

GROUP TRAINING ORGANISATION PANEL

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT



**Government
of South Australia**

The Government of South Australia GTO Panel for the supply of Group Training Organisation services became effective on 31st January 2020.

What is the Skilling SA Public Sector Project?

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment (OCPSE) is coordinating the Skilling SA Government Apprenticeship and Traineeship Signature Project (the Project).

It is part of [Skilling South Australia](#) a state government policy aiming to increase the uptake of apprenticeships and traineeships. With matched funding from the Commonwealth Government’s Skilling Australians Fund, the aim is to create more than 20,000 new training commencements over four years across the state.

As the State’s largest employer, the Public Sector has a target of 2,689 traineeship and apprenticeship commencements by 30 June 2022.

	Year 1 2018/19	Year 2 2019/20	Year 3 2020/21	Year 4 2021/22	Total
Skilling SA Public Sector Targets	453	672	782	782	2,689

What is the GTO Panel?

The Group Training Organisation (GTO) Panel consists of suppliers who offer services associated with the employment of trainees and apprentices including:

- Recruitment
- Job Seeker Support
- Employing trainees and apprentices who are hosted in workplaces

OCPSE has led a whole of government procurement to establish the GTO Panel. The evaluation was supported by specialist advisors from the Department for Innovation and Skills (DIS), Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) Procurement Services and Industrial Relations.

The GTO Panel consists of suppliers that are registered against the GTO National Standards in South Australia who have been evaluated as meeting the required functional specifications to support the Project.

What are the services available from the GTO Panel?

Public Sector agencies have been allocated targets for training activity with the flexibility of three pathways to meet targets.

Trainee/Apprentice Pathways

Pathway 1	Pathway 2	Pathway 3
Public Sector Employed Apprentice/ Trainee or Graduates on a Contract of Training)	GTO Employed and Public Sector Agency Hosted	Upskilling of Existing Public Sector Employee

The GTO Panel providers will be supporting the project through both Pathway 1 and Pathway 2 services.

Pathway 1 Services

The GTO Panel will support Pathway 1 Public Sector Employed Apprentices/Trainees and Graduates under a Contract of Training (CoT) by providing recruitment services and job seeker training and support. As these trainees/apprentices are directly employed in the SA Public Sector, OCPSE will coordinate and engage services through the appropriate agency contacts.

Pathway 2 Services

A GTO will employ a trainee/apprentice who will be hosted in the SA Public Sector. Pathway 2 enables agencies to engage a GTO as an alternative pathway towards their Skilling SA targets.

The GTO's responsibilities include the recruitment of a suitable trainee/apprentice, arranging the training/qualification with a suitable RTO, managing contracts of training, ensuring the wellbeing of the apprentice/trainee, promoting work health and safety, regular pastoral care and providing additional support services, i.e. mentoring, employee assistance programs and/or field officer visits.

As the Employer, the GTO manages the trainee/apprentice process including performance management and key functions such as industrial relations matters and payroll. The GTO will report regularly to OCPSE/Host Agency and invoice the Host Agency for the agreed charge out rate.

What are the benefits of using the GTO Model?

Using the GTO model has a range of benefits for agencies, including:

- GTO providers have already been assessed against functional requirements for the Project
- Standard Panel Agreement
- Contract management from OCPSE
- No Secondary Procurement requirement (approval by appropriate agency delegate)
- Standard Host agreement for all agencies

What are the Agency responsibilities under Pathway 2?

The Public Sector agency's role is to identify a hosting opportunity, collaborate with the GTO in the recruitment of suitable candidates, provide work experience in the relevant qualification and workplace supervision. As the Host Agency there is a responsibility to provide feedback, pay regular GTO invoices and sign off trainee/apprentice timesheets.

GTO Responsibilities:

- Is the employer
- Manages recruitment
- Is responsible for training arrangements
- Is registered employer with Training and Skills Commission Employer Registration
- Manages the contract of training and training plan
- Provides pastoral care and support services

Host Agency Responsibilities:

- Identifies the training/hosting opportunity
- Provides position information to GTO
- Involved in selection process
- Supervises trainee/apprentice
- Provides GTO feedback
- Pays GTO invoice

OCPSE:

- Provides SA Public Sector induction, SA Public Sector supervisor training, and Mentoring programs (where required)
- Contract management
- Review GTO reporting and KPIs

PATHWAY 1 PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYED

Recruitment

OCPSE will coordinate recruitment of Public Sector employed trainees/apprentices /graduates on a Contract of Training (CoT). Agencies contact OCPSE Skilling SA team requesting recruitment services using an iApply form.

The GTO will recruit in accordance with position and agency requirements and identify suitable candidates for the agency to consider. The GTO will invoice OCPSE for these services.

What eligibility criteria applies?

All candidates are required to be eligible for SA Public Sector Act Employment Opportunity conditions and commit to undertake the required training requirements. SA Public Sector traineeship/apprenticeship candidates must be 17-30 years old (or up to 35 for people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or having a declared disability). Graduates do not have an age limit. See candidate eligibility information sheets for more information.

