

JobQ^uest

Connecting People and Skills

Penrith Skills for Jobs Ltd

ABN 80 082 730 210

Annual Report 2016-2017



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JobQuest Mission

Through a client focused and community oriented approach,

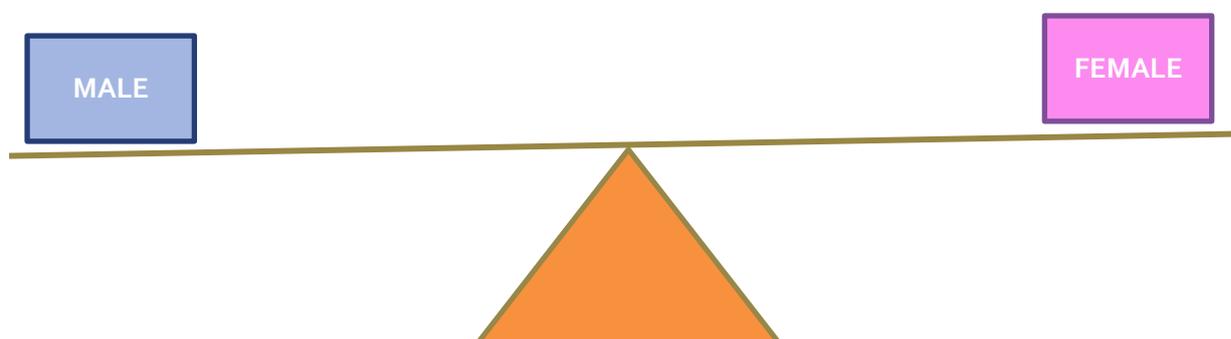
JobQuest supports our clients to:

- Develop skills in a safe and healthy working environment
- Connect with each other
- Engage with the community
- Build strong networks
- Recognise and realise opportunities
- Develop their sense of belonging

Employee Gender Balance

JobQuest has an excellent gender balance with only slightly more female employees than male.

Youth Programs are dominated by females and Employment Services are dominated by males.



How we Achieve our Mission

Employment Services

JobQuest runs property maintenance and cleaning units designed to provide transitional employment opportunities to enable people to gain skills to move on to more permanent work or operate their own small business. These operate in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains out of our Girraween office and in the Hunter out of our Newcastle office.

These services are offered to a range of customers including:

General public – fee for service

NDIS participants

- House cleaning and other household activities
- House and/or yard maintenance

Aged Care clients

- CHSP [Commonwealth Home Support Program] – Western Sydney only
- Home Care Packages
- Department of Veteran's Affairs clients

Commercial contracts

Youth Programs

JobQuest Youth Programs are designed to provide alternative learning models for young people who are not engaged well or coping well in mainstream education.

These programs assist young people to overcome some of life's hurdles and get on track to achieving their goals.

Some programs may be targeted to specific cohorts such as refugees or recent migrants and others to young jobseekers or young offenders.



Intergenerational program run at Kurri Kurri Masonic village

Training

Participation in training is an excellent way for people to engage with others and their community. The development of new skills continues to be the key to finding a job and retaining that job as technological and other changes impact on our working communities.

Our Youth Programs link with our Training arm with a focus on employment skills and literacy and numeracy support for young people. This integration of our training with our other operations provides a more substantial and structured impact on the people who engage with our services.

Other Community Programs

JobQuest provides a two-year, home-based, early learning and parenting program for families with young children.

It aims to provide a structured, education-focused early learning program at home to help prepare children for and participate in school; and is run at the Newcastle suburb of Windale.



Community Engagement

Community, heritage and connectedness are important to us at JobQuest.

We deliver a range of programs to help build more cohesive and inclusive communities.

These programs are often found in areas with significant growth or with emerging or changing communities including new or expanding cultural groups. Western and South Western Sydney and the Hunter are major areas targeted.

Assisting young students identified as being at risk of leaving school, usually due to having displayed anti-social behaviour, is one area of significant need.

Supporting students to develop strong ties to each other and to the community at large has been one strategy for overcoming many of the obstacles faced by such students. In these programs the participants are encouraged to become involved in community outreach programs.

These opportunities help the participants to develop skills and confidence in themselves and create positive relationships with the people around them.

Migrant, refugee and newly-arrived students are also helped to develop employability skills.

