



Strategies at Work

Enhancing employment opportunities for youth

The articles below outline programs and strategies that have been developed by Western Australian public sector agencies to enhance employment opportunities for youth.

Public Transport Authority

As part of a formal workforce planning process the Public Transport Authority Youth Strategy consists of the following initiatives.

1. Graduate Program

The Public Transport Authority has offered a two-year graduate rotational program for the last six years. Each year, the Public Transport Authority recruits a number of young, talented professionals who have recently graduated or are in their final year of study, in fields including accounting, business management, engineering (electrical, civil, mechanical, or mechatronic), information technology, marketing or communications, occupational safety and health, architecture and urban and regional planning. All graduates participate in the Public Transport Authority Mentoring Program, in-house Myers-Briggs Type Indicator assessment, the Public Transport Authority performance and development planning process and the Public Sector in Focus Graduate Program.

2. Business Traineeship Program

The Public Transport Authority, through the Public Sector Commission, coordinates a Business Traineeship Program to provide young people with the skills and opportunity to break into the workforce. The program consists of work rotations in various divisions of the agency giving participants agency-wide experience. Extra support is provided to trainees through a buddy program. On completion of the traineeship, trainees may become eligible for ongoing employment within the Public Transport Authority. Alternatively, they may be placed in the Public Sector Commission's recruitment pool for Level 1 positions that arise in all state government agencies.

3. Apprenticeship arrangement

The Public Transport Authority has a partnership arrangement with Downer Engineering, who utilise the agency as a rotational placement for apprenticeships. The Public Transport Authority pays for the apprentices while they are placed on rotation with the agency.

The objective of the Public Transport Authority's Youth Strategy is to improve employment outcomes and increase the representation of youth. This is further supported by the agency's Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan.



WA Police

WA Police engages in a significant intake of trainees through the School-Based Traineeship Program, administered by the Public Sector Commission. The aim of the School-Based Traineeship Program is to provide Year 11 students with a two-year transition from school to work and provide the agency with access to young people who can be trained with specific knowledge as a potential youth workforce.

Upon completion of a ten-week trial period, students deemed suitable sign-up for a part-time Certificate II Business Traineeship. Students are rotated during their first year to gain a broader perspective of the business units. Placements may be in:

- human resources;
- traffic and operational support;
- asset management;
- media and public affairs; or
- Crime Stoppers.

Trainees are provided with a broad agency induction at commencement of the traineeship, as well as a further workplace specific induction. During the ten-week trial, trainees are also given tours of the agency's metropolitan locations and provided with equal employment opportunity training, as well as training in the use of internet and email. At the completion of the School-Based Traineeship, successful participants are well placed to gain permanent employment with WA Police.

The School-Based Traineeship supports the focus of the WA Police Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan on increasing the representation of youth in the workforce at WA Police.

Department of Sport and Recreation

Like many Western Australian public sector agencies, the Department of Sport and Recreation has found itself with a significant mature-age workforce. Their approach to increasing youth representation within the department is two-tiered.

1. Graduate Program

The department offers 12 month contracts to university graduates and attracts applicants by targeting universities directly, as well as advertising on the Jobs WA website. On a regular basis, staff from the department deliver presentations at the universities to highlight the graduate program. Managers at the Department of Sport and Recreation have good working relationships with lecturers at the various universities, which provides a focused approach to recruitment.

Graduates undertake work in various areas within the department and participate in a rotation program to increase their skills. Projects undertaken by graduates have previously included sporting access issues for people with special needs, support for peak bodies and small sporting organisations; and strategic policy and planning.

Some graduates continue to work with the department at the end of their contract, while others gain employment within the wider sport and recreation industry.

2. Traineeships

Traineeships at the department are both school-based and full-time. Partnerships between the department and schools throughout Western Australia assist in the selection and appointment process for prospective students.

The department has achieved successful placements in their metropolitan and regional offices as well as in their camps. The department plans to expand its youth strategy to include participation in the National Indigenous Cadets Project. This project links Indigenous Australian students with employers through cadetship arrangements.

Through its youth strategy the Department of Sport and Recreation has increased its youth workforce profile.

Department of Education and Training

Frankie Clemente was a Year 10 student at Hampton Senior High School when he heard about school-based traineeships from the school's VET Co-ordinator. The traineeship offered an alternative to completing the TEE and provided a Certificate II in Business on completion.

Frankie considered his choices and opted for the school-based traineeship. He applied for the program through the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (the program is now run by the Public Sector Commission) and following an informal interview he was selected by the Department of Education and Training.

Two days per week were spent at the department district office undertaking administrative work in the area of curriculum. The remaining three days of the week were spent at school, completing 13 competency units. As well as the school units, Frankie was required to complete certain activities at work, keep a daily log and provide evidence to demonstrate his competency.

At the completion of the two-year traineeship, Frankie was selected for a fixed-term contract in VET Teaching and Learning within the department. At the department's request, Frankie went on to complete a 12 month work-based traineeship, culminating in a Certificate III in Business.

Frankie now works as an assistant screening officer (Level 2) in the Professional Standards and Conduct Branch at the department. He sees the benefits of participating in the school-based traineeship as being a foot-in-the-door to government. Working at the department has also enabled him to access a wide range of professional development.

The department accessed the school-based traineeship scheme to improve representation of youth which is a focus area of their Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan.

More information

If you would like further information on strategies for enhancing employing opportunities for youth contact a senior consultant at the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity by phone on (08) 9219 6000 or email at deope@opssc.wa.gov.au



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