving the objectives of the Mentoring Program will be recommended to the Minister to receive funding. Applicants must also demonstrate how the proposed project would be in addition to existing services available in the market place. Each Application will be assessed against the non weighted selection criteria set out in these Guidelines below:

#### Mentoring Program – Assessment Criteria for project proposals

Item	Assessment Criteria	Required Information
1.	Demonstrated capacity to provide mentoring support to Australian Apprentices engaged in a specific occupation or industry and from nominated priority groups	Applications should demonstrate the applicant's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Expertise in the specified occupation or industry</li><li>- Expertise (or potential to harness expertise) regarding the nominated priority cohorts including Apprentices in SMEs</li><li>- Organisational capacity to recruit suitably skilled Mentors</li><li>- Organisational capacity to manage and deliver a Mentoring Project.</li></ul>
2.	Quality of the proposed mentoring project to	Applications should outline the applicant's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Rationale for proposing the specified occupation or</li></ul>

Item	Assessment Criteria	Required Information
	support the needs of the occupation or industry and the nominated priority groups.	<p>industry, and the priority cohorts to be targeted in Mentoring Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding of the issues facing Australian Apprentices in the specified occupation or industry</li> <li>- Strategy for recruiting Australian Apprentices and Mentors to participate in the Mentoring Project</li> <li>- Strategy for identifying and supporting Australian Apprentices from priority groups</li> <li>- Capacity and strategy to provide consistent standards of high quality one-to-one (including face-to-face) mentoring support to Australian Apprentices</li> <li>- Ability to case manage Apprentices to ensure that the mentoring support provided meets the needs of individuals</li> <li>- proposed number of mentors and Australian Apprentices to be supported under the Mentoring Project</li> <li>- Approach to longer term sustainability of the project</li> <li>- Approach to monitoring the effectiveness of their project and improving the project based on feedback</li> <li>- Strategy for any additional 'value-add' features to support an effective Mentoring Project</li> </ul>
3.	Evidence of effective partnerships to support provision of Mentoring Project	<p>Applications should, where possible, include written endorsement from key stakeholders from the occupation or industry whose support will be critical to the success of the mentoring service. This includes any organisations to which Mentors may refer Australian Apprentices.</p> <p>Where the Lead Organisation is proposing to deliver the project with assistance from partner organisations, a letter from each partner organisation outlining the role they will play in delivering the Mentoring Project activities and their relevant prior experience in delivering that support is expected.</p>

### Assessment Information

DEEWR will conduct the assessment of Applications under the Mentoring Package in accordance with these Guidelines against the Assessment Criteria outlined above. Each Application will be assessed on its individual merits. The assessment may include consultation with relevant state and territory governments and agencies when appropriate.

As part of the selection process, DEEWR may undertake further checks of Applicants and Partner Organisations. DEEWR may also conduct checks for non-disclosure of relevant information. Where to do so would not be inconsistent with any Australian law, DEEWR reserves the right to use information from:

- DEEWR
- Other Australian Government agencies, such as the Australian Tax Office and Australian Securities and Investments Commission
- State or territory agencies
- Law enforcement agencies

- Credit reference agencies
- Courts or tribunals or
- Any other appropriate organisation or person reasonably required as part of these checks

Information obtained from checks on Applicants described in this section may be taken into account during the assessment of the Application or in making the final decision to offer funding. DEEWR may, but is not obliged to, seek further information, documentation or clarification from Applicants.

The Minister will decide and announce the successful Projects, based on the recommendations of DEEWR. All decisions relating to the allocation of funding will be final.

### Successful Applications

Successful Applications will receive a letter from DEEWR advising the outcome and the amount of funding approved. The notification of funding letter does not constitute a Funding Agreement and DEEWR is not obliged to provide any funding to the Lead Organisation until a Funding Agreement has been negotiated and executed by the Lead Organisation and DEEWR.

DEEWR reserves the right to negotiate with the Lead Organisation on any aspect of a Project prior to the execution of the Funding Agreement, including offering less funding than the amount for which the Applicant applied or a reduced project scope.

