



# Certificate of Proficiency Guidelines

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## Introduction

A person may make an *Application for a Certificate of Proficiency* where they have completed the relevant apprenticeship qualification. Additionally, the individual must be able to demonstrate that they are adequately trained in the trade through evidence of their employment in a particular trade vocation. This evidence enables a person to:

- Become trade qualified outside of a formal apprenticeship in New South Wales.
- Have trade training undertaken outside of a formal apprenticeship in New South Wales to be recognised and certified through the granting of *Certificate of Proficiency* in a nominated NSW trade vocation.

## Who can apply for a Certificate of Proficiency?

Anyone who is

- Living in NSW or living in Australia and intending to work in NSW.

And, can demonstrate that they adequately trained to work in a trade, through:

- The completion of training and/or assessment in the relevant Australian qualification, issued by an identified Registered Training Organisation, and
- Evidence of past employment and experience in the trade concerned with an equivalent term to the apprenticeship, and for a period working to Australian standards of operation.

## Why are applicants for Certificate of Proficiency now required to have the relevant Australian trade qualification before applying for a Certificate of Proficiency?

The amended Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act, has provision for *Certificate of Proficiency* to be issued by the *Commissioner for Vocational Training* to persons who have either:

- Demonstrated (through an application for trade skills recognition) they are adequately trained to work in a trade vocation, through evidence of past employment and practical experience and successful **completion of a relevant Australian qualification**.
- Successfully completed the *term of an apprenticeship* in a trade vocation and have been awarded the appropriate qualification by a registered training organisation.

\*The relevant Australian trade qualification is now an eligibility requirement for all applications for a Certificate of Proficiency through skills recognition in New South Wales.

## Information on apprenticeship trade vocations eligible for a Certificate of Proficiency

The Commissioner for Vocational Training publishes a Commissioner's Information Bulletin (CIB) containing information to support the administration of apprenticeships (**trade vocations**) as well as traineeship vocations. The following website contains CIBs for all vocations:

[www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/resources/cibs-bulletins](http://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/resources/cibs-bulletins)

When looking at CIBs it is important to note:

- Only apprenticeship or trade vocations are available for trade skills recognition.
- Only CIBs providing for Apprenticeships (or Apprenticeships and Traineeships), identify available trade vocations, **therefore disregard any CIBs which refer only to Traineeships** when looking at a CIB to find the relevant Australian trade qualification for a particular trade vocation.
- Where the CIB includes information on both Apprenticeships and Traineeships, refer only to the list of apprenticeship/trade vocations, to identify the relevant qualification for a particular trade. The qualification code and name can be used to search for further information on training providers who provide training and assessment from one of the following government websites:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/skills-nsw>

<https://www.myskills.gov.au/courses/search/>

- Selecting the qualification code and name link will take you to a PDF document providing you more information on the trade qualification, and the qualification structure or packaging rules concerning the individual units in the qualification.
- Further information can be found concerning the performance criteria and required skills and knowledge of each individual unit of competency within an apprenticeship qualification, if you are seeking to match your previous training or experience against a particular Unit of Competency within a trade qualification. This can be done by doing an internet search of each NTIS code, for respective Units of Competency.

## Benefits of a Certificate of Proficiency

A Certificate of Proficiency is beneficial in the following circumstances.

- **If you are working in a *Certified Trade* vocation a Certificate of Proficiency is necessary to work in the trade; or work without supervision; or work without limitation.** Licensed or *Certified Trade* vocations are any recognised trade vocations where a person is required to have a **Certificate of Proficiency** in order to obtain a licence, permit or authority under an Act to work in a trade vocation (see NSW Fair Trading). Your chances of finding a job in a *Certified Trade* will improve, because you will be able to gain the necessary a licence, permit or authority to work in a regulated trade, enabling you to work without the requisite supervision or restriction of an un-certified worker.
- **If you want to obtain a better paying job.** In some industry sectors such as mining or defence services, a **Certificate of Proficiency** can increase your employment prospects in in trade occupations in NSW. Certified tradespeople are generally paid more than people who don't have a trade certificate, or the necessary licence in *Certified Trade* vocations

- **If you want to undertake further education in your trade**, a **Certificate of Proficiency** and the associated trade qualification can assist you to gain entry into further education and training. It may also help you obtain advanced standing so that you can complete the course more quickly.