Using interactive and fun activities help the participants develop their communication skills and engage in ongoing relationships with peers in order to build self-confidence and plan for a positive future as an adult.

By running social enterprises aimed at providing work in a more supportive and flexible environment our employment programs assist people who have disengaged from the workforce and benefit from such a working environment. This program enables the employees to work within their communities and public housing tenants are a target group for this program.

Every program run by JobQuest relies on community engagement, enhances participants to be involved in their community and in most cases has some benefit to organisations, community groups and individuals.



Chairman's Report

I am very proud to report that JobQuest is continuing its great work of helping individuals to develop the skills they need in order to achieve their employment or further education goals and become highly valued members of our communities.

Changes to government funding have made this task challenging at times but I am pleased to say we have been able to respond to both the political and commercial impacts. This has enabled the organisation to continue to assist our participants through these difficult times.

Our primary undertaking in relation to these changes has been to understand how these reforms impact our own business models and viability. We have been able to respond with operational strategies that continue to be conducive to delivering the sorts of programs that help our target participants. In doing so, we have remained resolute in our mission of connecting people with the core skills they need to become resourceful, independent, caring and connected individuals within our communities.

It is with considerable satisfaction that I can say we continue to be on the right path to achieving the appropriate mix of services that recognises the needs of our participants, helps them build strong networks and achieve social connectedness.

We continue to work with a wide range of organisations such as community groups, schools, Job Active providers, Return to Work providers, Disability Services, NDIS Local Area Coordinators and commercial enterprises to ensure that our reach into, and engagement with, our communities is maximised.

A good example of this is our foray into the provision of services by our social enterprises to the aged and people with disabilities of our communities. This has been an excellent example of how different elements of our mission have been fused together to maximise community engagement and individual outcomes.

Our dedicated staff have been able to further develop and expand their skills to better respond to the needs of our participants. On behalf of the Board I thank them for their hard work, their loyalty and commitment and their patience and acceptance of change which is now an ongoing phenomena for us; as it is for all types of organisations and businesses.

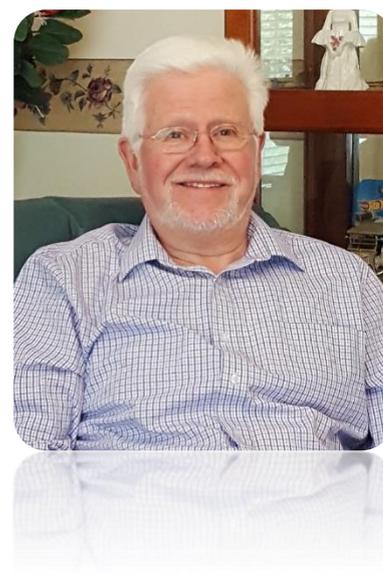
The stories you will read in this report are evidence of the positive outcomes achieved from just some of our successful programs. They focus on developing valuable skills such as teamwork, problem solving and resilience, using innovative models of learning that are based on and adapted to, their needs.

They also demonstrate the intent of our organisation over the last 12 months in capturing individuals at risk of remaining disadvantaged and providing them with the skills to achieve their goals and improve their circumstances, while feeling supported and nurtured along the way.

Our work is rewarding and while we still have some challenges ahead, I am immensely pleased with our progress and proud of our achievements.

Sydney Carr

Chairman of the Board – Penrith Skills for Jobs Inc



A blooming garden helps student blossom

Tom Gaston took part in a JobQuest program aimed at equipping him with the skills and abilities necessary to land him his ideal job as an apprentice carpenter.

He was one of 10 students who helped transform a community garden at the Hawkesbury campus of Western Sydney University. By the end of the ten week project, the garden was flourishing and so were the prospects of the keen gardeners who helped it bloom.

“Anything that is hands on for me is exciting,” 16 year old Tom said. “I love going to work every morning.”

The project was character building for the teen who had overcome adversity from a young age as Tom’s parents are deaf and he struggled to keep motivated at his Western Sydney school where he was in year 10.

But Tom said he looked forward to the days he could attend the Secret Garden where he tended to the plants and was able to try his hand at small timber projects like making a garden arbour.

It was also an opportunity to improve his communication and learning skills and build new skills that would prepare him for a vocation in carpentry.

Tom said he was not deterred by the early morning starts or the distance which he tackled either on public transport or by peddling his bike along the more than one hour route.