### Unsuccessful Applications

Where an Application is unsuccessful, Applicants will be notified in writing by DEEWR. Applicants who are unsuccessful may apply again for funding through submitting another proposal.

Feedback on unsuccessful Applications will be available on request. Feedback can be obtained by contacting [MentoringPackage@deewr.gov.au](mailto:MentoringPackage@deewr.gov.au).

## Funding Arrangements

DEEWR will open the funding application process to support the Mentoring Program. Applications for Mentoring Projects may then be submitted at any time, particularly where Proposals are responding to an emerging critical skills need.

### Payment of Funds

Applicants wishing to receive funding must agree to the terms of the Funding Agreement, unless the Department agrees to accept any proposed changes to those terms. The Funding Agreement will specify the legal requirements for each project and Lead Organisations must comply with all the requirements of the Funding Agreement, including ensuring that any subcontractors also comply with the requirements of the Funding Agreement. A copy of the pro forma Funding Agreement can be found at

[www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/MentoringPackage/MentoringProgram.asp](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/MentoringPackage/MentoringProgram.asp)

When the Department has received confirmation that successful applicants accept an offer of funds under the Mentoring Package, a Funding Agreement will be negotiated with the Lead Organisation and sent to them for signature. No contractual relationship will exist between the parties until the Commonwealth signs the Funding Agreement.

The Lead Organisation must ensure that projects supported by the Mentoring Package are delivered within the timeframes specified in the Funding Agreement, unless otherwise agreed with the Department.

Where the Funding Agreement is inconsistent with these Guidelines, the terms and conditions of the Funding Agreement will take priority over these Guidelines, to the extent of the inconsistency.

All Australian Government payments must be completed before June in the nominated financial year, and acquitted within 30 days of the final payment by the Australian Government.

### **No Undertaking**

Applicants should be aware that there is no guarantee of funding for any Applications. No payment will be made by the Australian Government under the Mentoring Package:

- for the development of Applications, regardless of whether or not an Application is successful, or
- for any other work by Lead and Partner Organisations in respect to the Mentoring Package, other than that set out in the Funding Agreement.

Further detail of the documentation requirements specific to the Mentoring Program are outlined in the Funding Agreement.

### **Reallocation of Funding**

Any unspent funds must be returned to DEEWR for reallocation, consistent with these Guidelines and provisions of the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*.

## **Performance Management, Reporting and Data Collection**

During the life of the program, DEEWR will monitor the performance of Lead Organisations in relation to delivering projects under the Mentoring Package. This may include:

- On-site monitoring
- Targeted monitoring
- System monitoring
- Desk-top monitoring.

Lead Organisations will be required to submit data and reporting to DEEWR on projects funded under the Mentoring Package in a format specified in the Funding Agreement. Reporting may include providing progress reports which details project activities including data and a final report reflecting outcomes and evaluation activity. These requirements will be specified in the Funding Agreement.

DEEWR will also evaluate projects funded under the Mentoring Package against their specified objectives as outlined in the Funding Agreement. Project outcomes may also be considered as part of the broader *Building Australia's Future Workforce* evaluation activity.

Failure to comply with obligations in the Funding Agreement can mean cessation of funding and even recovery of funding already paid.

## **Governance Information**

### **Compliance with Relevant Laws**

In accepting resources under the Mentoring package, all Lead and Partner Organisations must comply with all relevant statutes, regulation, by-laws and requirements of any Australian Government, state/territory or local authority.

For example, Lead and Partner Organisations should be aware of their obligations under:

- *The Fair Work Act 2009*
- *Anti-discrimination laws*
- *Occupational health and safety, and workers' compensation, laws*
- *Laws regulating provision of vocational education and training; and*
- *Privacy and freedom of information legislation.*

### **Working with Children**

Funded organisations must ensure that relevant people within the Project undertake appropriate working with children checks (as per jurisdiction legislation), where relevant.

