



NSW Utilities & Electrotechnology
Industry Training Advisory Body (ITAB)

NSW UE ITAB News Service 154 – August 2026

Executive Officer Message

Welcome to the August news service of the NSW Utilities and Electrotechnology ITAB. This month the ITAB also provided advice to the Department of Education on SBAT for our industry, worked with industry on coming training package requirements. I also continued to provide detailed advice to NSW DCCEEW on the Approved Service Provider Scheme and met with a new consumer electronics industry stakeholder that requires urgent attention to skill up their sector.



Enjoy the read.

In this newsletter we have an:

NSW News

- **Industry expectations for the delivery of the electrical qualification**
- **NSW Training Awards - Large Employer of the Year**
- **Smart and Skilled Update**
- **New NSW Skills Board Announced**
- **National News**
 - **UEE Full Training Package Review**
 - **PSO New Resources Hub**
 - **New PSO Electrician Workforce Capacity Study**

NSW NEWS

Industry expectations for the delivery of the electrical qualification

Last month I wrote an article about how to select an industry recognised Register Training Organisation (RTO) to deliver the Electrotechnology Electrician qualification (UEE30820). With the rise of dodgy RTO's delivering this qualification in NSW with the empty promise of an electrical licence at the end, I thought that it was an opportunity to outline how the qualification **SHOULD BE DELIVERED** or otherwise **INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICE**.

Off-the-job training in a technical training facility (e.g. TAFE or specialist RTO) is essential to achieving valid, safe and nationally consistent competency outcomes for the UEE30820 Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician. Workplace-only delivery or assessment models are not in line with the purpose of the qualification. **The UEE30820 qualification requires a blended assessment model.** While authentic workplace experience is critical, many core units contain knowledge and performance evidence that cannot be consistently, safely or validly demonstrated in real workplaces alone.

Why Workplace-Only Assessment Is Insufficient

1. Knowledge Evidence Cannot Be Reliably Demonstrated On-the-Job. Core units require explicit demonstration of:

- Electrical theory (single- and three-phase calculations)
- Interpretation and application of AS/NZS Wiring Rules
- Circuit protection design and discrimination
- Control logic and motor theory

In practice:

- Workplaces rarely require apprentices to formally explain or calculate theory
- Many employers rely on established practices rather than structured standards

interpretation

- Assessment of theory requires controlled conditions, not production environments

Training facilities are essential to ensure assessors can reliably validate underpinning knowledge.

2. Performance Evidence Requires Controlled and Repeatable Scenarios. Several core units require apprentices to demonstrate:

- Multiple fault-finding scenarios
- Safe isolation and testing under varied conditions
- Construction and modification of control circuits
- Exposure to a range of wiring systems and apparatus

In real workplaces:

- Faults occur unpredictably and cannot be “created” for assessment
- High-risk tasks (isolation, testing, fault simulation) are often restricted
- No single employer can provide exposure to all required scenarios

Simulated environments are necessary to ensure breadth, safety and assessment consistency.

3. Safety and Risk Management Constraints

Some performance evidence requirements involve:

- Live electrical systems
- Isolation and verification procedures
- Testing of newly installed or modified circuits

Allowing apprentices to demonstrate these tasks solely in workplaces:

- Introduces unacceptable safety risks
- Exposes employers and clients to liability
- Limits assessment opportunities due to operational pressures

Training facilities provide safe, controlled environments aligned with WHS obligations.

4. Profiled Units Still Do Not Eliminate the Need for Off-the-Job Training

While some units (e.g. installation and commissioning) require authentic workplace evidence, profiling:

- Does not address gaps in theory and fault exposure
- Does not guarantee exposure to full performance evidence range
- Must be complemented by structured off-the-job learning

Profiling supports, but does not replace, formal training delivery.

Implications for Policy and System Design

Training Design

- Block release or day-release models remain essential
- Technical colleges play a critical role in ensuring national consistency

Funding and Regulation

- Funding models must continue to support off-the-job training delivery
- Any move toward “workplace-only” assessment risks non-compliance with training package requirements

Workforce Quality and Safety

- Removing or reducing formal training increases safety risks
- Inconsistent competency outcomes undermine industry confidence and public safety

In Summary

UEE30820 is not a workplace-only qualification.

