



## Why don't young people want to pursue careers in Retail and Hospitality?

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**What's next...**

# Background to the research



National  
Careers  
Institute

## NCI Funded Project: *Careers in Everyday Industries: Potential Benefits of Increased Visibility*

Research team: Professor Erica Smith, Professor Victor Callan, Associate Professor Richard Robinson, Professor Andy Smith, Associate Professor Darryn Snell

### Project partners

- Federation University
- University of Queensland
- RMIT University
- SkillsIQ Skills Service Organisation

Project web site <https://federation.edu.au/research-everyday-careers>



# Research questions for the overall project

1. What are the perceptions of about career opportunities in retail and hospitality and how are these perceptions acquired?

Targeted groups:

- workers in the industries;
- young people at school, and university students;
- school staff, and staff in agencies advising adults on careers;
- the general public in Australia.

2. What careers are available in the retail and hospitality industries?

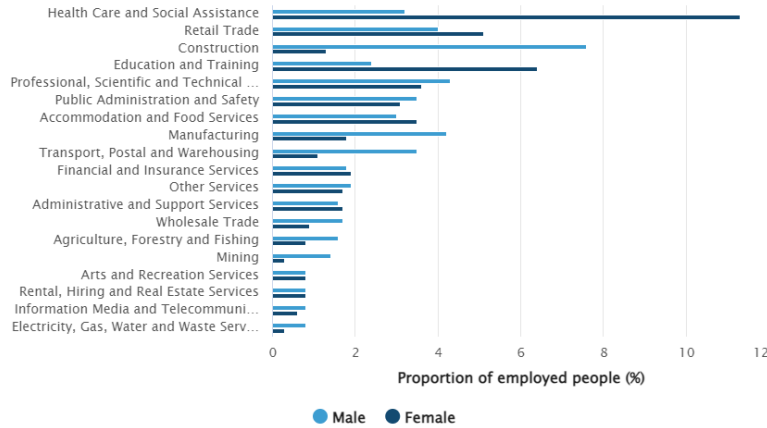
3. How could careers in these industries be made more visible, more attractive, and easier to navigate?

4. What would be the associated benefits, and for whom?

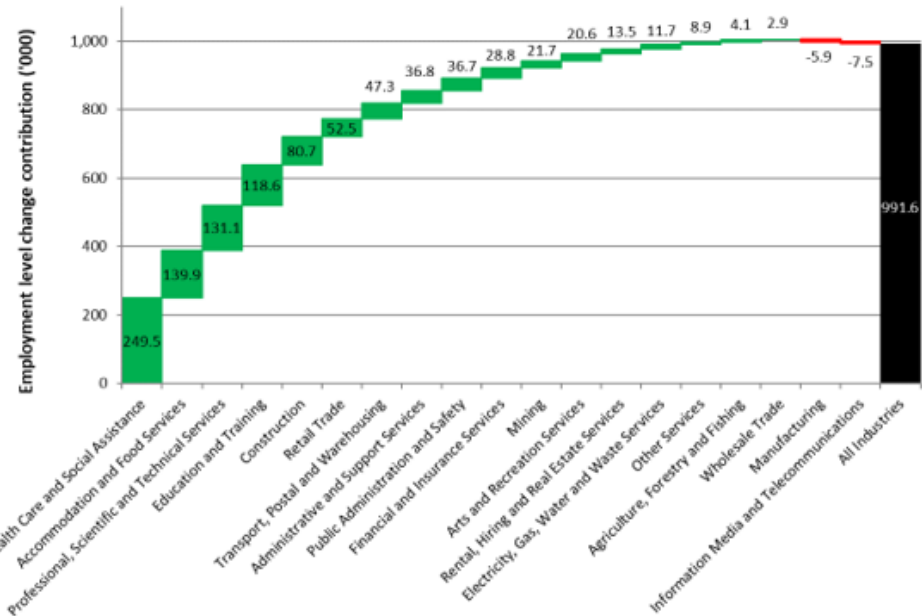


# Setting the Context: Where are the jobs? Where will young people likely find work in the future?

Industries of employment by sex, 2021



Projected employment growth by industry, 2025



Source: NSC, 2020 Employment Projections, five years to November 2025



# Data Collection

Three components:

1. On-Track Survey (Victoria)
2. Total VET Activity Training data
3. Focus groups with young people



## 2. On-Track Survey

- The On-Track survey is an annual survey conducted by Victoria's Department of Education and Training
- Aims to monitor the education, training and employment destinations of Victorian students who finish Year 12 and those who leave school before completion.
- The On-Track survey, which is completed by school students six months after leaving school, provides one of the most comprehensive sources of information on the destinations of Victorian young people.



# 1. On-Track Survey Data: Findings

Retail and Hospitality provide important job opportunities for young people

Top 5 employment destinations for Year 12 completers and non-completers, 2016 and 2020

Rank	Year 12 Completers		Year 12 Non-completers	
	2016	2020	2016	2020
1	<u>Sales Assistants &amp; Storepersons</u> (33.4%)	<u>Sales Assistants &amp; Storepersons</u> (33.8%)	Building & Construction (22.5%)	Building & Construction (24.1%)
2	Food, Hospitality & Tourism (29.0%)	Food, Hospitality & Tourism (27.0%)	Food, Hospitality & Tourism (20.1%)	Food, Hospitality & Tourism (15.3%)
3	Teaching, Childcare & Library (6.5%)	Teaching, Childcare & Library (6.5%)	<u>Sales Assistants &amp; Storepersons</u> (13.5%)	<u>Sales Assistants &amp; Storepersons</u> (15.2%)
4	Health, Fitness, Hair & Beauty (6.2%)	Health, Fitness, Hair & Beauty (5.2%)	Labourers, Factory & Machine Workers (6.3%)	Electrical & Electronics Trades (6.9%)
5	Building & Construction (4.1%)	Labourers, Factory & Machine Workers (4.5%)	Motor Vehicle Service & Repair (6.1%)	Motor Vehicle Service & Repair (6.3%)



