

Employability Skills Training (EST)

Annual Performance Report: 01/04/2020 – 31/03/2021

A note on this Annual Performance Report

As set out in the EST Performance Framework, Account Managers conduct a formal performance review for each EST provider annually.

Account Managers assess each EST provider's performance against each of the three key performance indicators (KPIs)—effectiveness, engagement and efficiency, and satisfaction and service quality.

This report provides your organisation with feedback on its performance in the delivery of services to allow your organisation to continuously improve and meet the needs of participants, employers and employment services providers.

Key Messages for the Annual Performance Period 2020-2021

Impacts of COVID-19

This performance period has again been a challenging one, with the annual performance assessment period impacted heavily by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that we are all still adjusting to.

With the continuation of lockdown arrangements in many areas, EST providers are still working hard to ensure suitable non-face-to-face courses are available across all employment regions.

The Department would like to acknowledge the significant efforts by EST providers that have continued to allow young people to have quick access to training and remain actively engaged.

While the labour market is showing signs of recovery, the reality is that finding or regaining employment continues to be tougher for young people compared to many other groups, and EST will continue to be an important way for young people to remain supported and engaged during these challenging times.

It is great to see that the participation rate for youths has improved to 69.3 in June 2021, which is 6 points stronger than in June 2020. Youth unemployment also decreased by 6.1 per cent (329,200) between June 2020 and June 2021. While the youth unemployment rate has recovered since March 2021 after an increase of 2 per cent over the year, falling to 10.2 per cent from its peak of 16.4 per cent in July 2020, it remains 1.6 per cent below its pre-pandemic level (11.8 per cent in March 2020). Despite this fall, the youth unemployment rate remains more than double the rate recorded for all persons (4.9 per cent in June 2021).

Trends for annual performance period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, EST providers showed adaptability and flexibility when it came to non-face-to-face service delivery. EST providers delivered just over 5,000 online and hybrid EST courses between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021.

Encouragingly, referrals remained strong throughout the performance period with EST providers ensuring there were enough courses available to fill the demand. While average class sizes decreased to around 6 participants to largely to a drop in the overall commencement rate, there was an increase in the number of courses able to be run due to the service delivery nature during COVID-19 restrictions.

Whilst there was initial impact at the height of the pandemic, the engagement rate increased markedly after the first few months and continued strongly throughout the start of 2021. This is in large part down to EST providers delivering courses that kept job seekers interested and engaged in the program.

The number of unused courses with referrals also decreased during this performance period when compared to 2019-2020. This is good for job seekers, EST and jobactive providers, reducing the number of job seekers who had to be removed from a course and referred to another course.

Key Areas of Focus

As we move into 2021-22, it is even more important that EST Providers continue to get young people job ready as the economy continues to recover. Some key areas of focus for EST Providers include (but are not limited to):

- Working with jobactive providers to leverage Youth Jobs PaTH internships and wage subsidies to further help EST participants.
- With the expansion of EST eligibility to now include job seekers of all ages in Online Employment Services (OES), EST providers should be tailoring courses for age-specific groups as well as considering how they can best market their EST courses to OES job seekers.
- Working with the Local Jobs and Skills Taskforces and Employment Facilitators in your areas to identify and support the delivery of activities that address local training and employment priorities.
- Improving documentary evidence, information management processes, and any lessons learned by privacy and/or data breaches or near misses. The [Provider Portal](#) has several resources to assist providers in ensuring that personal information is protected from unauthorised access, disclosure or loss, including that which is unintentional.

Performance Periods 7 and 8 (1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021)

EST Provider: Encompass

As set out in the EST Performance Framework, Account Managers conduct a formal performance review for each EST provider annually.

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Performance Results

KPI 1—Effectiveness

Employment Region	KPI 1.1a % commence paid employment	KPI 1.1b % achieve 4 week outcome	KPI 1.1c % commence PaTH internship	KPI 1.2 % improved following EST
Barwon	46.8	27.4	0.0	81.4

KPI 2—Engagement and Efficiency

Employment Region	KPI 2 - Engagement rate
Barwon	59.8

KPI 3—Satisfaction and Service Quality

Rating: Pass

Performance Assessment

This report is intended to provide you with constructive feedback regarding your organisation's delivery of services throughout the performance assessment period. However, it will also focus on examining the approaches and strategies that your organisation has been using to ensure the needs of job seekers, employers and employment services providers are met.

KPI 1 – Effectiveness

Within 6 months of completing an EST course with Encompass, 46.8 per cent of participants commenced paid employment, with 27.4 per cent achieving a 4 week employment outcome, it is pleasing to note that your organisations performance for these measures is better than the National Proportion.

The Department recognises the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic which have required Encompass to adapt their service to work within State Health directions. It is acknowledged that these directions, including lockdowns in Victoria have impacted PaTH Internships during the period. During the period, no participants who successfully finished your organisation's EST Course went on to commence a PaTH Internship. Your organisation is reminded that PaTH Internships have been designed to give young people a chance to demonstrate their skills in the workplace, with EST Courses valuable in preparing participants for future employment or work experience opportunities.

It was reported by jobactive providers that 81.4 per cent of participants demonstrated an improvement in their employability skills following participation in an Encompass EST course.

Your organisation's self-assessment report stated that EST course content is regularly reviewed and updated in line with industry demands and areas of growth and has been adapted to reflect local labour market conditions due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The Department is satisfied with Encompass' performance against KPI 1 during this Performance Period.

KPI 2 – Engagement and Efficiency

During this performance period Encompass achieved an overall engagement rate of 59.8 per cent, this is below the National Proportion. Your organisation is encouraged to continue to explore and implement strategies to support participants and ensure that they remain engaged in the EST program.

Encompass' self-assessment report noted that participants that had completed your organisation's courses have shared their experiences with other job seekers, assisting with word of mouth referrals. Your report advises that trainers attempt to establish a rapport with participants early and note anecdotally that once a participant has attended for 2-3 days, they are likely to remain engaged in the course through to completion.

The Department is satisfied with Encompass' performance against KPI 2 during this Performance Period.

KPI 3 – Satisfaction and Quality

Encompass described its strategies in place to ensure compliance with the Deed, Guidelines and your Service Delivery Plan. These strategies include participants completing self-evaluations of skills and knowledge at the beginning and completion of the course, assisting with identifying areas of improvement and satisfaction, participant surveys are used to rate service delivery and to drive continually improvement of course content and delivery.

The Department is satisfied with Encompass' performance against KPI 3 during this Performance Period.

Overall, the Department is satisfied with Encompass' performance during the period. Encompass is encouraged to continue to engage with jobactive providers to deliver EST courses and meet the demand in the Barwon ER.

Please contact your Contract Managers should you have any questions regarding the information in this report.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brad Orton', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brad Orton, on behalf of Dianne Bravo
Account Manager
Bendigo Regional Office
5 November 2021