

# NATIONAL SUPERVISION GUIDELINE FOR GAS TRAINEESHIPS AND APPRENTICESHIPS

Developed By	Energy Skills Australia
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# Disclaimer

This National Supervision Guideline does not in any way replace any Commonwealth, State or Territory legislative and/or regulatory requirements and does not override any duty of care responsibilities, codes of practice and other relevant codes or regulations pertaining to the supervision of trainees/apprentices.

Mandatory requirements may vary between States and Territories, and in different worksite situations. Wherever practical, this document has incorporated elements of mandatory requirements that are common to most jurisdictions but users should familiarise themselves to specific requirements that may apply to them.

This National Supervision Guideline has been produced by Energy Skills Australia, the industry declared Industry Skills Council for the Electrotechnology, Electricity Supply, Generation and Gas Transmission sectors.

Established in 1995, Energy Skills Australia is an independent, not for profit, bipartite company committed to supporting high quality training and workforce development within the energy industries, refer our [website](#) for more information.

## The Purpose of the Guideline

This National Supervision Guideline has been produced as advisory information for employers, employees, trainees, apprentices training providers, regulators and other industry stakeholders involved in the training of gas trainees and apprentices.

This information has been developed by Energy Skills Australia through extensive consultations with key industry stakeholders.

Traineeships/Apprenticeships utilise a combination of on-the-job and off-the-job training to develop the full range of competencies required to successfully complete the traineeship/apprenticeship.

Supervision of trainees/apprentices at work fulfils several purposes:

- Safety – supervision is a means of mitigating risk while the trainee/apprentice is developing competency in an industry with significant hazards and potentially severe consequences in the event of an incident occurring
- Quality – supervision contributes to ensuring the quality of trainee/apprentice work outputs are at an acceptable enterprise standard

- Learning support – supervision contributes significantly to the learning experience of the trainee/apprentice, especially to their ability to apply their knowledge and skills in varied circumstances

The type of supervision that is appropriate will vary depending on the work involved and the current competency level of the trainee/apprentice. It assists trainees/apprentices to learn good practice early on, supports them as they hone skills, and allows them to develop the confidence to step into their trade safely and effectively at the conclusion of the traineeship/apprenticeship.

This National Supervision Guideline presents a model of best practice supervision and suggested safe work practice for Supervisors responsible for supervising trainees/apprentices during their period of competency development. Importantly, it is hoped that in publishing this National Supervision Guideline, more sound supervision and safe work practices will emerge, leading to reductions in danger to life, property and the development of a quality workforce for the industry.

This National Supervision Guideline also augments the “*National Code of Good Practice for New Apprenticeships*” developed by the Commonwealth Government.

It has been developed to assist both parties (employers and new trainees/apprentices) entering into a “Training Contract/Contract of Training” with a clear understanding of each other’s obligations and expectations. A copy of the code is available from the Australian Apprenticeships [website](#).

This document will be amended from time to time to take account of changes in line with legislation, regulations, standards, technology, and/or key stakeholder views. Feedback on suggested changes is welcomed and should be directed to Energy Skills Australia in the first instance via [office@e-oz.com.au](mailto:office@e-oz.com.au).

***This Document sets the base requirements for supervision of trainees and apprentices working in the gas industry and does not mandate any additional enterprise controls put in place to supervise trainees and apprentices working in the gas industry.***

## Scope

This National Supervision Guideline applies to trainees/apprentices training under the Gas Training Package (UEG) or its predecessor or successor Training Packages.

It covers a number of Gas Industry traineeships and apprenticeships, primarily though it covers persons undertaking training in:

- Certificate II in Gas Supply Industry Operation
- Certificate III in Gas Supply Industry Operations

# Definition of Terms

The definitions below are provided to aid understanding of phrases used throughout this document.

## **Competent Assistant:**

- (a) is appropriately skilled to at least the same level to assist in performing gas work; and
- (b) is appropriately skilled to at least the same level to rescue and provide resuscitation to a person who has stopped breathing or is unconscious because of an incident; and
- (c) has displayed an acceptable knowledge for the type of work to be performed of life saving skills (typically rescue and resuscitation) as well as those required for the work being performed to the satisfaction of the employer; and
- (d) is appropriately skilled to at least the same level to rescue and/or provide CPR first aid to a person who has sustained an injury as a result of an accident caused by an incident; and
- (e) is skilled to at least the same level and in the sole task of observing the work movements of others in a hazardous environment and situation and, is competent in the skill being observed.