“I was a little nervous at first but I knew the course would be good for me,” Tom said. “There was one day I wasn’t feeling well but I was determined to go because I didn’t want to miss a day.”

“Every time I would go to the garden, there would be smiles all around from everyone. It made me feel better about myself.”

By the end of the course, Tom was so pleased with what he and the other nine students had achieved that he proudly led the guests who attended the graduation ceremony on a tour of the picturesque garden to show off their handy work.

So impressed with Tom’s attitude to work, TABMA (Timber and Building Materials Association) offered him an apprenticeship.

“School wasn’t for me, but this is really good. I’m working in a factory making frames and trusses. I love it,” Tom said.

“The program boosted my confidence and gave me the skills I needed to get to where I am today.”

Also pleased with Tom’s progress is his school careers and learning support teacher, Deborah.

“Tom was a really pleasant student but in class he was disengaged,” she said. “I’m really pleased he was able to establish some skills and achieve something wonderful.”



Nurturing positive skills in parents

Pennie overcame extreme anxiety to embrace a JobQuest program she credits for giving her a level of confidence she never expected.

In partnership with community organisation Janaya Family Development Services, the program was aimed at fostering positive parenting skills among its participants.

And that's just what it did for Pennie.

As well as a Certificate II in Business and a First Aid Certificate, Pennie also emerged with the skills to help her cope in situations she once found intimidating.

"I never could see myself entering a shop and introducing myself to the manager," Pennie said.

But that's exactly what she did in order to perform her part in a task that saw the group produce care packages for children about to enter foster care.

The participants aimed to make 10 packages filled with items like stationery, drink bottles and underwear but exceeded their own expectations to create 20.

"It was so nice to be able to do something like that for someone else," Pennie said. "I had to push myself every day and some days I was so overwhelmed. But I'm glad I did push through. Bagging the packages up was a great sense of achievement. I changed every week. I could feel my confidence grow knowing the others weren't judgemental."

Other participants created a recipe book filled with family friendly meal ideas for people on a budget.

The 10-week program taught invaluable communication and interaction skills that could be adapted in the home and in the workplace.

"Some of the fun parts was learning how to use a computer and send out a letter," Pennie said.

Jennie, a Learning Difficulties Disability Case Worker at Janaya, said Pennie experienced a "significant increase in her self-confidence. When she first started, you could see her struggling to engage and she felt very anxious. But now, while it is still difficult, she has learned strategies to work around that. Her confidence is what blew us away as well as the skills she learnt."



Graduation day for the participants with trainer Shauna and case worker Jennie [with their thank you gifts]

On the scent of success

A group of women are celebrating the success they made of a new venture making and selling soap.

They embraced a hands-on learning approach for a JobQuest retail and marketing project that taught them key aspects of running a business – from making a product, branding and packaging it and marketing their brand.

The five participants, aged from 18 to 24 from the Cessnock area, researched the ingredients needed to make their soaps, pricing, how to package the product and design a suitable logo. The end design was a hand representing each of the five participants.

They added to their business expertise to study profit and loss, customer service skills and learn about the psychology behind sales and competitive pricing.

“It was a course I enjoyed, the teachers treated us as equals. I learnt how to market soaps,” one student said.

“The teachers were great. I learnt how to make soaps. It was a well-structured course,” said another.

Over the course of three weeks, the women learnt core work skills like effective communication, how to present themselves in the workplace, how to work as part of a team, how to network with others such as local department stores and digital literacy skills.

They also learnt how to overcome obstacles encountered during a trial run making their soaps to build resilience and self-worth. After their first batch proved inferior, the participants problem solved and revised their recipe for a better result.

“It was a fun learning experience. I would do something like this again,” one student said.

The participants set up their soaps in a display at a local op shop, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), and the proceeds from their sales were returned to the store.

The students said the project succeeded in its aim to make their transition to work smoother with one saying: “I enjoyed the course. I learnt new things. I would do a course through JobQuest again.”



Norm embraces a new work chapter

Norman Cave concedes that if it wasn't for JobQuest, he'd likely be whittling the hours away at home doing very little.

Instead, the one-time foreman and football coach decided he would turn his casual role of doing odd jobs for a local real estate company into the real deal.

He enrolled as a mature age student and completed a Certificate of Registration course which has since turned into full time employment.

The course teaches the essentials needed to kick start a career in the property industry including the fundamentals to be able to list, sell, rent and manage properties.

