

Screen Printer	Australia
ANZSCO Code: 3921-12	November 2009
Labour market rating:	Shortage
Comment:	

Occupational demand

ABS 2006 Census data shows that approximately 1800 screen printers were employed in Australia, a decrease of 24 per cent over the five years to 2006. Recent ABS Labour Force Survey data show the number of binders, finishers and screen printers has decreased over recent years. Activity levels in the printing industry have also declined according to the ABS September 2009 quarter national accounts. This data shows a decrease of 15 per cent in economic growth in the printing industry over the year to September 2009. The DEEWR Skill Vacancies Index indicates a decline in vacancies for printing trades with a decrease of 35 per cent over the year to November 2009.

Occupational supply

Entry into the occupation is generally through the completion of a Certificate III in Printing and Graphic Arts as a four year apprenticeship. According to National Centre for Vocational Education Research data, course commencements fluctuated and averaged 48 per year in the five years to 2008. Course completions have also varied and averaged 23 per year over the same period. Department of Immigration and Citizenship net migration data show migration to Australia has had little impact on the supply of screen printers.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

A survey of employers who had recently advertised for screen printers was undertaken for this report. As vacancies were difficult to identify during the research period, some employers were cold canvassed despite not having recently advertised.

Nationally 61 per cent of vacancies were filled within four weeks of advertising. On average, employers received eight applicants per vacancy and considered one to be suitable. The majority of vacancies surveyed were replacement positions and most vacancies were filled within three weeks of advertising.

Most employers surveyed required trade qualified and experienced screen printers however, some employers did not require trade qualifications and were happy with extensive screen printing experience. The main reasons applicants were considered unsuitable were lack of qualifications and lack of experience. Almost 50 per cent of employers stated that whilst many unsuitable applicants had previous screen printing experience, this was not enough to secure positions.

The majority of employers contacted reported significant difficulties in finding trade qualified workers, and as a result many employers trained screen printers on the job. Employers also reported that screen printing is a dying trade with digital printing taking over much of the screen printing work. Approximately one quarter of employers stated that many newly qualified screen printers lacked skills on entry to the trade.

Labour market outlook

There is no indication that the labour market for screen printers will change significantly over the next six months.