

MEDIA RELEASE**11 July 2017****Apprentice Completion Rates a Close Match to University Graduates**

Sixty four per cent of Queensland's construction apprentices successfully complete their apprenticeship according to a new report from Construction Skills Queensland (CSQ). The completion rate is almost equal to those who complete a Bachelor-level university degree where 67 per cent complete within 6 years.

The *CSQ 2017 Apprentice Annual* indicates 6,200 construction apprentices will complete their training in Queensland in 2018, exceeding the number of tradespeople required by the industry. This surplus does not prove problematic as it helps to replace the tradespeople who leave the industry through processes of natural attrition.

CSQ CEO Brett Schimming said if the current completion rate and commencement volume remains steady, Queensland will have enough qualified apprentices to meet the future demands of the industry.

"With just under 24,000 construction apprentices in Queensland, there is a strong number of new tradespeople entering the workforce to meet the needs of Queensland's construction industry for the foreseeable future," he said.

"A continued emphasis on how well the industry attracts, retains and develops its apprentices will ensure we have a strong intake of apprentices."

The report reveals that the construction industry takes on more apprentices per worker than any other industry, with 20 per cent of Queenslanders who began an apprenticeship in 2015-16, selecting the construction industry. This finding comes after recent doom and gloom predictions of an impending tradie crisis in Queensland which seems unfounded when you look at the evidence.

Of the approximately 25,000 construction apprentices who commenced in 2015-16, less than half of the apprentices are the conventional image as young school-leavers, with 53 per cent aged 20-or-over when they began their apprenticeship.

Mr Schimming said there is no definitive factor driving the age shift or significant advantage when it comes to what age someone commences and completes their apprenticeship.

"Age doesn't matter when it comes to completing an apprenticeship, we've found both older and younger construction apprentices complete at similar rates," he said.

“What’s great to see is the Queensland construction industry takes on 3.3 apprentices for every 100 workers, which is an intake rate higher than any other industry.”

The report shows that apprentices are predominately employed in the residential sector, with this sector accounting for over 50 per cent of the apprentice intake in 2015-16.

Mr Schimming said the top occupations of apprentices within Queensland’s construction industry is a reflection of the high intake in residential construction.

“Previously there was a period of high apprentice employment in engineering construction. Currently we’ve recorded a spike in residential work and this continues to increase,” he said.

“Carpenters, electricians and plumbers account for two thirds of our apprentices and we predict this trend is here to stay as the distribution of construction apprentice intake by sector is strongly skewed to residential.”

Mr Schimming added that CSQ remains committed to helping the industry invest in building their skills across a wide range of regions, sectors and occupations to meet the future needs of the Queensland construction industry.

“It is essential to Queensland’s construction industry to keep updated on this shifting terrain in order to be better equipped for ongoing changes and provide greater support to our network of apprentices,” he said.

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About Construction Skills Queensland (CSQ)

Construction Skills Queensland (CSQ) is an independent industry-funded body supporting employers, workers, apprentices and career seekers in the building and construction industry. Funded by an industry training levy, we work closely with employers, apprentices, industry partners, training providers and individuals across Queensland to build capability at every level of business. As a recognised industry leader, our mission is to promote the building and construction industry as a career of first choice, encourage investment in skills and training and increase the number of skilled workers in the industry.

