



BUSY At Work
The APPRENTICESHIP Community



E-Book

Salon Guide

Hiring and retaining
a hairdressing
apprentice

Free Download!

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INTRODUCTION

At BUSY At Work, we understand the significant role apprenticeships play in the growth and sustainability of the hairdressing industry. This guide is designed to provide salon owners, managers and hairdressers with all the essential information they need when considering hiring an apprentice. From understanding the legal requirements to finding the right candidate and supporting them through their training, this e-book will equip you with the knowledge to make informed decisions and effectively integrate an apprentice into your business.

Why Hire an Apprentice?

Hiring an apprentice offers numerous benefits, including:

- Contributing to the development of the hairdressing industry
- Accessing fresh talent and new perspectives
- Ensuring that your skills and knowledge are passed on to the next generation
- Taking advantage of wage subsidies and financial incentives from both Federal and State governments
- Building a pipeline of skilled stylists for your salon's future growth



UNDERSTANDING HAIRDRESSING APPRENTICESHIPS

What is a Hairdressing Apprenticeship?

A hairdressing apprenticeship is a structured training program that combines practical on-the-job experience in a salon with formal education, leading to a recognised qualification in hairdressing.

Types of Hairdressing Apprenticeships

In Australia, hairdressing apprenticeships typically fall into three categories:

- **Full-time apprenticeships:** The apprentice works and trains full-time, on average 38 hours per week.
- **Part-time apprenticeships:** The apprentice works and trains part-time, a minimum of 20 hours per week. These apprentices work a regular pattern of hours which are usually recorded in writing.
- **School-based apprenticeships:** The apprentice combines work and training while still attending school, often part-time. You cannot complete a Hairdressing Apprenticeship as a Student Based Trainee in Western Australia, you can only complete a Cert II Salon Assistant.

Each type of apprenticeship has its own set of requirements and it's essential to choose the one that best fits your business needs and the apprentice's circumstances.

The Role of the Salon Owner/Manager

- As a salon owner or manager, your role in the apprenticeship is crucial. You'll be responsible for: Providing a safe and supportive work environment
- Ensuring that the apprentice receives appropriate training in various aspects of hairdressing
- Monitoring their progress and providing regular feedback
- Complying with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements
- Balancing the apprentice's training needs with the day-to-day operations of your salon





LEGAL AND REGULATORY CONSIDERATIONS

Apprenticeship Contracts

A formal training contract must be signed by both the employer and the apprentice. This contract outlines the terms of the apprenticeship, including the duration, type of training provided and the rights and responsibilities of both parties.

These contracts must be registered with the relevant State Training Authority, [Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority \(VRQA\)](#) in Victoria, the [Apprenticeship Office WA](#) in Western Australia, [The DESBT](#) in Queensland and [Training Services NSW](#) in New South Wales.

Workplace Health and Safety

Employers are legally required to ensure the health and safety of their apprentices while they are at work. This includes:

- Providing appropriate training on salon safety, chemical handling and hygiene practices
- Ensuring proper supervision
- Supplying necessary personal protective equipment (PPE)



In Victoria, comply with the [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004](#). In Western Australia, follow the [Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984](#).

Award Wages and Entitlements

Hairdressing apprentices in Australia are entitled to be paid according to the [Hair and Beauty Industry Award 2020](#). Key points include:

- Pay rates vary based on the apprentice's year of training and age
- Adult apprentices (those starting at 21 years or older) may have different pay rates
- Apprentices are entitled to be paid for time spent in training
- Include superannuation and workers' compensation insurance

Always check the specific award rates and conditions, as they may be updated periodically.

Licensing and Accreditation

While hairdressing doesn't typically require specific licensing, ensure that your apprentice is working towards obtaining their Certificate III in Hairdressing as part of their training.

