

Australian vocational education and training statistics

# Completion and attrition rates for apprentices and trainees 2023

National Centre for Vocational Education Research



## Highlights

Individual completion rates after 4 years for apprenticeships and traineeships commencing in 2019 were:

- 54.8% for all occupations, down 1.0 percentage points from those commencing in 2018
- 54.1% for trade occupations, up 0.7 percentage points from those commencing in 2018
- 55.7% for non-trade occupations, down 2.5 percentage points from those commencing in 2018.

An individual may complete their training under more than one contract if they change employers or take a break from their training.

Contract completion rates after 4 years for apprenticeships and traineeships commencing in 2019 were:

- 47.7% for all occupations, down 1 percentage points from those commencing in 2018
- 42.9% for trade occupations, up 0.7 percentage points from those commencing in 2018
- 53% for non-trade occupations, down 2.6 percentage points from those commencing in 2018.

# Introduction

This publication presents contract and individual completion and attrition rates for apprentices and trainees, **four years after commencement**.

Apprentice and trainee completion and attrition rates are calculated by tracking the outcomes of individuals and contracts of training over time. Although most apprentices and trainees in trade occupations complete within 4 years and those in non-trade occupations within 3 years, completion rates are continuously updated as new data becomes available each year. To reflect this, NCVET publishes both completion rates four years after commencement and to date completion rates.

- Completion rates **4 years after commencement**: The most recent cohort with four years of available data is the 2019 commencing cohort. To allow for consistent comparisons with earlier cohorts, completion rates are measured at the same point in time, i.e. four years after commencement.
- Completion rates **to date**: To provide the most current completion rates, rates incorporate the latest available data, up to 2023.

Caution should be taken when comparing cohorts using to-date rates, as earlier cohorts will have had more time to complete than those that commenced more recently.

In this product, we report both individual and contract completion rates.

- **Contract completion rates** are calculated by tracking the outcomes of contracts of training over time
- **Individual completion rates** are derived from contract completion rates, adjusted by the average number of recommencements by occupation. This adjustment accounts for individuals who may not complete their apprenticeship with one employer but go on to complete it with another.

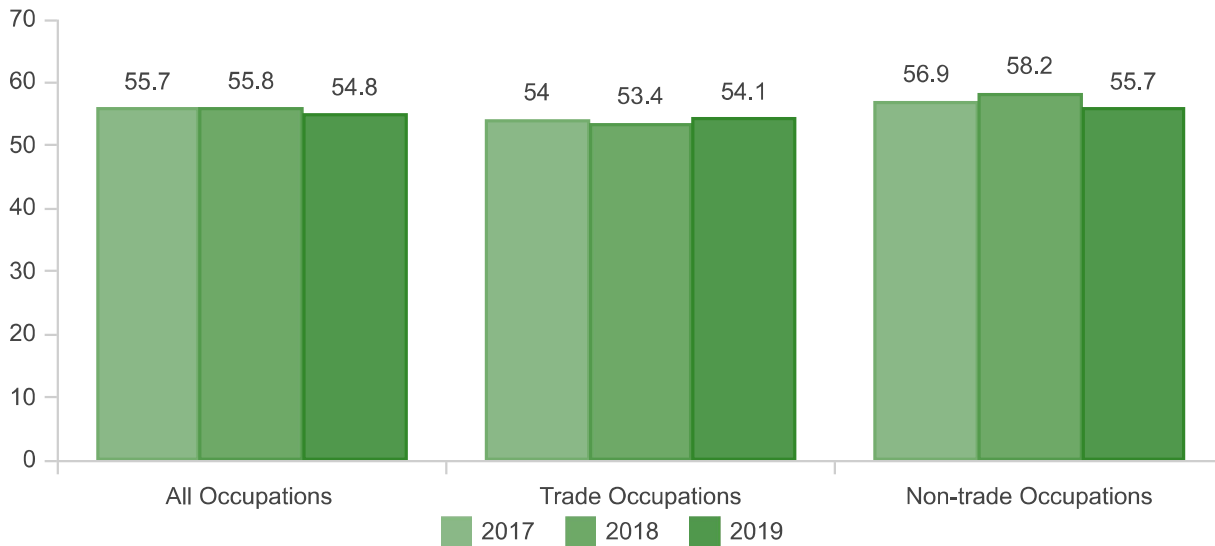
For contracts commencing more recently, we estimate the proportion of contracts commenced in a given year that will eventually be completed by applying a 'life tables' methodology. **Projected rates** assume that the patterns of contract completion and attrition observed in the data for past quarters approximate the patterns that will occur for the most recent quarters. If the patterns of completion and attrition change slowly overtime, then this approximation will be valid. Conversely, if the patterns of completion and attrition for the most recent quarters turn out to be noticeably different from those seen in the past, then the reliability of the projected rates will decrease as the discrepancy between the patterns of completions and attritions increases. For example, projected rates will likely be impacted by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and governments' economic responses. Further details on this methodology may be found at [Estimating apprentice and trainee completion and attrition rates using a 'life tables' approach \(ncver.edu.au\)](https://www.ncver.edu.au/estimating-apprentice-and-trainee-completion-and-attrition-rates-using-a-life-tables-approach)