## **Complexity**

Means carrying out complex work in a gas industry environment. This work could include working on live infrastructure, coordinating work and conducting isolation procedures including organising work permits, installing and maintaining flow control devices and conducting first on site emergency response procedures.

## **Contract of Training**

A contract of training is an agreement entered into by an apprentice and an employer for an agreed period of time (typically 36 months). It will be in a form recognised by State, Territory and Commonwealth governments. The purpose of the contract is to develop the apprentice to become a fully qualified and competent tradesperson.

The contract of training imposes obligations on both the apprentice and the employer. Those obligations include obligations to provide supervision and to provide a range of work for the apprentice to properly acquire the required competencies.

The contract of training will require a Training Plan to be negotiated with a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). The training plan will detail the off-the-job component of the apprentice's training.

In some jurisdictions a contract of training may be also called a training contract.

## High Risk Work

High Risk work is defined under WHS / OHS legislation and regulations. It includes but is not limited to working at heights and working in confined spaces.

High risk work may impose additional supervision requirements.

## Live Work

Live Work refers to work on networks that contain gas. That is, existing infrastructure as opposed to infrastructure being laid on a Greenfield site. There is a general requirement that such work should not be performed without due regard for any prevailing legal requirement, standards, or codes of practice. Reference for all gas work, live or dead, should be made to the relevant Australian Standards:

- ASNZS 4645.2:2018 – Gas distribution networks – steel pipe systems
- AS 2885.0:2018 – Pipelines – Gas and Liquid Petroleum – general requirements
- ASNZS 4645.3:2018 – Gas distribution network – plastics pipe systems
- ASNZS 4645.1:2018 – Gas distribution networks – network management

## Range of work

This may also be referred to as “Range of Conditions”.

It is expected that an apprentice will have the opportunity to undertake work across a broad range of equipment, application and task types in order to develop the well-rounded competence of a tradesperson.

It is recognised that particular enterprises may specialise in an industry segment and their apprentices may develop specific competencies relevant to that segment, but this cannot be at the expense of core trade competencies.

Note that minimum expectations of a range of work can be imposed by regulators and by Competency Standard Units within a training plan.

## Standard of work

All gas industry work carried out must ensure compliance with ASNZS 4645.2:2018, AS 2885.0:2018, ASNZS 4645.3:2018 and ASNZS 4645.1:2018.

## Supervision of trainees and apprentices

Supervision means the level and pattern of control exercised over a trainee or apprentice when allocating work to be performed.

## Supervisor

Supervisor means a person with related technical competence who is charged with the responsibility of assisting, whether directly or indirectly, a Trainee or an Apprentice

registered under a “*Training Agreement/Contract of Training*” in their competency development. Supervisors may also be crew leaders or team leaders.

### **Testing for System integrity and operability whilst commissioned**

For the purposes of this Guideline *Testing for System integrity* refers to work that relates to **testing** installations, equipment or articles, that are commissioned and at the following pressure ranges:

- Low (Distribution);
- Medium (Distribution);
- High (Distribution); and
- Transmission ( higher than 1050Kpa).

### **Trainee/Apprentice**

A person in training undertaking an Apprenticeship under a “Training Contract”/“Contract of Training” using the UEG training package or its predecessor or successor Training Package.

It can also apply, in context, to any person in training who is involved in workplace activities as a part of that training. This could include trainees undertaking Certificate II & III qualifications or existing tradespersons undertaking Skill Sets or higher qualifications such as Diplomas.

### **Training Contract**

See Contract of Training.

### **Training Plan**

A Training Plan is an agreement between an apprentice, employer and a chosen Registered Training Organisation. It details the Qualification the apprentice will undertake, the Competency Standard Units making up that qualification, and other supporting information.

## **Background to Supervision**

Entry into Gas industry vocations is typically through State/Territory approved Traineeships or Apprenticeships. Gas Industry Trainee/apprentices generally take one to three years to complete and utilise an on-and-off-the-job training regime to develop a trainee’s full range of competencies.

The appropriate level of supervision that should be applied to a trainee/apprentice during the on-the-job component should be applied with respect to:

- The welfare of the apprentice in terms of WHS/OHS;

- The necessity for completed work to comply with minimum standards;
- The learning of new aspects of competency;
- The practicing of skills and exercising of knowledge to improve quality and efficiency of work;
- The application of skills and knowledge to a representative range of work; and
- Any mandatory requirements imposed by legislation, regulation or codes of practice.