FINDING THE RIGHT APPRENTICE

Recruitment Strategies

Finding the right apprentice is crucial for both the success of your business and the apprentice's future career. Consider the following strategies for recruiting an apprentice:

- Advertise the Position: Use job boards, industry associations and local newspapers to advertise the apprenticeship.
- Post the position to our National, apprenticeship specific jobs board www.apprenticeshipcentral.com.au
- Partner with TAFEs and training academies that offer hairdressing courses
- Leverage your professional network within the hairdressing community
- Participate in career fairs or host open days at your salon
- Utilising government resources: Each state offers government resources for apprenticeship recruitment. In Victoria, consider the [Victorian Government's Recruit Smarter](#) initiative. In Western Australia, the [Hiring Managers Toolkit](#) offered by the WA Government can be useful.

Interviewing Tips

When interviewing potential apprentices, look for candidates who demonstrate enthusiasm for the trade, a willingness to learn and a strong work ethic. Consider:

- Asking about their interest in hairdressing and any relevant experience
- Inquiring about their long-term career goals in the industry
- Assessing their communication skills and ability to interact with clients
- Consider a practical test or trial day to evaluate their basic skills and enthusiasm

Remember, your recruitment process should reflect your company's values and culture. By implementing these strategies, you'll be well-positioned to find the right apprentice for your business

Skills and Attributes to Consider

An ideal apprentice should have a mix of technical aptitude and soft skills, such as:

- Creativity and passion for hairdressing
- Good communication and customer service skills
- Manual dexterity and attention to detail
- Willingness to learn and adapt to new techniques
- Ability to work in a team environment
- Physical stamina to stand for long periods





TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Creating a Training Plan

A structured training plan is essential for ensuring that your apprentice acquires the necessary skills and knowledge. The plan should outline:

- On-the-job training: Practical tasks that the apprentice will perform, aligned with their coursework.
- Off-the-job training: Formal education provided by a TAFE or registered training organisation (RTO).
- Progress milestones: Key competencies or skills that the apprentice should master at different stages of their training.

Balancing Work and Study

Apprentices often have to balance their work responsibilities with their study commitments. As an employer, you should provide support by:

- Allowing time off for study: Ensure that your apprentice has enough time to attend classes and study for exams.
- Encouraging practical application of studies: Where possible, align their salon tasks with what they are learning in their coursework.
- Providing a quiet space for study or practice during quieter periods in the salon



Mentoring and Support

Providing mentorship is one of the most effective ways to support an apprentice. Consider assigning a senior team member as a mentor to:

- Guide the apprentice through their training: Offer advice and share industry insights.
- Provide feedback: Regularly discuss the apprentice's progress and areas for improvement.
- Encourage professional growth and creativity in hairdressing beyond the initial apprenticeship.

Assessment and Feedback

Regular assessment and feedback are critical for an apprentice's development. Implement a system where:

- Formal assessments: Are conducted at regular intervals, aligned with their training milestones.
- Constructive feedback: Is provided to help them understand their strengths and areas that need improvement.
- Documentation of progress: Keep detailed records of their development to ensure they are on track to complete their apprenticeship successfully.



FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Understanding Apprenticeship Wages

Hairdressing apprentices are paid a percentage of the fully qualified hairdresser's wage, with the rate increasing each year of their apprenticeship. Refer to the [Hair and Beauty Industry Award 2020](#) for specific rates.

Federal Incentives

The Australian government recognises the importance of apprenticeships in developing a skilled workforce and offers significant support to employers who take on apprentices. The cornerstone of this support is the [Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System \(AAIS\)](#).

The AAIS offers support throughout the apprenticeship journey, from commencement to completion. It aims to encourage businesses to invest in training and development, particularly in industries facing skills shortages. The program includes various payments and support measures, such as wage subsidies, completion incentives and additional support for apprentices facing disadvantage.



In addition to federal incentives, each state offers its own set of programs to further support employers in taking on apprentices. Let's examine the specific incentives available in Victoria and Western Australia:

Victoria:

- [Victorian Skills First Program](#): Offers additional support to Victorian businesses, including subsidised training costs and targeted wage subsidies for specific industries.
- Payroll tax exemptions: Victoria offers payroll tax exemptions for wages paid to apprentices under registered training contracts.