## Individual completion rates

For apprenticeships and traineeships commencing in 2019, the individual completion rate after 4 years was:

- 54.8% for all occupations (down 1.0 percentage points from those commencing in 2018)
- 54.1% for trade occupations (up 0.7 percentage points from those commencing in 2018)
- 55.7% for non-trade occupations (down 2.5 percentage points from those commencing in 2018).

Figure 1 Individual completion rates (after 4 years) for contracts commencing in 2017 to 2019 (%) - Australia

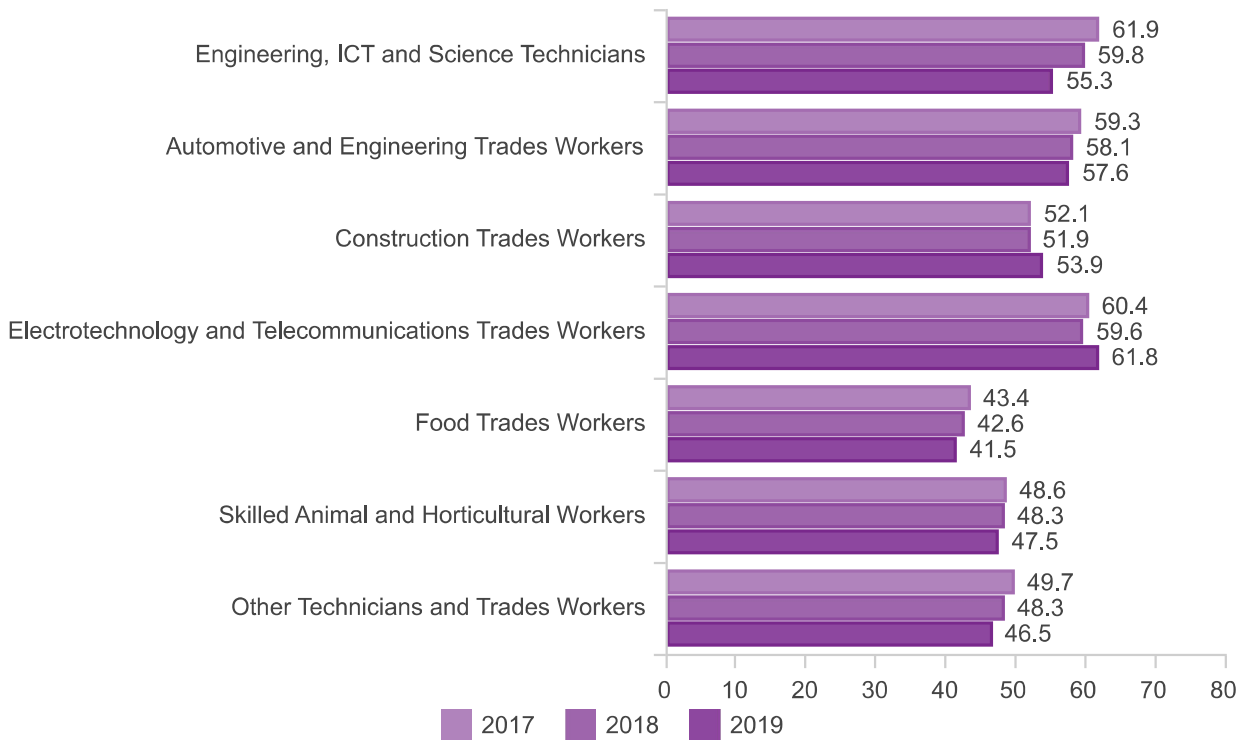


**Note:** Estimates of contract completion and attrition rates may have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for trade occupations which decreased for contracts commencing in 2018 and 2019. Contributing to the decline was an increase in the proportion of contracts with a status of 'continuing or outcome unknown'.