Supervision requirements need to be considered at the time that the allocation of work to the trainee/apprentice is being planned.

The tapering pattern of supervision, (progressing from direct through general to broad supervision), is a proven model in developing competence. Progression through the supervision pattern should be based on an assessment of the technical and safety requirements of the work to be conducted, as well as the apprentice's current experience, proven capability and competency achieved

Although this Guideline includes nominal timeframes, these are for indicative purposes only and should not be used as a rule for each individual.

At any given time during the apprenticeship, the apprentice is likely to be working under different levels of supervision for different tasks.

## Levels of Supervision

Supervision means the level and pattern of control exercised over an trainee/apprentice when allocating work to be performed or undertaking that work.

There are three forms of supervision used in relation to this National Supervision Guideline. They recognise the need to monitor closely and provide high levels of support when the apprentice undertakes new or unfamiliar work with reductions in monitoring and support as the apprentice becomes competent.

### Direct Supervision

Direct supervision means the personal supervision of a worker – trainee/apprentice, at all times, on a direct and constant basis, within visual contact and/or earshot (audible range). Constant basis refers to the continuous supervision of tasks' being performed for the first time and until skill is demonstrated for the complexity of the task and work environment.

Direct supervision is normally appropriate where:

- The apprentice is new to the task or has not yet demonstrated a consistent ability to perform the task to a minimum standard;



- The task contains variations to basic work that are new to the apprentice;
- The formally assessed hazards and risks related to the task indicate direct supervision is appropriate;
- The apprentice has not yet completed off-the-job training that supports competent performance of the task; or
- There is a reasonable chance for unplanned events that may be beyond the apprentice's current ability to manage.

## General Supervision

General supervision means the trainee/apprentice does not require constant attendance of the skilled Gas industry supervisor but requires personal contact with a Gas industry worker on a recurrent (periodic) basis when working on Gas industry infrastructure or equipment.

Periodic supervision means being under instruction and direction for tasks being performed.

General supervision is normally appropriate where:

- The apprentice has previously demonstrated their ability to perform the task safely and to minimum standards without need for constant intervention;
- The apprentice has demonstrated an understanding of any hazards and risks involved with the task and an ability to manage those risks appropriately;
- The apprentice clearly understands when and how to seek assistance and support;
- The formally assessed hazards and risks related to the task indicate general supervision is appropriate;
- The apprentice has an appropriate level of knowledge and practical skill from either or both on-the-job or off-the-job learning; and
- The apprentice has previously demonstrated an ability to manage (or seek assistance with) reasonably predictable unplanned events.

## Broad Supervision

Broad supervision means the apprentice/trainee does not require constant supervision but requires personal contact with a skilled Gas industry worker on at least a regular/occasional basis when working on Gas industry infrastructure or equipment. Occasional supervision means being under instruction and direction with checks being carried out on completion of multi-tasks.

Broad supervision may be appropriate where:

- The trainee/apprentice has previously demonstrated their ability to perform the task safely and to acceptable standards without need for supervisor intervention;
- The trainee/apprentice has demonstrated an understanding of any hazards and risks involved with the task and an ability to manage those risks appropriately;
- The trainee/apprentice has previously demonstrated their ability to assess and monitor hazards and risks involved with the task;
- The trainee/apprentice clearly understands when and how to seek assistance and support;
- The formally assessed hazards and risks related to the task indicate broad supervision is appropriate;
- The trainee/apprentice has a significant level of knowledge and practical skill from both on-the-job and off-the-job learning; and
- The trainee/apprentice has previously demonstrated an ability to manage (or seek assistance with) unplanned events that may occur.

Given that when an apprentice completes their training and becomes a tradesperson, they are expected to be able to work un-supervised, it is important that they should be able to work under broad supervision with minimal support by the time they near the end of the apprenticeship.

Regulatory restrictions to broad supervision may exist in some circumstances. In such cases where general or even direct supervision may be mandated, it is still important that the apprentice develops the competency to perform the work without intervention by the supervisor before the end of the apprenticeship in order for them to be a safe and reliable tradesperson.

## Selecting a level of Supervision

The level of supervision that is appropriate should be in context with the tasks to be performed, the environment in which the tasks are to be performed and the current competence of the trainee/apprentice who is to perform the tasks.