## **Skills and knowledge you are required to outline**

Applicants need to demonstrate both underpinning knowledge and trade skills associated with a particular trade vocation.

**Underpinning knowledge** is a correct understanding of relevant information to ensure a task is performed to acceptable trade practice.

**Trade skills** are the ability to perform trade to acceptable trade practice.

This might include the ability to:

- Read and respond to work instructions, specifications and technical drawings
- Correctly use and application of products
- Select and use appropriate materials, tools, machines and equipment to acceptable trade practice
- Correctly use and apply trade tools and measuring instruments, using accepted trade practice.
- Plan, set out, lay out and undertake work tasks associated with a trade occupation to acceptable trade practice
- Diagnose and correct faults or undertake repairs or rectification work to acceptable trade practice
- Create or produce trade products and services to in accordance with acceptable trade practice
- Carry out trade work independently
- Supervise and impart trade skills and knowledge to other staff, including apprentices

## **Application process**

To apply to have your trade skills recognised you need to obtain an application form published on the Training Services NSW website.

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/resources/vt100-certificate-of-proficiency>

Please ensure that you read the instructions on the front page of the application form where the following important information is explained:

- Who is eligible to apply and what must be provided with the application
- That the application is for a Certificate of Proficiency applicable to an apprenticeship trade vocation
- Required information that must be included with the application
- How to lodge the application
- An application fee is payable when lodging the application

## Documentary evidence needed to support your application

The Commissioner for Vocational Training relies on documentary evidence to assess your application. Therefore, it is important that you complete the application form carefully and **include all required information and documentation**.

Examples of relevant documents include:

- A certified copy of the relevant Australian trade qualification relating to the trade vocation you are seeking to obtain a Certificate of Proficiency (including a transcript outlining how course subjects completed)
- Any qualifications you hold relevant from either overseas or Australia, relating to the trade qualification you have completed (including a transcript outlining course subjects completed)
- Work related references from employers detailing the nature of trade work you have performed and the duration of employment in the trade (references must be on employers letterhead signed and dated)
  - Evidence of any periods of self-employment in the trade (see information below regarding advice on the presentation of evidence concerning self-employment)
  - Evidence supporting the duration of employment and training in the trade to date

## Certification of documents

Documents attached to your application for a Certificate of Proficiency must be certified as complete and accurate copies.

Who can certify my documents?

- An accountant (member of a recognised professional accounting body or a Registered Tax Agent).
- A person listed on the roll of the Supreme Court of a State or Territory or the High Court of Australia as a legal practitioner.
- A barrister, solicitor or patent attorney.
- A police officer.
- A postal manager.
- A principal of an Australian secondary college, high school or primary school.
- A medical practitioner.
- A Justice of the Peace (with a registration number in the State in which they are registered).
- A minister of religion (registered under Subdivision (a) of Division 1 of Part IV of the Marriage Act 1961).

The certified copy must include the statement "I certify that this is a true copy of the original document". The certifier must also include their full name, signature, date, registration number (if any) and qualification or occupation which makes them eligible to certify documents, on each of the photocopied identification documents.

## Evidence of self-employment in Certified Trade vocations

Self-employment on its own is not sufficient to meet requirements for the demonstration of past employment and experience in the trade concerned. The Commissioner must be satisfied that you are adequately trained in the relevant trade vocation and have actually undertaken hands on trade

work, in addition where the trade concerned is a *Certified Trade* vocation (electrical) the development of trade experience must conform to any industry regulatory requirements governing this work. The Commissioner must be satisfied that you were adequately supervised by **qualified** trade workers in legitimate employment.

If your application relies on a period of self-employment to demonstrate past employment and experience in your application for Certificate of Proficiency your application should also provide the following:

- Adequate explanation of how your trade work was supervised
- Evidence demonstrating the scope of “hands on” trade work you have performed through self-employment, verified by a qualified supervisor.