Funded organisations must be familiar with state or territory legislation applicable to working with children, which may impose obligations on Providers. In particular, funded organisations must adhere to any requirements for the protection and reporting of the maltreatment or sexual abuse of children under the relevant state or territory legislation which includes, but is not limited to:

- *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 (NSW)*
- *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1988 (NSW)*
- *Child Protection Act 1999 (QLD)*
- *Health Act 1937 (QLD)*
- *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000 (QLD)*
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (VIC)*
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (VIC)*
- *Children's Protection Act 1993 (SA)*
- *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 (TAS)*
- *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT)*
- *Community Welfare Act 1983 (NT)*
- *Children and Young People Act 1999 (ACT)*
- *Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004 (WA)*

### **Complaints Handling Process**

Any person may lodge a complaint or provide feedback directly to DEEWR in relation to the Mentoring Package by contacting DEEWR's free-call number: 13 38 73.

DEEWR will aim to resolve a complaint within 30 days of its receipt. Where it is not possible to resolve a complaint within 30 days, concerned parties will be kept informed of progress. DEEWR may be required to contact funding recipients, employers or other relevant parties in investigating a complaint. Where a complaint involves an allegation of fraud, criminal activity or the misappropriation of funds, the matter must be reported directly to the Branch Manager.

Branch Manager  
Australian Apprenticeships Reform Branch  
DEEWR (C50MA7)  
GPO Box 9880  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

If an applicant or recipient, or any person, is dissatisfied with the Department's administration of the Mentoring Package, they can raise their concerns with the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will generally prefer the Department be given an opportunity to deal with the complaint in the first instance.

Additional governance information is outlined at [Attachment A](#).

### **Contact Details**

All enquiries should be directed to [mentoringpackage@deewr.gov.au](mailto:mentoringpackage@deewr.gov.au).

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Definition
<b>Applicant</b>	The Applicant refers to a Lead Organisation.
<b>Application</b>	The Application is submitted by an Applicant in the Application for funding process for the Mentoring Package.
<b>Application Form</b>	The template to be used by Applicants when submitting a Proposal for funding for the Mentoring Package.
<b>Apprenticeship /Traineeship Training Contract</b>	A contract for an apprenticeship or traineeship made between an employer and an Australian Apprentice, which is registered with the appropriate state or territory government department or agency, as may be required by state or territory legislation or regulation.
<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	The identified criteria for assessing Proposals for funding, as outlined in these Guidelines.
<b>Australian Apprentice</b>	<p>A person who is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employed under an Apprenticeship/Traineeship Training Contract</li> <li>• Involved in paid work and structured training which commonly comprises both on and off the job training</li> <li>• Undertaking a negotiated training program responsive to client choice that involves obtaining a nationally recognised qualification.</li> </ul> <p>In some states and territories, Australian Apprentices may be referred to as apprentices, trainees or trainee apprentices.</p>
<b>Australian Apprenticeship</b>	<p>The contracted employment and training arrangement between an Australian Apprentice and an employer.</p> <p>In some states and territories, Australian Apprenticeships may be referred to as apprenticeships and traineeships.</p>
<b>Commencement</b>	Commencement occurs when an Australian Apprentice has signed an Apprenticeship/Traineeship Training Contract.
<b>Completion</b>	When an Australian Apprentice has completed the full qualification or skill set and a certificate or statement of attainment has been issued.
<b>(the) Department</b>	The Commonwealth, acting through the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations or the Australian Government Department from time to time responsible for the Mentoring Package.
<b>Funding Agreement</b>	The legally binding agreement between successful Applicants and the Department for the provision of projects which must be executed before an organisation is eligible to receive funding under the Mentoring Package.
<b>Funding Round</b>	Funding Round refers to any formal period announced by the Department for the submission of Applications for funding.
<b>Industry Skills Councils</b>	Industry Skills Councils are not-for-profit companies governed by industry-led boards that provide independent skills and training advice to industries and enterprises.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>(the) Guidelines</b>	These Guidelines for the Australian Apprenticeships Mentoring Package (the Mentoring Package).
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	An organisation that is coordinating all Partner Organisations for a Project under the Mentoring Package. Lead Organisations are responsible for applying for funding and managing Project resources, delivery and reporting.
<b>Mentor</b>	Apprenticeship Mentors who are engaged under funded Projects to provide personalised mentoring to Australian Apprentices.
<b>Mentoring Projects</b>	Projects funded under the Mentoring Program.
<b>Participating Employer</b>	Participating Employers are employing or contracting organisations (including both profit and non-profit organisations and sole traders) that have agreed to participate in a Partnership.
<b>Partner Organisation</b>	A Partner Organisation is any organisation that is in Partnership with a Lead Organisation for a Proposal under the Mentoring Package.
<b>Partnership</b>	A Partnership is a group of separate legal entities that lodge a Proposal collectively. The Partnership must appoint a lead member entity (the Lead Organisation) to act as agent for the other member entities. The Lead Organisation must be authorised to negotiate and act on behalf of each member of the Partnership in dealing with the Department. Each member of the Partnership must confirm the authority of the Lead Organisation to deal with the Department in connection with their Proposal and their Project.
<b>Project</b>	A successful Proposal that has been awarded funding under the Mentoring Package (for both Advisers and Mentoring Programs) will be known as a Project.
<b>Proposal</b>	The Proposal is submitted by an Applicant during the Application Process for the Mentoring Package.
<b>Skills Shortage</b>	Where employers are unable to fill or have considerable difficulty in filling vacancies for an occupation, or if there are specialised skills needs in the occupation, at current levels of remuneration and conditions of employment.
<b>Skills Connect</b>	Skills Connect is a range of initiatives designed to bring together the Government's skills programs and better target industry and worker training. Skills Connect includes funding from the National Workforce Development Fund, Accelerated Apprenticeships Program, the Mentoring Package and the Workplace English Language and Literacy Program.