# 1. On-Track Survey Data: Findings

Top 10 occupations in Victoria of Year 12 or equivalent completers who were employed at the time of the On Track survey 2020

Occupation	Working Full-time	Working Part-time	Total	Percent
Sales Assistants	102	473	575	12.7
Checkout Operators & Cashiers	47	445	492	10.9
Waiters	52	313	365	8.1
Kitchenhands	34	245	279	6.2
Counter Hands at Food Outlets	33	231	264	5.8
Other Retail	42	199	241	5.3
Store persons	59	136	195	4.3
Factory Workers & Packers	105	67	172	3.8
Cooks	29	89	118	2.6
Receptionists	33	62	95	2.1
All other occupations			1734	38.3
Total respondents			4530	100.0





## 2. VET Training Statistics: Key Findings

### Formal training:

- According to 'Total VET Activity' data there were 263,761 VET enrolments in hospitality and retail in 2017 (3.4 million VET qualifications in total).
  - Five people per 100 employed in retail were being trained  
The largest enrolments were in the Cert II Retail Services (34,357) and the Cert III Retail (15,826).
  - Thirty-one people per 100 employed in hospitality were being trained
    - The largest enrolments were in Cert II Hospitality (48,651), Cert II Kitchen Operations (36,320), Cert III Hospitality (34,975) and Cert III Commercial Cookery (28,762).

### Non-accredited (in-house) training:

- Industry preference for non-accredited (in-house training)
  - On-line (often unpaid/after hours)
  - Limited 'in-house' credentials



## 2. VET Training Statistics: Key Findings

<b>Types of retail workers</b>	<b>Types of Hospitality, Tourism and Hotel Workers</b>
Sales assistants	Dishwasher
Customer services representatives	Cook
Visual merchandiser	Chef
Retail warehouse worker	Customer services representatives
Retail supervisors	Administration Officer
Retail managers	Restaurant or hotel manager
Team leaders	Tourism operator
Regional managers	Area manager
Senior leaders (HQ)	Senior leaders (HQ)

### Career (and training?) Pathways: Retail and Hospitality

<b>Retail Qualifications</b>	<b>Hospitality, Tourism and Hotel Qualifications</b>
Cert 1/2/3 Retail Services	Cert 2/3/4 Hospitality
Cert 4 Retail Management	Cert 3 Commercial Cookery
Cert 3 Retail Training	Cert 3/4 Patisserie
Diploma of Retail Leadership	Cert 4 Kitchen Management
Diploma of Retail Management	Advance Cert in Hospitality and Tourism
	Diploma of Business (Hospitality Management)
	Bachelor of Tourism and Hospitality



# 3. Student Focus Groups

Research question: What are the views of young people about career opportunities in retail and hospitality?

- Focus groups with young people in their first year at university (VE and Higher Education Business students)

University	Student Cohort	Number of student participants
University of Queensland	Recent School Leavers	2
	Tertiary Business Students: Higher Education	8
RMIT University	Recent School Leavers	5
	Tertiary Business Students: Higher Education	7
	Tertiary Business Students: TAFE	1
Federation University	Tertiary Business Students: Higher Education	3



# 3. Focus groups: key findings

Few saw themselves pursuing a career in retail and hospitality. The reasons for this varied but common explanations were:

- They had ambitions for careers in other industries
- They did not believe the two industries provided rewarding or lucrative career opportunities for graduates
- They did not have good experiences working in the industry and no longer wanted to work in the industries.
- They did not perceive these industries as aligning with their values (e.g. environmental sustainability).



# 3. Focus groups: key findings

They valued the ‘transferable’ skills they had developed for their future careers outside the industries. The skills they stressed as most important were:

- Customer service skills
- Emotional intelligence
- Interpersonal skills
- Team working
- Problem solving skills
- Digital skills
- Social skills
- Communication skills

But few had received formal training and often complained about the lack of training:

‘managers should not complain every time that you haven’t done this bit properly, you haven’t made this meal properly, they should have regular training, that would help’ (RMIT focus group student).



# 3. Focus groups: key findings

Student participants often viewed career opportunities in these industries in negative terms. They explained these views as emerging from:

- Their direct experiences which were not favourable (retail had a relatively better reputation as the hours and working conditions were seen as more regulated and standardised).
- The reputation that these industries have at large in society in which there is a strong cultural bias against working long-term in these sectors.
- Their family members which expect them to pursue careers in more 'desirable' industries
- Friends who also perceive these industries as 'where you work when you are young'.
- The failure of the industries to promote the career opportunities that they might provide.



# Options:

- The industries need to address perceived structural and cultural issues to enhance the experience of entrants.
- Improved individual work experiences for young people in their first entry level jobs in the industries, including improvements to training.
- Better promotion of career opportunities in the retail and hospitality industry by career practitioners and the industries themselves.
- Targeted career pathways and promotional materials for university graduates to improve awareness of how these industries do provide rewarding opportunities for graduates.
- The industry needs to more clearly articulate career opportunities behind frontline service roles.
- Better publicise the benefits of accruing transferable skills avoiding 'low' and 'soft' skills language which devalues skills sought out in many industries.
- Improve company reputations as providing decent work as these impact overall industry employer branding



# Thank You for Listening!

If you would like to learn more about the Careers in Everyday Industries project a short video of the project, produced by DEWR, is available at the project web site, or directly at <https://www.dewr.gov.au/nci/partnership-grants-program/case-study-videos>