The structure of its core units, assessment conditions and safety requirements mandate a blended approach combining: Authentic workplace experience, and structured, simulated and theory-based training in a technical facility.

Any policy, funding or reform proposal must recognise that training facilities are foundational to electrical apprenticeship quality, safety and national consistency.



If you know of a person who is interested in becoming an electrician with a licenced outcome in NSW, please give them this article. It is disheartening to hear of candidates who have spent \$1000's of dollars and chosen a dodgy RTO only to realise that they are unable to get the licence in NSW.

NSW Training Awards

The NSW Training Awards were held on Tuesday 25th August to coincide with national skills week. Congratulations to all finalists especially those in the apprenticeship of the year category. Again, this year electrotechnology and electrical apprenticeships dominated the finalist nominees. Finalists were Zhofi boglari-Davykoza from Albury Council completing a CIII in Electrotechnology Electrician with TAFE NSW, Jack DeFreitas from Essential Energy completing a CIII in ESI Distribution Overhead with Essential Energy RTO. And Nikita Wells completing a CIII in Hairdressing from Cooper & Co Hairdressing, with TAFE NSW.

NSW Large Employer of the Year

More great news from the training awards for our industry was Ausgrid being awarded large employer of the year. Ausgrid is the largest electricity distributor on Australia's east coast.

Supporting 174 apprentices across the business and achieving a 95 per cent completion rate, the program brings together apprentices, trainers, mentors, leaders and training partners to help build the skilled workforce needed to power communities across Sydney, the Central Coast, Newcastle and the Hunter.

Group Executive People & Culture, Celina Cross said the achievement reflected a collective effort. "We are incredibly humbled and honoured to receive this recognition," Ms Cross said.

"While our name is on the award, it really belongs to the many people who help our apprentices succeed every day. It takes a village to build a great apprenticeship program, and we're fortunate to have dedicated trainers, mentors, supervisors, leaders, training partners and apprentices who all play a part.

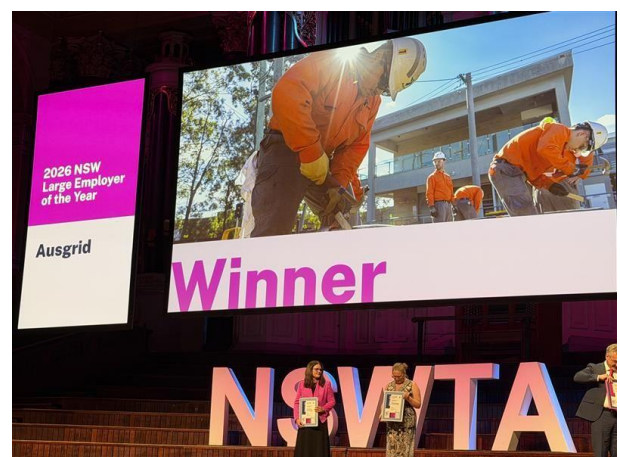
"We're very proud of what the Bright Spark Apprentice program has become, but even more proud of the people behind it. Their commitment to sharing knowledge, supporting development and creating opportunities for young and mature-age people is what makes the program successful.

"We're also grateful to our training partners, including TAFE NSW and Busy at Work, whose support helps us deliver a strong learning experience and positive outcomes for apprentices.

"We see apprenticeship training as an investment in our people, our communities and the future of the energy industry, and we're grateful to be part of that journey."

Fourth-year substation technician apprentice Jaqueline Marshall said the support available through the program had been one of its greatest strengths.

"What stands out about the Bright Spark program is that you're never learning alone. There's always someone willing to help, whether it's a supervisor, mentor, trainer or another apprentice," Jaqueline said.



“The hands-on experience you get across different parts of the business and the support from people around you have given me confidence in my skills and shown me just how many opportunities there are for a long-term career in the energy industry.”

