

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA WORKSHOPS – FUTURE SKILLS ORGANISATION

22-23 July 2024

### Summary of discussions

Future Skills Organisation (FSO), the Jobs and Skills Council for the finance, technology and business (FTB) sectors, held workshops in Adelaide on 22-23 July 2024 to seek the views of South Australian industry, government, registered training organisations (RTOs) and learners on skills and training challenges and priorities for their industries.

Key themes from the discussions:

- Employability (or non-technical) skills are a key requirement for FTB workplaces. In addition to employability skills that support individuals in the workplace (communication, being part of a team, self-management) the rapid pace of change in FTB occupations require individuals to have strong resilience, problem solving, and self-directed learning skills.
- A skills first approach is needed but recognising the role of qualifications in providing underpinning capabilities and knowledge that supports entry, development, and advancement in industries and occupations.
- Employers are supporting skill development in informal and formal ways, directly in the workplace and in partnership with training providers. The importance is recognising the skills needed for different job roles and making skill development accessible to meet the range of needs – employers, employees, and learners.
- The challenges for small and medium businesses are different than for large employers. The system needs to be flexible enough to support the whole industry.

A more detailed summary of key themes over the two days is included at the end of this document.

### What next?

We look forward to using your insights to inform our [FSO Projects](#), including the 'ICT Training Package Needs and Gaps Analysis,' 'Earn While You Learn' and 'Qualification Design to Support Digital Capability' projects.

This week we released our [Workforce Plan 2024: Agenda for Action](#), we welcome your feedback and encourage you to share it with your network. Note – it is a weighty read, reflecting the volume of stakeholder engagement and research behind it, but conveniently broken into sections and summaries.

### Thank you

Many thanks to all our participants. We really appreciate your time, insights, and enthusiasm.

Also enormous thanks to Stone and Chalk, Lot Fourteen and TAFE SA for hosting our workshops. Great hosts, and great venues.

To remain involved and stay up to date with our work, [join our community of Collaborators](#) who are shaping the future of skills.



Patrick Kidd  
Chief Executive Officer  
Future Skills Organisation

**South Australia Industry workshop – 22 July 2024 – Stone and Chalk, Lot Fourteen**

Key theme	Comments	Implications for education and training
There is a need to connect in with the school sector earlier – pathways from Year 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important for employability skills</li> <li>• Make small chunks of accredited training available to scaffold into further accredited pathways</li> <li>• Make tech roles and pathways more visible between school, tertiary and the workplace</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on pathways, skills sets for entry-level roles, identify entry-level roles for early careers</li> </ul>
Employability skills are increasingly important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication skills</li> <li>• Critical thinking and reasoning skills</li> <li>• Growth mindset</li> <li>• Autonomy and ability to be self-taught</li> <li>• Being part of a team, leading a team</li> <li>• Needs a connection back into the school system – use of digital technologies means young people don't always develop communication skills in the same way (re. face to face, on the phone).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to clearly articulate the cluster of different skills that make up different roles in each industry               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ mix of employability and occupation specific skills</li> <li>○ 'entry-level' for different roles – (understanding impact on higher order non-technical skills)</li> <li>○ identify part of the education and training system (including workplace) is best placed to support development of employability skills at each level</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Employers require job applicants to have high level skills and experience – there are few 'entry level' roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competition for skills is high for experienced staff</li> <li>• Few businesses can bring in entry-level staff and support through to higher levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Options (e.g. EWYL) to provide employers with support to give access to workplace experience for learners</li> </ul>
Qualifications have limitations but are not irrelevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Front loaded training doesn't reflect the evolving nature of industry. Instead, ongoing upskilling on-the-job is a more effective approach. Hence, looking for skills that can</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the skills and knowledge that underpin an industry (or occupation) and recognise these in qualifications</li> </ul>