For trade apprenticeships and traineeships commencing in 2019, the highest individual completion rates (after 4 years) by occupation were:

- Electrotechnology and Telecommunications Trades Workers at 61.8% (up 2.2 percentage points from those commencing in 2018)
- Automotive and Engineering Trades Workers at 57.6% (down 0.5 percentage points from those commencing in 2018).

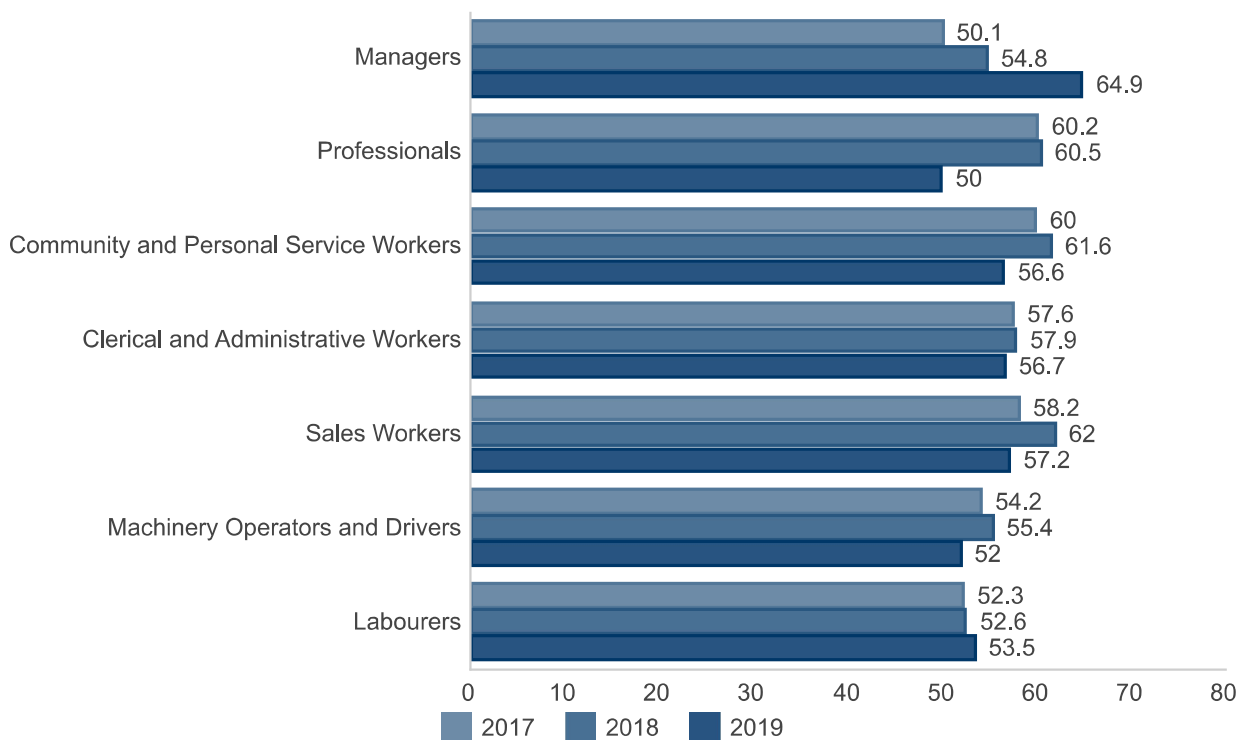
**Figure 2 Individual completion rates (after 4 years) of trade occupations for contracts commencing in 2017 to 2019 (%) - Australia**



For non-trade apprenticeships and traineeships commencing in 2019, the highest individual completion rates (after 4 years) by occupation were:

- Managers at 64.9% (up 10.1 percentage points from those commencing from 2018)
- Sales Workers at 57.2% (down 4.8 percentage points from those commencing from 2018).