The award reinforces Ausgrid’s long-standing commitment to developing future talent. For more information on the event and finalists visit: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/2026-training-awards>

Smart and Skilled Update

NSW FEE FREE CONSTRUCTION (NFF-C) PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PART

The NSW Fee Free Construction (NFF-C) Pre-Apprenticeship Part Qualifications program is **open until 31 December 2026**. NFF-C Pre Apprenticeship Part Qualifications Training Needs Identification (TNI) applications can now be submitted to the relevant Training Services Regional Office.

The Intent of the NFF-C Pre-Apprenticeship Part Qualifications Program

The NFF-C Pre-Apprenticeship Part Qualifications Program is a joint Commonwealth and NSW government-funded initiative under the Fee Free TAFE Skills Agreement, providing students access to pre-apprenticeship/traineeship initiatives designed to give students an experience of working in construction-related trades.

It aims to inform students’ decisions around which building or construction apprenticeship/traineeship to pursue, improve their employability outcomes, and support their transition into the construction industry through an apprenticeship or traineeship pathway.

Places are still available for this program, and providers are encouraged to submit TNI applications while opportunities remain. Please note that TNIs for this program will not be accepted after 31 December 2026. Providers can enrol students once a Provider Activity Schedule (PAS) has been accepted. For more information contact your local Training Service Regional Office. Contact details for regional offices are as follows:

Central & Northern Sydney: TS.Chatswood@det.nsw.edu.au

Southern & South Sydney: TS.Bankstown@det.nsw.edu.au

Parramatta & Western Sydney: TS.Parramatta@det.nsw.edu.au

Hunter & Central Coast Regional: TS.Newcastle@det.nsw.edu.au

North Coast & Mid North Coast: TS.Lismore@det.nsw.edu.au

New England: TS.Tamworth@det.nsw.edu.au

Western NSW: TS.Orange@det.nsw.edu.au

Riverina NSW: TS. WaggaWagga@det.nsw.edu.au

Illawarra & South East NSW: TS.Wollongong@det.nsw.edu.au

New NSW Skills Board Announced

There is a refreshed NSW Skills Board announced by The Hon. Steve Whan Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, at Monday's launch of Skills Week. The NSW Skills Board is responsible for providing independent, high level, strategic advice on the skills system in NSW. It plays an important role in shaping the state's VET and tertiary education system. In late 2025, a comprehensive review of the board was undertaken in line with the NSW Skills Plan and VET Review priority to reform skills and industry governance. It identified the need to refine the board's focus areas and update its membership to respond to emerging workforce challenges.



The new board members bring a broad range of expertise spanning industry, education, VET and skills development, economics and local, state and federal government. Notably, the Board now includes a student and an employee representative, ensuring their perspectives help shape the advice provided to government. Collectively, it better reflects the diversity of NSW and the people it serves through the VET system. With widespread skills shortages across industries and growing demand for skilled workers, improved workforce analysis and strategic planning are critical to keeping NSW competitive.

The Board will continue to provide expert, strategic advice to the NSW Government that supports workforce development and strengthens the economic future of NSW. In addition, its guidance will help ensure skills and training meet the needs of individuals, industry, regions and the wider NSW economy. For more information on the 8 new NSW Skills Board members visit:

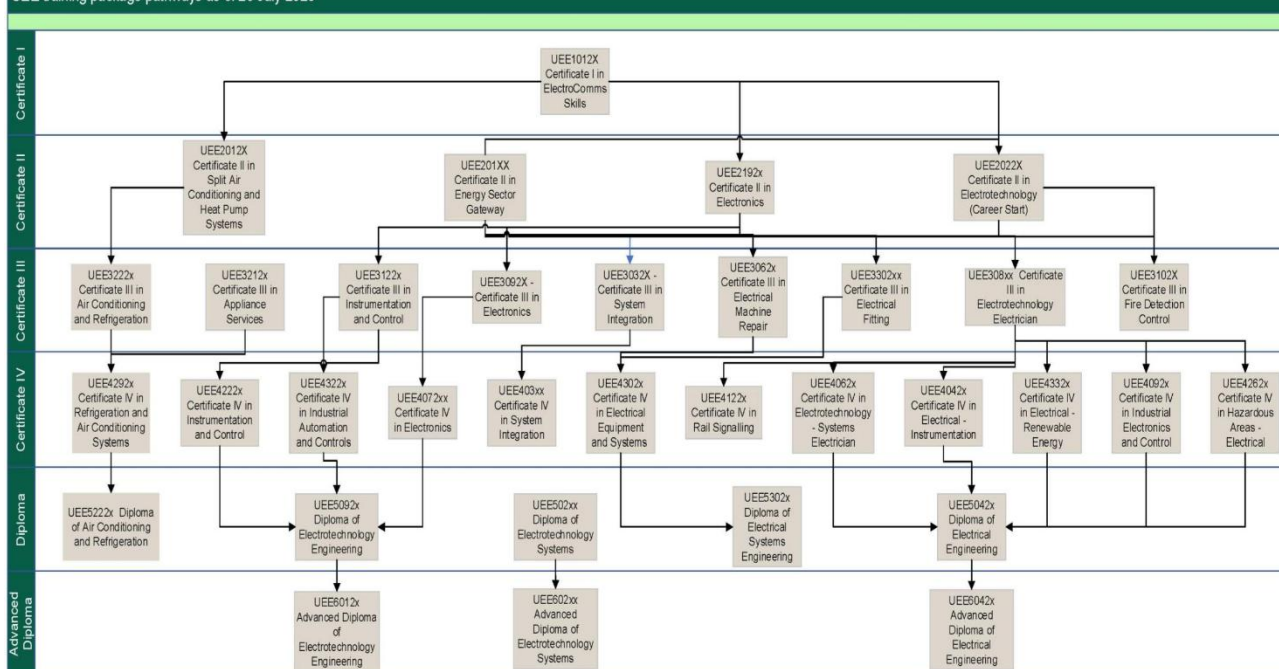
<https://education.nsw.gov.au/skills-nsw/nsw-skills-board#Membership0>

NATIONAL UPDATE

UEE Full Training Package Review

As readers would be aware that the UEE Training Package is currently in full review. New draft qualifications are expected to be released at the end of August 2026. Draft development includes the new UEE30827 Electrotechnology Electrician qualification with 24 core units of competency. As it stands, there will be no elective units in this qualification. Several core units will carry pre-requisites. The new qualification will cover ERAC Essential Capabilities for an unrestricted electrician's licence. It will also include workplace evidence units of competency. A new core unit will be introduced called *Perform Low Voltage Rescue and Emergency Response*.

Below is a copy of the draft pathways chart outlining the pathways for the various UEE qualifications.



The ITAB advocates to ensure that NSW industry stakeholders needs are included in the reviews of the training package. Please ensure that any feedback give to PSO includes the ITAB. We can not advocate on your behalf if we don't know the issues or have the advice.

PSO New Resources Hub:

Powering Skills Organisation is preparing to launch a new digital resource hub designed to make it easier for industry, educators and stakeholders to access information, resources and consultation materials in one place. The platform will bring together publications, training product resources, practical tools and other key information through a more streamlined and searchable experience.

The resource hub is being developed to improve access to current information and support ongoing engagement with PSO projects and initiatives. More information will be released in the coming weeks as the platform becomes available.

New PSO Electrician Workforce Capacity Study

This month, PSO has released a new Electrician Workforce Capacity study. It outlines why more apprentices are essential and who holds the key to growth areas. Examining one of the key challenges facing Australia's energy workforce, how to increase the number of electricians entering the industry.

The research highlights that demand for electricians is growing rapidly across clean energy, housing, infrastructure and data centres, with clean energy alone expected to require around 42,500 additional electricians by 2030. Importantly, the study finds that the challenge is not simply a lack of people interested in becoming electricians or a lack of training capacity. Electrical contractors already train around 71% of electrician apprentices, yet only around one in three of the approximately 48,000 electrical businesses currently employ an apprentice.

The research points to the capacity and willingness of employers to take on apprentices as a key opportunity for workforce growth. Factors including the cost of training, supervision requirements and uncertainty about retaining apprentices can influence an employer's decision-making.

For more information visit [PSO ApprenticePaper_ReportAndAppendix.pdf](#)

If you would like to contribute to this News Service, please feel free to write to the undersigned accordingly. Thank you.

For the latest and past News Services visit: www.uensw.com.au/news/

Kind regards
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