Job seeker training

OCPSE will arrange workshops facilitated by a GTO Panel provider and invite Public Sector employed trainees, apprentices and graduates on a CoT towards the end of their contract of training.

PATHWAY 2 ENGAGING A GTO

The OCPSE Skilling SA team can assist agencies to engage with a GTO provider.

Agencies can directly contact the GTO Panel providers regarding a hosting opportunity. The DPC SA Extra website contains across government contract information, including the GTO Panel process.

Agencies can contact OCPSE via OCPSEskillingSA@sa.gov.au for GTO Panel pricing information. Agencies should consider the following when engaging a GTO;

- Training qualification relative to hosting opportunity,
- Supervisor availability with relative industry experience,
- GTO pricing, location and services

Are all GTO Providers offering the same service?

The GTO providers are contracted by the Panel Agreement to provide minimum specifications of services and can provide the services required under the Project. They must also meet requirements under the Training and Skills Commission Guidelines. However, each provider may have specific experience or expertise. Agencies are encouraged to review all GTO Panel provider details prior to deciding which GTO will best suit their needs.

Can GTO Panel members approach agencies directly to promote their services?

GTO's can engage via nominated agency contacts directly and/or via the OCPSE Skilling SA Team. Agencies may also contact the GTO directly regarding their specific business and workforce needs.

How do I obtain the pricing information of the GTO Panel?

Pricing information is obtained by contacting OCPSEskillingSA@sa.gov.au.

What is the pricing based on?

Pricing is based on a breakdown of the required GTO services using a Certificate III Business Administration and trainee (5 years out of school) as an example and foundation for the pricing structure. This can be used as an indicative guide.

Variations in the pricing will occur due to the trainee/apprentice salary (i.e. age/level/time out of school), the qualification costs, duration of traineeship and other details relevant to essential costs.

Can indicative pricing for a traineeship/apprenticeship be requested from a GTO Panel Provider?

Yes, prior to proceeding to recruitment the GTO will provide an estimated total charge out rate (for the duration of the apprenticeship/traineeship). Agencies can use this to confirm support from the appropriate agency delegate. The final rate will depend on the candidate's pay rates.

Who decides on the RTO used?

The Host Agency and trainee/apprentice can indicate a preference of training provider. The GTO can also provide advice and a decision should be made with the agreement of the parties, considering factors such as availability, scope and pricing.

What is the Qualification pricing cap, and who will revise this?

The GTO pricing for the qualification component is capped at 20% above the TAFE SA subsidised traineeship/apprenticeship price. OCPSE must approve a qualification cost for a private RTO provider, however it can approve pricing outside the scope of the pricing cap where reasonable, i.e. there is a benefit to the trainee/host employer. The GTO is responsible for contacting OCPSE to review qualification costs.

PATHWAY 2 RECRUITMENT

What is the Agency's role?

A GTO Employed and Public Sector Hosted trainee/apprentice recruitment process is undertaken by the selected GTO using information provided by the Agency. It is best practice for both the GTO and Host Agency to collaborate to achieve the best outcome.

What is the candidate eligibility criteria for Pathway 2?

The trainee/apprentice is required to commit to the training requirements and must not be on the Public Sector Re-Employment Register. There is no upper age limit in this program however candidates must be at least 16 years old.

What job readiness testing occurs?

The GTO is contracted under the Panel Agreement to undertake recruitment of suitable candidates based on agency role information. Agencies should be clear with the requirements of the role and expectations of candidates. The GTO must also undertake literacy and numeracy testing of suitable candidates.

What screening is undertaken?

The GTO is responsible for National Police Clearance and other authorised employee screening (i.e. DHS Screening). Agencies may be responsible for additional screening where the GTO does not have access to a specific screening requirement (i.e. agency internal process).

Who checks the Public Sector Re-Employment Register regarding a candidate?

The Host Agency is responsible for checking the internal SA Public Sector Re-Employment Register of the traineeship/apprenticeship candidate to be hosted in the Public Sector.

What does the GTO do once a suitable candidate has been found?

The GTO will assist in preparing the pricing documentation for the Official Order.

As the employer, the GTO is responsible for arranging the training requirements; this includes Employer Registration (with the Training and Skills Commission) and arrangements for the Contract of Training via the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network provider (AASN).

The GTO liaises with the RTO and assists with the development of a training plan.

What is the Official Order?

An official order is required to be completed to form a Host Agreement with a GTO in the SA Public Sector for all GTO employees. No secondary procurement is required.

The Official Order contains contact and pricing information including:

- All pricing information relative to charge out rates
- Variations and discounts where applicable
- Employee related expenses (must be compliant with legislation and industrial awards)
- Qualification cost capped at 20% above the subsidised TAFE SA fee
- Adjustments for any existing Government funding (i.e. other state or commonwealth funding).

Who completes an Official Order for a Hosting Agreement?

The GTO will start the Official Order for each new trainee/apprentice with relevant pricing information. This will be used for the Host Agreement.

Agencies must ensure a suitable delegate signs the Host Agreement, accepting the applicable charge out rates.

Does OCPSE review the Official Order?

The GTO will provide a draft Official Order Form to OCPSE. This will allow for checks against the pricing approach undertaken in the Panel Agreement.