	<p>underpin autonomous and self-directed learning. Evidence of this through a work portfolio and signalling of where an individual has worked.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A foundation of learning (whether quals-based or skills-based) is needed, to support an understanding of the philosophy and principles that underpin a discipline or learning area. It supports individuals to make sense of new knowledge and skills in the sector and supports upskilling and ongoing learning.</li> <li>• The training package has value and the content generally good. Assessment rules create barriers to access – overly prescriptive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve understanding of, and support for, industry and RTO partnerships</li> <li>• Promote the value of qualifications as a foundation for lifelong learning and career transition, regardless of the changes in the skill demand.</li> </ul>
Skills must be linked to getting a job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to define the skills required by industry for them to employ</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with industry to understand skill profiles needed for roles in the industry, from entry through to experienced.</li> </ul>
Lifelong learning is essential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tech and industry changes require ongoing upskilling over the course of a career</li> <li>• Employees need to have self-directed learning skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training system must recognise and make more accessible access to ongoing upskilling and reskilling needs</li> <li>• The possibility of developing a lifelong learning framework that incorporates formal and informal learning opportunities.</li> </ul>
Support for learning in the workplace is challenging for small business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small businesses need productive staff immediately – larger businesses can support employees to develop skills, while supported as part of a team.</li> <li>• Govt, as a large employer, can have a role in supporting workplace learning (in gov workplaces)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify how to support SMEs with workplace training – formally or informally</li> <li>• Improve our understanding of the investment employers make in training their staff – formal and informal</li> <li>• Improve our evidence base on the impact of financial incentives on employers</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia does not have a current data set that measures employers investment in training – formal or informal</li> <li>• The TAE requirements are a barrier for employers to support formal assessment in the workplace</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand how employers can be supported with workplace learning and assessment, relevant to their size and needs</li> </ul>
<p>The impact of changing and emerging technology cannot be accurately predicted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Front-loaded training will never be sufficient</li> <li>• Foundation skills needed to support individuals to be self-directed lifelong learners</li> <li>• Education and training needs to be accessible in smaller chunks, flexibly delivered</li> <li>• Employers are focused on what is in a program and flexible delivery, rather than who is delivering it (re. preference for accredited vs. vendor training).</li> <li>• AI is changing jobs at different levels differently – removing some entry level roles, while enhancing the productivity of senior level roles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the foundation skills and knowledge needed to support ongoing learning and upskilling in an industry, and any specific capabilities for specific occupations</li> <li>• Recognise that capability at the completion of training is a point in time only, not static. How can ongoing learning and upskilling be supported by the system?</li> </ul>
<p>Skilled migration can support skill gaps, but isn't a solution for all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beyond temporary visas, skilled migrant pathways are generally too high cost for small businesses</li> <li>• Start-ups draw heavily on international skills as not available domestically</li> <li>• Increasingly sovereignty issues prevent employment outside of the domestic workforce</li> <li>• Many skilled migrants struggling to find employment due to other skill gaps (language, local context).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve understanding and evidence of how employers are (or want to) access employees from skilled migrant pathways.</li> <li>• Understand the impact of the cost of supporting different visa pathways for different business types (sizes)</li> </ul>

## South Australia RTO workshop – 23 July 2024 – TAFE SA

Key theme	Comments	Implications for education and training
Students report the need for problem solving and autonomous learning skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Success in Cert III Cyber Security: need to go beyond the in-class taught theory to seek out additional skills and knowledge</li> <li>• Students that lack problem solving skills struggled with the course</li> <li>• RTOs are increasingly including this in technical courses – the reason for this needs to be communicated to students to maintain engagement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly identify and teach to the foundation skills needed to support success for the industry</li> <li>• Identify the learning pathway for employability skills, starting from the compulsory schooling sector.</li> </ul>
The skills shortage (in cyber / tech) isn't at the entry level but at higher skill levels – but pathways aren't clear to move from entry to highly skilled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plenty of students graduating with entry level skills from TAFE and unis. But few entry level roles in cyber.</li> <li>• Qualifications and skills need to lead to jobs – employers need to clearly articulate what capabilities and skills that are in demand for employment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for workplace experience to grow entry level skills</li> <li>• Role for EWYL programs to support workplace experience as part of the learning journey</li> <li>• Identify clear pathways into and through careers</li> <li>• Better information for students to understand where their skills can take them (and any skill gaps to get to the roles they want)</li> </ul>
Access to workplace experience is key to employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers want skills and experience</li> <li>• Workplace learning needs to work for employers and learners</li> <li>• The whole system has a role here – e.g. the regulator (ASQA) has reduced the mandatory component for workplace placement in recent years.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EWYL models</li> <li>• Identifying any funding or regulatory barriers to RTOs partnering with employers to support work placements for students</li> <li>• Profile and understand key components of successful industry – RTO partnerships (e.g. DXC and TAFE SA, TasTAFE).</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DXC and TAFE SA – work placement integrated with Cert IV in IT experiencing significant positive benefits for the employer (DXC and other partners – Govt and banks) and TAFE SA (higher completions).</li> </ul>	
<p>There is interest from industry to be VET tutors / trainers, but regulatory requirements can be a barrier</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TAE requirement is viewed as a barrier</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the additional flexibility enabled in new RTO standards</li> </ul>