Western Australia:

- [Jobs and Skills WA](#) Employer Incentive: Provides up to \$8,500 for WA employers who employ an apprentice or new entrant trainee. Additional loadings may apply for target groups or regional areas.
- Payroll tax exemptions: WA offers payroll tax exemptions for wages paid to apprentices under registered training contracts.



Budgeting for an Apprentice

While apprenticeships are a valuable investment, it's important to budget for the associated costs, including:

- **Wages:** Ensure you account for the rising wage rates as the apprentice progresses.
- **Training costs:** Consider the expenses related to formal education and any additional training you might provide.
- **Tools and equipment:** Factor in the cost of providing the apprentice with the necessary tools and safety equipment (scissors, combs, brushes, etc.)
- **Superannuation contributions:** Remember to include the mandatory superannuation payments for your apprentice.
- **Workers' compensation insurance:** Ensure you have appropriate coverage for your apprentice.
- **State-specific levies or charges:** Be aware of any additional costs that may apply in your state or territory.

LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AND COMPLIANCE

Workplace Rights and Obligations

Apprentices are entitled to the same workplace rights as other employees, including:

- Fair pay: In accordance with the [Hair and Beauty Industry Award 2020](#)
- Safe working conditions: Compliance with Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) regulations.
- Leave entitlements: Including annual leave, sick leave and public holidays.
- Protection from discrimination: Ensuring that the apprentice is treated fairly and with respect.

Managing Apprentice Records

Accurate record-keeping is essential for compliance and for monitoring the apprentice's progress. This includes:

- Training records: Documenting the on-the-job training provided and the apprentice's achievements.
- Wage records: Keeping detailed records of wages paid, including any adjustments due to progression or completion.
- Contractual documentation: Maintaining copies of all agreements and contracts signed.





Handling Disputes

Disputes between employers and apprentices can arise, but many can be resolved through clear communication and mediation. If a dispute escalates, you may need to involve:

- Access the BUSY At Work mentorship services to assist with any disputes.
- [Fair Work Ombudsman](#): For issues related to wages, conditions, or workplace rights.

Victoria-specific:

- Victorian Apprenticeship Field Officers: Who can assist in mediating disputes specific to apprenticeships.
- [Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority \(VRQA\)](#): Can also assist with apprenticeship-related disputes.

Western Australia-specific:

- [Department of Training and Workforce Development](#): Can provide support in resolving apprenticeship issues.



INTEGRATING APPRENTICES INTO YOUR BUSINESS

Onboarding Processes

A well-structured onboarding process helps set clear expectations and makes the apprentice feel welcomed and valued. Your onboarding process should include:

- Introduction to the salon team and culture
- Overview of salon policies, including safety protocols and client interaction guidelines
- Assignment of a mentor stylist
- Familiarisation with salon equipment and products

Creating a Supportive Environment

Building a supportive environment is key to the apprentice's success. This includes:

- Encouraging open communication:
Allowing the apprentice to ask questions and provide feedback.

- 
- Promoting a culture of learning: Where mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities.
 - Recognising achievements: Celebrating the apprentice's milestones and progress to keep them motivated.

Team Dynamics

Integrating an apprentice into an existing team can present challenges, particularly if team members are not used to working with trainees. To foster a positive team dynamic:

- Promote inclusivity: Encourage team members to support and mentor the apprentice.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities: Ensure that everyone understands the apprentice's role within the team.
- Provide conflict resolution mechanisms: To address any issues that may arise from misunderstandings or differing expectations.