HOSTING ARRANGEMENT

Is the Confidentiality Undertaking required?

Yes. The GTO will have the trainee/apprentice complete the confidentiality undertaking prior to commencement and provide a copy with the signed Host Agreement to the Host Agency/OCPSE.

What is the standard of behaviour of GTO employees, (e.g. Public Sector Values and Code of Ethics)?

The Panel Agreement requires the GTO to ensure its employees (including staff and trainees/apprentices) to maintain the same

standard of behaviour as public sector employees, including the Public Sector Values and the Code of Ethics.

An agency can determine the appropriate level of screening required, for both the trainee/apprentice and field officer(s) that visit the trainee/apprentice. Agencies should note that site visits are a requirement of the GTO hosting arrangement. The Panel Agreement also protects agencies regarding intellectual property.

Are the terms and conditions in the panel agreement negotiable?

No. The Panel Agreement was prepared by the South Australian Government Crown Solicitor's Office and contains the contractual arrangements that all suppliers on the Panel are required to comply with. Any special conditions added to the Official Order and/or Host Agreement must not be in conflict with the Panel Agreement.

Can Agencies and GTO's negotiate away from the minimum specifications?

No. Agencies cannot negotiate with a GTO away from the minimum specifications. GTO's have a contractual obligation under the panel agreement, including the annexed GTO Services Contract and Host Agreements to provide services in accordance with the specifications of the agreement. i.e. GTO's cannot use their own Host Agreement form.

OCPSE reserves the right to audit the functionality implemented for each Agency to ensure compliance with these specifications, both at implementation of any new service and throughout the term of the Panel Agreement.

Will the Hosting Agreement costs change throughout the agreement?

Host Agreements are subject to increases due to the award increases or the trainee/apprentice being eligible for a different wage rate (GTO trainees/apprentices are employed under the Commonwealth employee jurisdiction). The GTO's invoicing will provide reasons for any such changes.

Do GTO employed Trainees/Apprentices have the same employment conditions as SA Public Sector Trainees/ Apprentices?

No. The trainee/apprentice is employed by the GTO. The GTO can advise on the relative employment conditions and relevant award (i.e. Commonwealth Modern Award). The GTO is required to advise the Host Agency of specific expected costs (i.e. any applicable allowances).

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

Are agencies required to use a supplier from the Panel?

Yes. Cabinet has mandated that all agencies and entities of the South Australian Government must use the established GTO Panel. An exemption to the GTO Panel must be requested in writing to the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment.

How does the panel exemption process work?

To be granted an exemption from the Panel, a formal process is required. The request for the exemption (in the form of a Minute) must be raised by the Chief Executive of an agency and be addressed to the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment. Prior to an agency submitting an exemption request, a meeting with representatives of OCPSE is required to discuss the grounds upon which the exemption would be sought. A standard exemption Minute form may be obtained from OCPSE.

Does an agency need to seek an exemption if it is looking to procure a capability that is not listed on the Panel?

Agencies are advised to contact OCPSE to discuss their requirements to procure any traineeship/apprenticeship related support services or training even if that is not in the scope of the panel.

Many of the panel suppliers offer capabilities that extend beyond the current

scope of the panel and the GTO Services contract that has been executed by OCPSE allows for additional services.

OCPSE will advise the agency of a recommended course of action and will monitor demand for additional services.

Will OCPSE have an ongoing role with the Panel?

OCPSE is coordinating the Skilling South Australian Government Apprenticeship and Traineeship Signature Project and will be managing the Panel Agreements (contracts) over the life of the Project.

Do SA Government Industry Participation Policy requirements apply to the GTO Panel?

Yes, the procurement process applied to GTOs and required a submission of a tailored Industry Participation Policy (IPP). The GTO's are expected to complete reporting to the Office of the Public Advocate aligned to the anniversary of the contract commencement each year.

Does the GTO panel agreement have an expiry date?

Yes. The panel agreement is for an initial term up to 30 June 2020, with an additional two (2) one (1) year extension options to 30 June 2022 (dependent on contract review).

Does the contract authority maintain ongoing assessment of the GTO Panel?

Yes. A contract management plan (CMP) will be used to monitor the GTO Panel Agreements to ensure the contractual commitments and obligations including compliance with the minimum specifications and key performance indicators are achieved.

What if the agency has an existing Host Arrangement for a trainee/apprentice with a GTO?

Existing host arrangements will continue in their current form (unless parties agree to modify), however future host arrangements **must** be made with a GTO Panel provider, and under

the Panel Agreement with the specified Host Agreement.

A GTO Panel provider may consider transitioning existing host agreements to the Panel's standard form to allow for consistency.

Can GTO's make public announcements or media releases in relation to GTO Panel and Agency Placements?

GTO's are required to obtain written approval from OCPSE prior to communicating the awarding of the panel contract with any third party. The GTO's must not post a public announcement or media release about the awarding of a Public Sector Panel Agreement, GTO Services Contract or Host Agreement without the consent of the agency.

Who do I contact if I need more information regarding the Panel?

Contact the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment

OCPSEskillingSA@sa.gov.au

