

Hairdressing

Industry Overview

The hairdressing industry is the largest employing occupation in the personal services sector. The industry provides a range of hair related services to both men and women. The recent resurgence of specialised barber shops is proving to be the expanding sector of this industry as trends in men's grooming such as styled haircuts and facial grooming become more popular. The industry has two apprenticeships, hairdressing and barbering.

According to ABS, at the end of June 2017 there were 2,245 hairdressing business in Western Australia. ¹

There are approximately 22,353 hairdressing and beauty salons in Australia employing 84,871 people. The industry is predicted to have an annual growth of 1.3%.²

The industry is predominantly made up of small to medium business with the majority being owner operators. While there are some salon chains including franchises, the small to medium salons employ between 1–6 people. Competition is high and will remain high as salons compete for clients.

In WA there has been a decline in the current uptake of apprentices in the hairdressing industry with salons unable to take on apprentices due to the declining economy and lack of consumer confidence and spending.

Supply and demand

Hairdressing is considered a luxury service and as such relies on a buoyant economy to survive. However, while the hairdressing industry in general is experiencing a downturn in business the barbering sector is very buoyant. Industry information is that there is not a critical shortage of qualified hairdressers as yet but it is predicted that there will be in the future.

Skills demand and shortages

In the longer term, 3-5 years, it is anticipated there will be a critical shortage of qualified hairdressers due to the decline in employment over the last 12 months. The lead time for training an apprentice in hairdressing and barbering is 3 years, however due to the declining economic conditions salons are either closing or not investing in apprentices. The barbering sector has reported a shortage of qualified barbers.

Job roles or skills in decline

Cutting skills are reported to be at a low level across the industry and skill sets in cutting are being accessed via external courses with salons and wholesalers. With the current primary fashion focus on colouring, cutting skills are not being developed during apprenticeship training and skills are being obtained after the qualification.

¹ ABS 8165.0 –Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, June 2017

² IBISWorld

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Due to the economic decline salons have closed and hairdressers are working from home. This can create many issues such as: (a) salons no longer trading therefore there is no rental income generated for empty shops (b) home hairdressers do not employ staff – apprenticeships in decline (c) it can create a ‘black economy’ where cash transactions are not necessarily declared.

Emerging Technologies or innovative advances.

The emergence of new and innovative technologies will see a demand for advanced trichology knowledge. Stem cell technology research has produced a range of products to the marketplace for hair growth and hair thickening services. These products will require hairdressers to have a greater knowledge of the structure of the hair and how it reacts to certain ingredients within the products.

Social media has also had an impact on the way hairdressers keep up to date with new styling and colouring techniques. On line tutorials are plentiful and accessible.

Specific training product issues

The emergence of stem cell technology and the need for hairdressers to have a deeper understanding of the skin and hair will require science and trichology units to be stronger within the Certificate III in Hairdressing.

The merging of science and trichology knowledge into other units within the SHB30416 Certificate III in Hairdressing has not been successful and has in fact diluted the knowledge of the skin and hair. Now more than ever hairdressers need a thorough understanding of the skin and hair and the impacts and contraindications certain products can have on a client’s wellbeing.

The Certificate III in Hairdressing should also include units dealing with digital literacy and how these skills can be used for the benefit of the business. An example of this could be an appointment App, similar to a restaurant booking App that allows appointments to be made using this mode instead of ringing the salon. This would save time and money for the salon and the client.

Are there any policies or targets in relation to certain workers?

Anyone who is capable of learning the skills is able to enter the industry.

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Industry workforce priorities for the next four years

- Communication Skills
- Literacy and numeracy
- Work readiness
- Skills sets flexible enough to meet the needs of the business
- Digital literacy – social media – marketing the work of the salon and making appointments.
- Knowledge of science and trichology
- Emphasis on cutting skills