LONG-TERM PLANNING

Retaining Apprentices Post-Completion

Retaining an apprentice after they complete their training can be beneficial for your business, as they are already familiar with your processes and have the skills needed to contribute effectively. Strategies for retention include:

- **Offering competitive wages:** Ensure that your pay rates are competitive with industry standards.
- **Providing career development opportunities:** Offer further training, certifications, or the possibility of advancing within the company.
- **Creating a positive work environment:** Foster a culture that values and rewards loyalty and hard work.

To ensure a smooth transition for competency-based apprentices:

- **Update Records:** Track competencies as they're achieved to recognise progress.
- **Provide Completion Statement:** Issue a formal statement once all competencies are met, certifying them for employment.
- **Submit to Authorities:** Finalise apprenticeship status by sending documents to the State Training Authority.
- **Emphasise Growth:** Show how certified skills support career growth within the company.





Succession Planning

Apprentices can play a critical role in the long-term sustainability of your business. By developing a succession plan, you can:

- Prepare for future growth: Ensure that you have a pipeline of skilled workers ready to step into key roles as your business expands.
- Retain valuable skills: Prevent the loss of expertise by training apprentices to take over from experienced team members who may retire or move on.

Developing Future Leaders

Identify apprentices with leadership potential and invest in their development. This might include:

- Offering management training programs
- Providing opportunities to lead small teams or projects within the salon
- Involving them in aspects of salon management and business operations as they progress

Remember, long-term planning is about creating a sustainable pipeline of skilled workers who can contribute to your business's growth and success.



EMPLOYER SUPPORT EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

At BUSY At Work, our mission is to support businesses in developing a skilled and committed workforce. We believe that the success of your apprentices is directly linked to the success of your business.

Our comprehensive support services are designed to ensure that apprentices are well-prepared, supported and motivated to complete their training and contribute to your organisation.

Why Choose Us?

BUSY At Work brings unparalleled knowledge and a trusted reputation in apprenticeship services and support

Tailored Support Service

- **Capability Assessment:** Pre-apprenticeship assessment that evaluates your apprentice's suitability for their career ahead.

- 
- **Wraparound Support:** Comprehensive services for apprentices facing barriers, including women in trades, First Nations Australians, apprentices with disabilities and those in remote areas.

Focus On Retention & Completion

- **Integrated Support:** Targeted mentoring and regular check-ins to keep apprentices on track.
- **Continuous Engagement:** Ongoing support for both apprentices and employers to promptly address any issues.

Mentoring & Education

- **Demand-Driven Mentoring:** One-on-one guidance, skill development and emotional support.
- **Employer Education:** Best practices for supporting apprentices and fostering an inclusive work environment.

Streamlined Processes

- **Accessing Government Incentives:** BUSY will assess you and your apprentice for eligibility and help you receive maximum benefits.
- **Administrative Ease:** Assistance with all paperwork for a hassle-free process.
- **Technical Support:** Help with the Apprenticeship Data Management System (ADMS) and the claiming process.



THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS, BUSY AT WORK PROVIDES SUPPORT WITH:

1. Assessment

An assessment will be completed prior to sign up to determine the readiness of both you and your Apprentice/Trainee and to identify tailored supports that BUSY At Work can provide.

2. New Employee Induction

BUSY At Work will carry out a full sign up for both you and your Apprentice/Trainee.

3. Choosing A Training Provider

BUSY At Work will provide you and your Apprentice/ Trainee a list of suitable Registered Training Organisations to choose from to deliver the training.

4. Government Registration

BUSY At Work will finalise the Training Contract and forward to the State Training Authority for registration.

5. Eligible Incentive Claims

BUSY At Work will assess you and your Apprentice/ Trainees' eligibility for incentives and process accordingly.

6. Mentoring & Support Services

BUSY At Work will provide mentoring and support services throughout the apprenticeship to both you and your Apprentice/Trainee by one of our industry qualified mentors.

7. Completion Of Training

Upon successful completion of their apprenticeship or traineeship, your Apprentice/Trainee gains a formal industry qualification that is nationally recognised.



SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

In this guide, we've covered the key considerations for hiring an apprentice, including understanding apprenticeships, legal and regulatory obligations, recruitment strategies, training and development, financial considerations, compliance and long-term planning. By following these guidelines, you'll be well-equipped to successfully integrate an apprentice into your salon.

Next Steps

If you're ready to take the next step in hiring an apprentice, or if you have further questions, BUSY At Work is here to help. Contact us for advice, support and resources tailored to your needs.

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FAQS

What is the minimum age to start an apprenticeship?

In most cases, apprentices must be at least 15 years old, though there are exceptions for school-based apprenticeships.

Can apprentices work part-time?

Yes, apprentices can work part-time, but the duration of the apprenticeship may be extended to accommodate the reduced hours.

What happens if an apprentice doesn't complete their training?

Employers should work with the apprentice and their training provider to explore options, including additional support or transitioning to another role.

How long will it take?

Full-time apprenticeships will take between 36 to 48 months, depending on the apprentice and how quickly they complete the competencies. An apprentice will undertake qualifications from Cert Level III to Advanced Diploma.



Can I hire an apprentice if I'm self-employed?

Yes, as long as you can provide the necessary training and supervision. Some small businesses partner with Group Training Organisations to share apprentices.

What qualifications do I need to train an apprentice?

You don't need formal teaching qualifications, but you or a supervisor must be qualified in the relevant trade and able to provide on-the-job training.

How much time off does an apprentice need for training?

This varies by trade and qualification, but typically apprentices need regular time off for off-the-job training, often one day per week or in blocks of time.

Can I terminate an apprenticeship contract?

Yes, but there are specific procedures to follow. Termination should be a last resort after attempting to resolve any issues.

I'm having trouble managing my apprentice, how can BUSY Help?

Yes, BUSY has dedicated mentors who can assist at risk apprentices and employers with concerns that may effect their work arrangement and/or successful completion of their apprenticeship.

INTERVIEW QUESTION GUIDE

New Hairdresser Apprentice

Passion and Interest in Hairdressing:

- What inspired you to pursue a career in hairdressing?
- What aspects of hairdressing excite you the most?
- Have you had any experience with hair styling, even informally?

Technical Knowledge and Skills:

- What do you know about different hair types and textures?
- Are you familiar with any hair coloring techniques?
- Have you ever used professional hairdressing tools? If so, which ones?

Customer Service Skills:

- How would you handle a client who is unhappy with their haircut?
- How do you think you can contribute to creating a positive salon atmosphere?
- Describe a time when you had to deal with a difficult person. How did you handle it?

Learning and Adaptability:

- How do you stay updated with the latest hairstyling trends?
- How do you handle constructive criticism?
- Are you comfortable with the idea of ongoing training and education in hairdressing?

Physical Demands:

- Hairdressing often requires standing for long periods. How do you feel about this?
- Do you have any concerns about working with chemicals used in hair treatments?

Teamwork:

- How do you feel about working as part of a salon team?
- Can you describe a situation where you had to work closely with others to achieve a goal?
- Time Management: How would you manage your time if you had multiple clients scheduled close together?
- How do you prioritise tasks when you're busy?

Creativity:

- Can you describe a hairstyle you've created or would like to create?
- How do you approach matching a hairstyle to a client's face shape and personal style?

Career Goals:

- Where do you see yourself in the hairdressing industry in 5 years?
- Are you interested in any particular specialisation within hairdressing (e.g. cuts, colouring, bridal styling)?

Practical Assessment:

- Would you be comfortable demonstrating basic hair washing or styling techniques as part of this interview process?

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BUSY At Work is contracted by the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations to administer the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System. BUSY At Work has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this information at the time of printing. Eligibility criteria applies to all Australian apprenticeships and traineeships. For more information please contact BUSY At Work on 13 28 79. BUSY At Work is a trading division of The BUSY Group Ltd (ABN 17 575 363 535 / ACN 168 870 326) © September 2024.