## Attachment A: Additional Governance Information

<p><b>Conflicts Of Interest</b></p>	<p>An Application will not be considered if, in its preparation, any person misuses any position(s) of knowledge or opportunity they have (or have had) which relate to any other dealings with the Department or any other Australian Government agency.</p> <p>Applicants need to ensure that they do not have any conflict of interest that would prevent their organisation (or a Partner Organisation) from proceeding with an Application or in performing the duties of their Funding Agreement.</p> <p>The Applicant must immediately notify the Department if any conflict of interest arises. If this happens, the Department may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enter into discussions to try and resolve the conflict of interest;</li> <li>• Disregard the Application; or</li> <li>• Take any other action that it considers appropriate.</li> </ul> <p>If a Conflict of Interest cannot be resolved, the Application will not be considered further.</p>
<p><b>Freedom Of Information</b></p>	<p>All documents in the possession of the Department including those in relation to the Mentoring Package funding recipients are subject to the <i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i> (FOI Act). Unless a document falls under an exemption provision, it will be made available to the general public if requested under the FOI Act.</p> <p>All FOI requests are to be referred to the FOI Coordinator in the Department's national office. By post:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">FOI Coordinator Administrative Law Team Legal and Investigations Group Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations GPO Box 9880 CANBERRA ACT 2601</p> <p>By email: <a href="mailto:foi@deewr.gov.au">foi@deewr.gov.au</a></p> <p>Decisions regarding requests for access under the FOI Act will be made by an authorised decision maker in accordance with the requirements of the FOI Act.</p> <p>For information on making a request for access to documents in the possession of the Department under the FOI Act visit: <a href="http://www.deewr.gov.au/Department/Pages/FreedomofInformation.aspx">http://www.deewr.gov.au/Department/Pages/FreedomofInformation.aspx</a></p>
<p><b>Goods And Services Tax (GST)</b></p>	<p>The total funding payable to the Lead Organisation by the Australian Government may include an amount to cover GST. Applicants are advised to consider the likely implications of the <i>A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999</i> on the funding provided by the Australian Government. Applicants are encouraged to seek their own advice on the treatment of funding under the agreement.</p>