**Figure 3 Individual completion rates (after 4 years) of non-trade occupations for contracts commencing in 2017 to 2019 (%) - Australia**

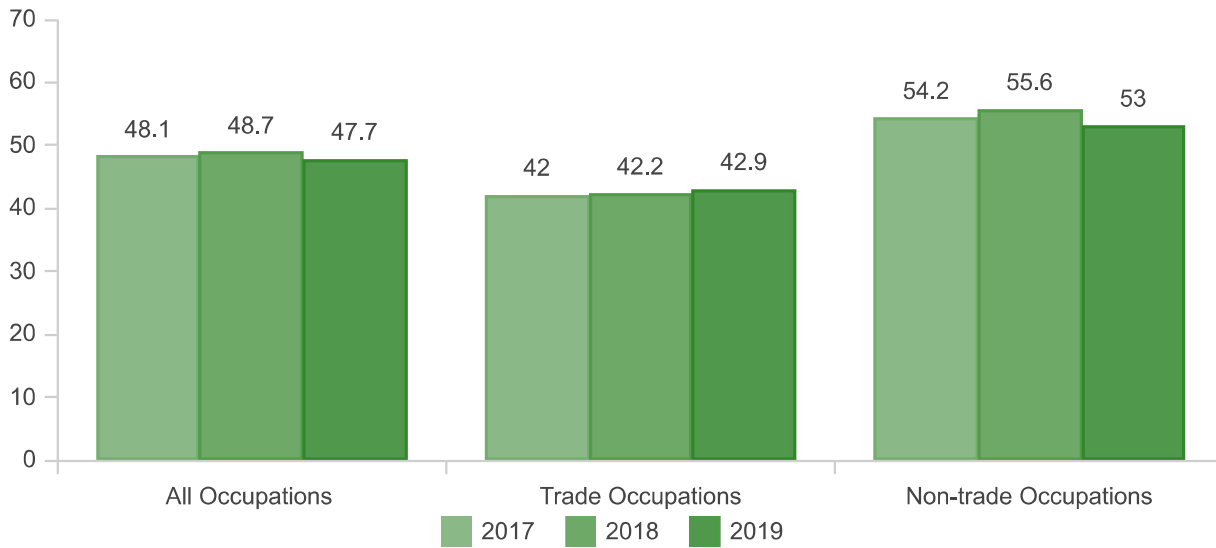


## Contract completion rates

Contract completion rates (after 4 years) for apprentices and trainees commencing in 2019 were:

- 47.7% for all occupations, down 1 percentage from 2018
- 42.9% for trade occupations, up 0.7 percentage from 2018
- 53% for non-trade occupations, down 2.6 percentage from 2018.

Figure 4 Contract completion rates (after 4 years) for contracts commencing in 2017 to 2019 (%) - Australia



**Note:** Estimates of contract completion and attrition rates may have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for trade occupations which decreased for contracts commencing in 2018 and 2019. Contributing to the decline was an increase in the proportion of contracts with a status of 'continuing or outcome unknown'.

More information on the contract completion rates, including completion rates to date, is available in *Completion and attrition rates for apprentices and trainees 2023: data tables - to date*:

<https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/data/all-data/completion-and-attrition-rates-for-apprentices-and-trainees-2023-data-tables>

## Difference between individual and contract completion rates

Nationally, the difference between individual and contract completion rates is greater in trade occupations (11.2 percentage point difference for 2019 commencements) than in non-trade occupations (2.7 percentage point difference). This indicates that contract recommencements and movement between employers is higher in the trades than in non-trade apprenticeships and traineeships.

The largest adjustment factors (indicating the highest levels of recommencements and movement between employers) were for trade apprenticeships and traineeships.