"I was sick of being at home and not doing anything," Norm said.

"I was doing odd jobs for the real estate but I wanted to learn more," he said. "The Certificate of Registration allows me to do so much more like talking to the tenants and organising maintenance jobs."

Norm said he loves his new role as Property Officer with Bennett Realty and fills most days doing routine inspections.

"I found all of the course really interesting and it was easy to understand. If I hadn't done the course, I'd probably still be at home" he said.

"I've done different things in my working life until I went through a disability and was on the pension."

Rather than being idle, Norm embraced the opportunity to take part in the entry level real estate course that he said had proved life-changing.



Construction and hospitality all in a day's work for students

High school student Jack found that learning and fun can go hand-in-hand. The year 12 student said he enjoyed the "hands on and practical side of learning" that the program offered.

"I know what skills I'm using now and can talk about myself in a good way," Jack said. "I feel like it will be easier to get a job because I'm more confident and know what sort of things a boss looks for."

The construction of three possum houses was one component of the Foundation Skills Training course aimed at helping the year 12 participants improve their employability skills by developing their reading, writing, numeracy and communication skills.

"My favourite activity was following the possum house construction project," Jack said. "I had to read plans to build a possum house then I measured and cut wood, gluing and nailing it together."

The participants put the knowledge they gained to the test when they drafted a business model for hardware chain Bunnings, who after reading the brief, donated \$100 towards the purchase of materials.

They first assembled six cardboard models of their houses before transferring the design to timber to make the final product using a combination of hand and power tools. They then painted the houses to compliment the landscape.



The possum houses will be erected at Blackbutt Reserve, a native wildlife reserve near Newcastle, and another will be donated to Barkuma Neighbourhood Centre which assists the local Aboriginal community.

"I learnt how to work in a team, do a risk assessment, how to talk to customers and how to act in a workplace," Jack said.

Also as part of the program, participants took part in an intergenerational project run in conjunction with aged care facility Kurri Kurri Masonic Care. The students learnt how to take orders, plate up food and provide table service in a pop-up café at the home.

Jack said understanding how to communicate effectively was an invaluable part of the program.

"I liked the pop-up cafe and talking to the residents. That taught me how to speak to customers and how to take orders," he said.

"The way the class was run was really good with hands on stuff and we were able to have fun."

Jack said he was keen to put into practice the skills he learned and hasn't ruled out a trade related career.

Technology bridges the generation gap

Five students in years 9 and 10 from a Newcastle high school were selected to take part in the Books program at Newcastle's Wallsend Library in a bid to build their confidence and job readiness skills.

The program continues to prove that our youth and older people can learn great things from each other as the students assist older library users to navigate the challenges of using technology.

One of the library's digital services team provided the students with an introduction to workplace safety and the library's customer service expectations, as well as an insight into how to help customers navigate the technology and the digital collections. The training enabled them to support older library users by demonstrating to them the eBooks system and provide general help with using the technology.

"Our library customers, particularly seniors, appreciate the personalised attention they receive and respect the skills, knowledge and patience displayed by the students," he said.

The program was a successful example of intergenerational learning and gains were made by both parties involved. The older library visitors learnt to be more tech savvy while the millennials listed among the benefits they gained as increased self-esteem and confidence and improved communication skills.

"We welcome the opportunity to demonstrate that the library is not just a place to borrow books but provides opportunities for learning and using technology," a library team member said. "It's also great to have support from the students to demonstrate our digital services and answer questions when the library is busy."

This program has been a long running partnership between JobQuest and Newcastle Council. The 2013-2015 program received a Library Stars award. These awards showcase the successes of public libraries and the project was praised for showing innovation and building stronger communities.



Annual Compliance Report

JobQuest's operations are carried out within 4 quality frameworks which enable our customers to be assured that our services remain at the highest quality. In order to meet the required standards of operation, continuous improvement is embedded into everything we do. The 4 quality frameworks are:

- Work Health and Safety Management Systems AUS/NZ4801
- National Standards for Registered Training Organisations
- Aged Care Common Standards
- National Disability Services Standards

WORK HEALTH & SAFETY

A work health and safety surveillance audit was successfully completed on 21st August. The result was excellent with some areas still in need of minor improvements including:

- Document control; and
- Records keeping for some activities.