## Processing your application

Soon after your application for Certificate of Proficiency is accepted, you will receive a notice from the *Commissioner for Vocational Training* acknowledging receipt of your application. This notice will also confirm key particulars in relation to your application, such as:

- The spelling of your name.
- That the trade vocation you are seeking the Certificate of Proficiency.

Please check your application particulars are correct. In addition if there are any changes to your address, phone contact or e-mail details after you have lodged your applications please phone the number on notice to arrange for any errors to be corrected.

## Timeframe to finalise your application

The time needed by the Commissioner to assess and determine the outcome of your application will depend on:

- The quality of the documents you provide to support your application.
- Whether the Commissioner requires further information to determine your application.
- Whether an independent competency assessment is required.

Once the Commissioner has finished assessing your application, you will receive a notice advising you of the decision.

## Reviews

If the Commissioner rejects your application, you may seek an administrative review of a decision to issue a Certificate of Proficiency. This provides for an individual to first seek an Internal Review with the Commissioner for Vocational Training within 28 days of a decision to issue a Certificate of Proficiency on the following form:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/resources/application-for-internal-review>

After the Internal Review is finalised by the Commissioner for Vocational a decision to refuse to issue a Certificate of Proficiency can be reviewed by the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) for an administrative review under the *Administrative Decisions Review Act 1997*. A request for such a Review can be made within 30 days from the date of the written notice from the

Commissioner advising you of the decision to: *refuse to issue you a recognition under Part 3 of the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001.*

Further information concerning the steps you will need to follow in an administrative review matter before NCAT can be found on the following website:

<https://ncat.nsw.gov.au/ncat/how-ncat-works/ncat-divisions-and-appeal-panel/administrative-and-equal-opportunity-division.html>

**For further information about making an appeal to the Administrative and Equal Opportunity Division of NCAT and the External Appeal form go to [www.ncat.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ncat.nsw.gov.au) or call 1300 006 228 and press option 3.**

## **Trade certificates issued by the Commissioner**

The Commissioner issues a Certificate of Proficiency to individuals who have successfully completed an *apprenticeship* or *traineeship* and to persons who have been successful in applying for a Certificate of Proficiency in New South Wales.

A **Certificate of Proficiency** is awarded on application where an individual has demonstrated:

1. They have completed an applicable Australian qualification.
2. They are adequately trained to work in a trade, through evidence of past employment and experience in the trade.

## **Licensed Trades**

A number of trade vocations require licences or registration in NSW. This is administered by the relevant licensing authority or registration body. **The Certificate of Proficiency issued by the Commissioner is not a substitute for this and is not a guarantee that you will receive the required licence or registration.**

Trade or industry sectors subject to licensing or registration include:

- Aircraft trades
- Building and construction trades
- Refrigeration/air-conditioning trade
- Electrical trades
- Telecommunications, security, and alarm cabling
- Automotive trades
- Plumbing trade

You should contact the relevant licensing authority for further information regarding licensing matters.

## **Interpreting and Translation services**

If any document is not in English, and it is required to support your application you need to provide the Commissioner with a certified copy of the original and (attached to it) an English

translation made by an official translating service. The translator must certify that the translation is complete and accurate.

Further information on interpreting and translation services can be found at Services NSW:

### **Translation Services**

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-document-translation-services>

### **Interpreting Services**

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/book-interpreter>

## **Privacy notice**

The information you provide in your application for Certificate of Proficiency will be treated confidentially and will be used by the NSW Department of Education and the Commissioner for Vocational Training for the purpose of assessing your application.

When dealing with your application, the Commissioner may seek to validate the information you provide by contacting your current or former employers, any training organisations or colleges you have attended, and relevant State or Commonwealth departments or agencies.

The information you provide will be stored securely by NSW Department of Education you may correct any personal details at any time by contacting the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Unit:

**Email:** [trade.skills@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:trade.skills@det.nsw.edu.au)

**Phone:** 1300 772 104