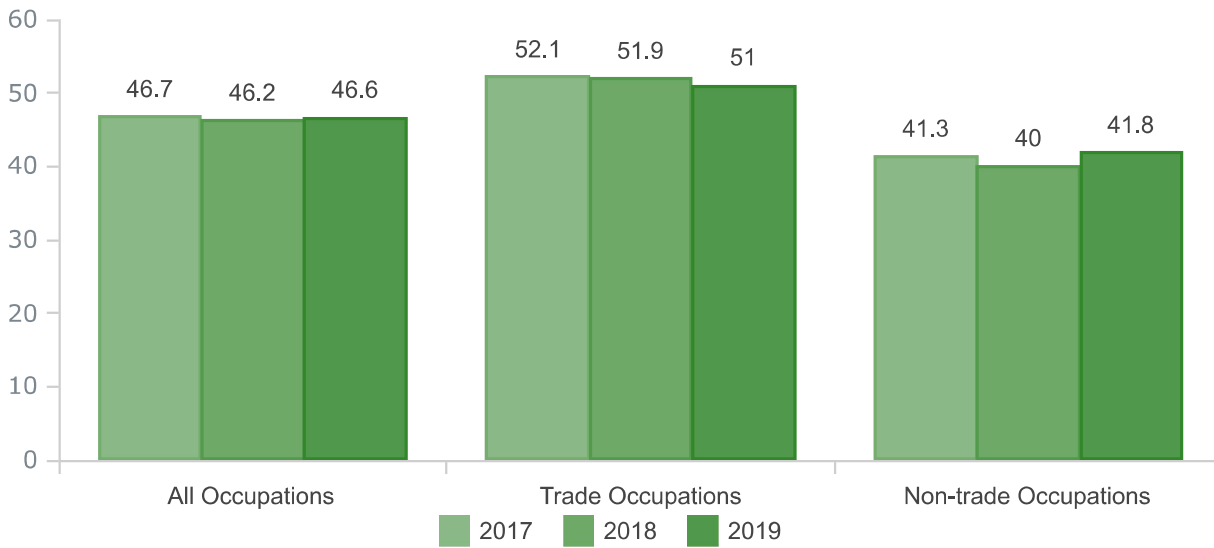
- the individual completion rate for Hairdressers commencing in 2019 was 45.2% compared with a contract completion rate of 31.2% (14 percentage point difference)
- the individual completion rate for Construction trades workers commencing in 2019 was 53.9% compared with a contract completion rate of 39.7%
- the individual completion rate for Electrotechnology and telecommunications trades workers commencing in 2019 was 61.8% compared with a contract completion rate of 47.7%

For more information on adjustment factors refer to *Completion and attrition rates for apprentices and trainees 2023: data tables - to date*: <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/data/all-data/completion-and-attrition-rates-for-apprentices-and-trainees-2023-data-tables>

## Contract attrition rates

The attrition rate after 4 years for contracts commencing in 2019 was 46.6%, 0.4 percentage points increase from 2018.

Figure 5 Contract attrition rates (after 4 years), for contracts commencing in 2017 to 2019 (%) - Australia



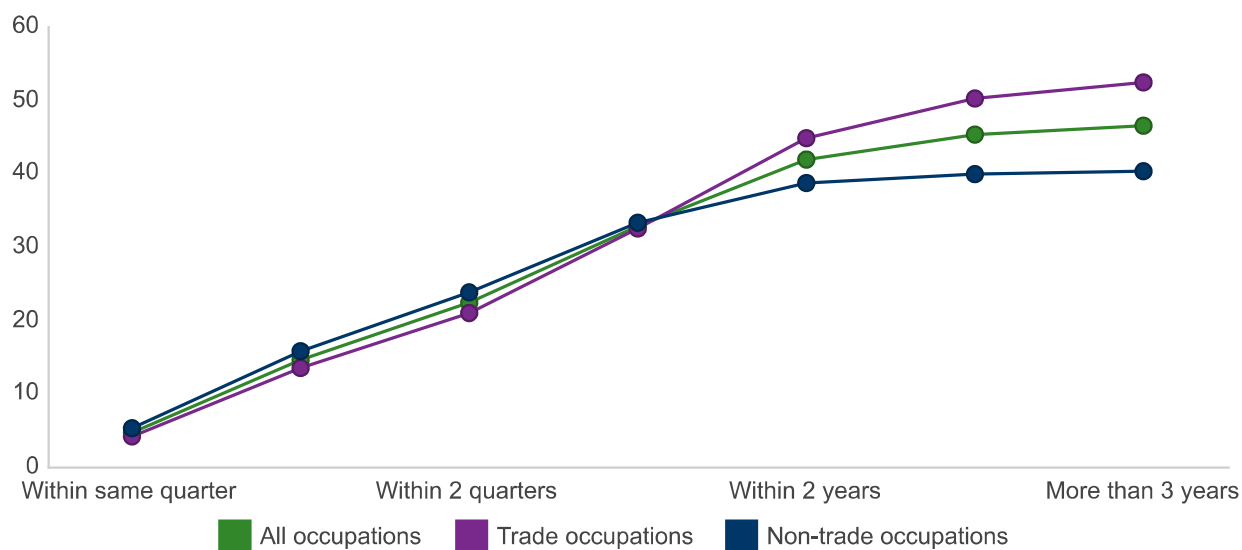
**Note:** Estimates of contract completion and attrition rates may have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for trade occupations which decreased for contracts commencing in 2018 and 2019. Contributing to the decline was an increase in the proportion of contracts with a status of 'continuing or outcome unknown'.