AUSTRALIAN SKILLS QUALITY AUTHORITY

A re-registration audit is due to be completed in 2018. Current focus for the RTO is external validation, professional development, internal auditing, record keeping systems and case based evidence of compliance in line with the new ASQA "student centred approach" based around the journey of the student with the RTO.

AGED CARE QUALITY AGENCY

Accreditation to enable delivery of the Commonwealth Home Support Program CHSP was successfully completed in April 2016. While systems will continue to remain in place to support the quality of services offered to aged customers and the accreditation will be reviewed in line with the requirements under the new aged care funding arrangements.

DISABILITY SERVICES STANDARDS

JobQuest is a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme NDIS provider and has in place systems to meet the Disability Services Standards [DSS]. We met the requirements for the DSS Third Party Verification process in 2015 and continue to provide quality services to our NDIS funded clients.

The new Quality Assurance and Safeguards Framework and Code of Conduct consultations were completed in April and June respectively but no further information has been made available on the roll out of the new certification process.

NDIS requirements around funding and invoicing for services is expected to be strengthened in the future as access to the scheme and the number of providers expands.



Community Partners

JobQuest would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the support of our partners who assist us every step of our way. For all the in kind support as well as funding and grants, we would like to thank:

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| 365Care | GPT - Charlestown Square | NSW State Debt Recovery Office |
| ABC Radio | Hawkesbury Skills Inc | Pacific Link Housing |
| Ability Options | Housing NSW | Path2Change - Wallsend |
| ADRA - Cessnock | Hunter Health England Health - John Hunter Hospital NICU | Penrith City Council |
| Anglican Parish of Telarah - Rutherford | Hunter New England Health - Belmont Hospital | Peppercorn Services Inc (Hawkesbury Leisure & Learning Centre) |
| Annecto | International Child Care College - Newcastle | Port Stephens Council Libraries - Tomaree Library |
| APM [Advance Personnel Management] | Joblink Plus - Cessnock and Kurri | Regis Aged Care - Port Stephens |
| Avid Travel | Junaya Family Support Services - Blacktown | RFBI Masonic Villages - Cessnock and Kurri |
| Blacktown Pistol Club | Juvenile Justice NSW | Ronald McDonald House - Newcastle |
| Break Thru People Solutions | Lake Macquarie City Council | School Industry Partnership |
| Broadspectrum | Living Care, Ashwood Residential Care and Green Hills Residential Care Services | Skilling and Employment – Jordan Springs and Ropes Crossing |
| Brotherhood of St Lawrence | Local Government Training Institute - Thornton | Sydney West Multicultural Services |
| Calvary Retirement Community - Cessnock | Milabah - Schools as Community Centre | The Hills Shire Council |
| Catholic Education Office | Mission Providence - Mt Druitt | The Mount Druitt Hub, Blacktown City Council |
| City of Parramatta Council | Museum of Contemporary Art [MCA] | The Parliament of New South Wales |
| Commonwealth Attorney General's Department | Narla Village - Belmont | The Place: Charlestown Community Centre |
| Commonwealth Department of Defence | Newcastle City Council | Training Services NSW, NSW Department of Industry |
| Commonwealth Department of Employment | Newcastle City Council Libraries - Wallsend Library | The Art Gallery of New South Wales |
| Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Border Protection | Newcastle Elderly Citizens Centre Inc. | The Field of Mars Environmental Education Centre |
| Commonwealth Department of Social Services | North West Disability Services, The Secret Garden & Nursery | Taronga Zoo |
| Community Migrant Resource Centre | Northcott | Uniting Care Australia |
| Compass Housing Services | NSW Department of Education | WICA (Windale Interagency & Community Alliance) |
| Corporate Partners | NSW Department of Family and Community Services | WISE Employment |
| EMPOWERability Inc | NSW Department of Health | Workskil - Cessnock |
| ESG [Employment Services Group] | NSW Department of Primary Industries | |
| Event Cinemas Kotara and Glendale | NSW Police Force | |
| Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre | | |
| Forsythes Training - Newcastle | | |

Special thanks to all our partnering high schools and public schools. Your dedication and resourcefulness is an inspiration both to our participants and our staff.

JobQuest also acknowledges the assistance from our peak bodies including Jobs Australia, Building Services Contractors Association Australia, Community Colleges Australia, National Safety Council of Australia, Waste Management Association of Australia, Aged and Community Services ACT & NSW and the Western Sydney Community Forum.

As member organisation, JobQuest continues to find their support invaluable.

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