

## Information Statement

### **Research Project: Women Trade Apprentices' Experiences and Wellbeing in Male-Dominated Workplaces: An Evaluation of Women Apprentice Experiences in Australia**

Document Version 4; dated 5 August 2024

You are invited to participate in the research project identified above which is being conducted by Dr Vivien McComb and Associate Professor Narelle Eather from the University of Newcastle.

#### ***Why is the research being done?***

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of women trade apprentices in relation to their experiences and wellbeing when completing a traditionally male-based trade in electrotechnology or mobile plant technology in a male-dominated industry. Study participants will be women apprentices completing a trade apprenticeship and leadership (training coordinators, area managers, and/or supervisors) with direct involvement in the apprenticeship program in the Hunter Valley mining and energy industries.

The aim of this study is to identify and explore training and development processes that support women trade apprentices in the mining and energy sector; and the training practices and programs provided in organisations that improve the retention and success of women trade apprentices at the individual and organisational level. A particular focus will be on women trade apprentices' wellbeing and how the principles of positive psychology can be applied to apprentice training programs for this cohort.

Results of this study will be used to inform and build on the area of training and development for women trade apprentices in typically male-dominated industries in relation to the most effective practices to support the development and wellbeing of women trade apprentices.

#### ***Who can participate in the research?***

Participants in this study will be women trade apprentices currently completing a trade qualification in a typically male-dominated mining and energy sector organisation.

#### ***What would you be asked to do?***

##### *Women Trade Apprentice Participants*

Women trade apprentices, if you agree to participate, will be asked to complete an online questionnaire via QuestionPro about your perspectives and experiences of support and development for your trade qualification in your organisation.

#### ***What choice do you have?***

Participation in this research is entirely your choice and will not impact on your working relationship with the organisation where you are currently completing your apprenticeship, or the trade college where you are undertaking your study. Only those who complete the questionnaire will be included in the project.

#### ***How much time will it take?***

##### *Women Trade Participants*

The time it will take for women trade participants to participate in this study will be a few minutes to read this information statement and 15 minutes to complete the online questionnaire via QuestionPro.

#### ***What are the risks and benefits of participating?***

If a participant has an emotional response to completing the participant questionnaire, the participant has the choice to not answer a particular question, or to stop participating in this study. If further support is needed, the participant will be directed to the free counselling service available through Lifeline, phone number 13 11 14.

There is potential organisational risk, as there could be adverse findings about women apprenticeship wellbeing, or training coordinator interview findings which shed negative light on the organisation.

### ***How will your privacy be protected?***

Any personal information provided by participants will be confidential to the researcher. The results of the study will be published in general terms and will not allow the identification of individuals.

Initial questionnaire response data will be securely stored on the QuestionPro server. Only the researchers listed on this application will have access to the data. For further information regarding storage of survey data you can visit: <https://www.questionpro.com/security/>

Questionnaire data: when data is extracted from the QuestionPro server it will be securely stored on Vivien McComb's password protected laptop on a secure OneDrive cloud service.

The data will be retained for at least 5 years by Vivien McComb on the password protected laptop on a secure OneDrive cloud service belonging to Vivien. No other persons other than the researchers will have access to the files and no person will be identifiable in the data files or published reports.

### ***How will the information collected be used?***

The results of the research will be reported and disseminated via national and international conferences and peer reviewed publications and to inform future practice in apprentice training programs.

### ***What do you need to do to participate?***

Please read this Information Statement and be sure you understand its contents before you participate in this study. If there is anything you do not understand, or you have questions, please contact the researcher.

If you would like to participate, please complete the questionnaire.

### ***Further information***

If you would like further information and/or a summary of the research findings, please contact Dr Vivien McComb – [vivien.mccomb@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:vivien.mccomb@newcastle.edu.au)



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Dr Vivien McComb

This project has been approved by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee, Approval No. H-2024-0149. Should you have concerns about your rights as a participant in this research, or you have a complaint about the manner in which the research is conducted, it may be given to the researcher, or, if an independent person is preferred, to the Human Research Ethics Officer, Research Services, NIER Precinct, The University of Newcastle, University Drive, Callaghan NSW 2308, Australia, telephone (02) 4921 6333, email [Human-Ethics@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:Human-Ethics@newcastle.edu.au).