## Contract attrition rates for those commencing in 2018

For contracts commencing in any given year, reliable attrition rates cannot be calculated until enough time has elapsed for most of those contracts to report an outcome. Some contracts, especially in the trade occupations, can be for periods of four or more years. In addition, there is a time delay in reporting contract outcomes to the national collection. Therefore, 2018 is reported as a comparison year for the attrition rates graph because the time elapsed since commencements has been long enough to enable reliable estimation of attrition rates.

Of the apprentice and trainee contracts that commenced in 2018, 32.7% of were cancelled or withdrawn within the first year.

Figure 6 Contract attrition rates for contracts commencing in 2018 (%) - Australia



More information on the contract attrition rates is available in *Completion and attrition rates for apprentices and trainees 2023: data tables - to date*: <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/data/all-data/completion-and-attrition-rates-for-apprentices-and-trainees-2023-data-tables>

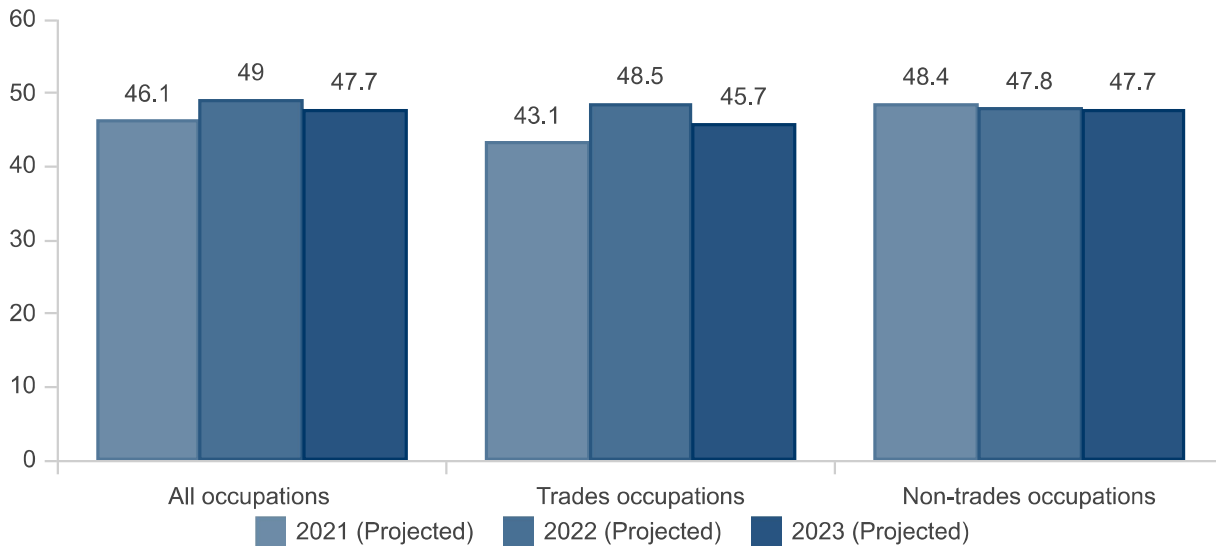


## Projected completion rates

The completion rate for apprentice and trainee contracts that commenced in the December quarter 2023 is projected to be:

- 47.7% for all occupations
- 45.7% for trades
- 47.7% for non-trades.

Figure 7 Projected contract completion rates, for contracts commencing in 2021 to 2023 (%) – Australia



NOTE: Estimates of contract completion and attrition rates may have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for trade occupations which decreased for contracts commencing in 2018 and 2019. Contributing to the decline was an increase in the proportion of contracts with a status of 'continuing or outcome unknown'.

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