

# Apprentice and trainee completion rates FACT SHEET



## Frequently asked questions

The apprentice and trainee completion rates methodology was changed in 2025, impacting how completion and attrition rates are reported.

### What's the main change?

The previous methodology focused on contracts of training - i.e. an agreement between a student and an employer to undertake on-the-job-training. However, an apprenticeship or traineeship can comprise multiple contracts, so we were unable to present a complete, or observed, picture of a person's training.

The new methodology uses unique identifiers to track apprenticeships/traineeships across multiple contracts of training, and to track individuals across multiple apprenticeships. Apprenticeships are considered complete if they include any completed contract. Likewise, an individual is considered completed if they have a completion record for any contract of training they attempt. If no completion is recorded, the contract, apprenticeship or individual is counted as an attrition if the latest transaction we have on record is a cancellation or withdrawal, otherwise they are still considered as active, or 'in-training'.

The publication's summary report focuses on completion rates for apprenticeships and traineeships, as these have the most direct relevance to the sector, and lead to a specific occupational outcome.

### How are apprenticeships tracked in the new methodology?

Apprenticeships are tracked using national apprenticeship and person-level identifiers generated by the Apprenticeships Data Management System.

Agreement has been reached to include these identifiers in the AVETMIS Standard so they can be submitted to NCVER with states and territories' quarterly apprenticeship data. Implementation is planned for 1 January 2027. In the interim, the identifiers are provided directly to NCVER by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations under an interim data sharing agreement.

### What's the difference between "individual" completion rates in the old methodology and in the new?

The old methodology had to estimate "individual" rates from contract-level information, based on the ratio of contract commencements to recommencements. This was in reality closer to an "apprenticeship"-level rate, because recommencements only account for movement between contracts in a related qualification. The new methodology uses identifiers to track individuals, to provide more accurate data.

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### How are “to date” rates, 4-year and 6-year rates calculated?

The new publication provides 3 types of completion and attrition rates:

- “to date” rates consider any activity occurring on or before the last day of the most recent calendar year. In *Apprentice and trainee completion rates 2024*, this is 31 December 2024. These rates will be revised each year as we receive data on more transactions. As earlier commencing cohorts will have had longer to complete than more recent, we cannot use “to date” rates to compare across time. For example, the 2018 commencing cohort will have had an extra year to complete compared to the 2019 commencing cohort, so their “to date” rates are not comparable.
- 4-year completion rates include any activity occurring within 4 years of the commencement date. We use this to be able to provide a “like for like” comparison between different commencing years. While the previous methodology calculated 4 years from the end of the commencing year, the new methodology uses an exact 4 years from each contract/apprenticeship/individual commencement date. These rates are recommended in the analysis of non-trade occupations.
- 6-year rates are calculated similarly to 4-year rates, and are recommended in the analysis of trade occupations.

### What’s the difference between *Apprentice and trainee completion rates* and *Apprentice and trainee quarterly publications*?

The *quarterly* publications provide a summary of contract events occurring in the specified quarter, for example the number of commencements, completions and cancellations/withdrawals. It also reports on the number of contracts in-training (i.e. that have commenced but not yet completed or cancelled/withdrawn) at a given point in time. Quarterly publications focus only on contracts of training.

The *Apprentice and trainee completion rates* report tracks contracts, apprenticeships and individuals over time, and calculates the proportion that go on to either complete or cancel/withdraw.

For a given year, the number of *quarterly* commencements plus recommencements is equal to the number of contract-level commencements in the *completion rates* report.

### How can I find out more information?

Please refer to our Technical Paper: *Completion and attrition rate methodologies for apprenticeships, individuals, and contracts* <<https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/publications/all-publications/apprentices-and-trainees-completion-and-attrition-rate-methodologies-for-apprenticeships-individuals-and-contracts>>.