<p><b>Insurance</b></p>	<p>Lead and Partner Organisations are required to maintain insurance coverage and provide information regarding this coverage on request. Insurance must be valid for the full period of the Funding Agreement.</p> <p>Lead and Partner Organisations must maintain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers' compensation insurance for an amount required by the relevant state or territory legislation</li> <li>• Public liability insurance for \$10,000,000 (ten million) or more per claim; and</li> <li>• Professional indemnity insurance for \$1,000,000 (one million) or more per claim.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Liability Issues</b></p>	<p>The Department is not liable to the Applicant in relation to the Funding, including without limitation, when the Department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varies or terminates all or any part of the Funding Round or any negotiations with the Applicant;</li> <li>• Decides not to proceed with any or all of the Program deliverables sought through a Funding Round; or</li> <li>• Exercises or fails to exercise any of its other rights under or in relation to the Guidelines.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Privacy Act</b></p>	<p>The Department is bound, in administering the Mentoring Package, by the provisions of the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (the Privacy Act). Section 14 of the Privacy Act contains the Information Privacy Principles (IPPs) which prescribe the rules for handling personal information.</p> <p>Funded organisations under the Mentoring Package must abide by the IPPs and the Privacy Act when handling personal information collected for the purposes of the Mentoring Package.</p> <p>Lead Organisations must ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal information is collected in accordance with IPPs 1-3;</li> <li>• Suitable storage arrangements, including appropriate filing procedures are in place;</li> <li>• Suitable security arrangements exist for all records containing personal information</li> <li>• Access to a person's own personal information held by the organisation is made available to the person at no charge</li> <li>• Records are accurate, up-to-date, complete and not misleading</li> <li>• Where a record is found to be inaccurate, the correction is made</li> <li>• Where a person requests that a record be amended because it is inaccurate but the record is found to be accurate, the details of the request for amendment are noted on the record</li> <li>• The personal information is only to be used for the purposes for which it was collected, or for other purposes where expressly allowed by IPP 10; and</li> <li>• Personal information is only disclosed in accordance with IPP 11.</li> </ul> <p>Lead Organisations must also ensure that Partner Organisations abide by the IPPs and the Privacy Act when handling personal information for the purpose of the Mentoring Package.</p> <p>Lead Organisations must further ensure that IPP2 notices in the form specified by the Department are used by the Partner Organisations when collecting personal information so that the Department can have access to that</p>

	<p>information and use it for the purposes intended by the Department. The Department will notify Lead Organisations of the required form for the IPP2 notice.</p> <p>Complaints about breaches of privacy should be referred by post to:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Privacy Contact Officer Administrative Law Team, Legal and Investigations Group Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations GPO Box 9880 CANBERRA ACT 2601</p> <p>Privacy complaints can be made directly to the Federal Privacy Commissioner however the Federal Privacy Commissioner will generally prefer that the Department be given an opportunity to deal with the complaint in the first instance.</p> <p>Lead Organisations and Partner Organisations should seek their own independent advice regarding queries about the application of the Privacy Act to their activities.</p>
<b>Record Keeping</b>	<p>Lead Organisations are required to maintain accurate records of the execution of the Project.</p> <p>Lead Organisations must comply with reasonable requests for information and monitoring requirements by the Department. The Funding Agreement requires Lead Organisations to give to the Fund Delegate, an officer of the Department's Investigations Branch, or any person authorised in writing by the Department's Secretary reasonable access to its records, premises and employees upon provision of reasonable notice.</p>
<b>Subcontracting Arrangements</b>	<p>Lead Organisations must identify the names and roles of subcontractors in the Funding Agreement. Further, to manage potential conflict of interest, information needs to be updated and kept current as projects are delivered.</p> <p>Successful applicants under the Mentoring Package will be expected to develop a plan that will include all details of the partnership arrangements (including subcontracting arrangements) for the project and the manner in which they implement the project. These details will be incorporated into the Funding Agreement through a Project Plan.</p> <p>Lead Organisations must enter into a legally binding agreement with Partner Organisations delivering the projects under the Mentoring Package, and report data as required in accordance with their Funding Agreement with the Department.</p> <p>Lead Organisations must not without the Department's prior written approval subcontract any obligation under the Funding Agreement, and will remain fully responsible for the performance of their obligations under the Funding Agreement.</p>