The following should be considered:

- Requirements of any legislation, regulations, duty of care responsibilities, or codes of practice,
- The employer's and skilled Gas industry worker supervisor's assessment of the apprentice's ability to perform the tasks, including;
  - Past experience doing the same and similar work,

- The quality of the work and compliance with good work practices on past occasions,
- The level of support from required in doing the work on past occasions, and
- Supervision guideline tables, refer pages 12-13, provide a pattern of supervision considered appropriate for typical application.

## Employer and Supervisor Support of Training

Employers are responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure that an trainee/apprentice work activities during the term of their traineeship/apprenticeship are such that they experience a suitable mix of work activities relating to the competencies associated with their training program.

Supervisors should have the appropriate and full range of technical competencies for given work as well as an understanding of supervision related to trainees/apprentices, such that they are familiar with the level of supervision that should be applied for the given work and how this should be varied dependent upon the knowledge, skill, and experience of the trainee/apprentice.

During the course of a traineeship/apprenticeship, it is important that the trainee/apprentice:

- Gains experience with all the required competencies
- Gains experience with a representative *range of conditions, consistently* and to *requirements* in the industry
- Has the opportunity to start competence development under direct supervision then progress to general and finally to broad supervision as proven competency develops.

The supervisor role is also critical to the training outcome. The trainee/apprentice needs the supervisor to:

- Help the trainee/apprentice minimise any negative outcomes, especially in the earlier stages of competency development,
- Help the trainee/apprentice interpret and assimilate new information and contexts,
- Provide opportunities to demonstrate capabilities in a safe manner, and
- To assist the trainee/apprentice with their obligation to record workplace experience by verifying their workplace records (profile or work log records).

## Trainee/Apprentice Support of Training

The trainee/apprentice is required to be proactive with their own training. This includes:

- Working safely and to the best of their ability,
- Asking appropriate questions when unsure of facts or requirements,
- Respecting the contribution being made by employer and supervisors,
- Diligently monitoring their own progress and documenting their workplace experience (profile or work log records in the form required by their RTO / regulators).

## Regulator Requirements

As previously stated, nothing in this National Supervision Guideline should be construed as an indication that any regulatory requirement set out in Acts, Regulations, Australian Standards, or Codes of Practice can be ignored or avoided.

Specific regulatory requirements may vary across different States and Territories and across different industries and trades.

It is a common requirement of Gas regulatory authorities in each State/Territory that Gas industry work is performed in accordance with the respective regulations, codes of practice and Australian Standards. A person carrying out unsupervised Gas industry work should be appropriately qualified or experienced. With the relevant qualifications and/or experience, a person may carry out a range of work without supervision. Trainees and apprentices however, provided they are engaged under a “*Contract of Training*” and are appropriately supervised are generally permitted to perform relevant Gas industry work.

**The supervising Gas industry worker is obligated in taking all reasonable steps to ensure that all Gas industry work is checked, tested and complies with appropriate Acts, Regulations, Codes of Practice, and Australian Standards.**

Employers of Gas industry workers and Gas industry workers themselves, (which includes trainees and apprentices), must be aware of, and comply with the requirements of any local State/Territory Gas industry Act, local supply authority requirements, Common Law requirements (duty of care), Codes of practice, permit systems, and/or any other relevant code or regulation. Information regarding applicable requirements should, in the first instance, be directed to such bodies.

# Typical Patterns of Supervision

Note: that the following tables indicate typical supervision patterns for trainees and apprentices over time but the information in the table should not be used in place of regulatory requirements where these may apply or in place of proper assessment of the apprentice's ability to perform the work. the type of works in the following tables are an example only

**TABLE 1: Certificate II in Utilities Industry Operations**

<b>Working on Gas Network Infrastructure/Facilities and Equipment for Distribution, Transmission and LPG</b>		
<b>Type of Work</b>	<b>Apprentice/Trainee Typical Trainee/Apprentice Stage</b>	<b>Supervision Required</b>
Installation of new services/mains	One Two Three	Direct General Broad
Disconnect /Rreconnect small capacity gas meters	One Two Three	Direct Direct/General General/Broad
Minor maintenance to mains/services	One Two Three	Direct Direct/General General/Broad
Conducting Systems Operations Activities	One Two Three	Direct General Broad
Carrying out loading, unloading of gas cylinders and loading of gas tankers	One Two Three	Direct General Broad

Over a 12 month nominal traineeship stage one is 1-4 months; stage two 5-8 months; stage three is 9-12 months.

**Table 2: Certificate III in Gas Industry Operations**

<b>Working on Gas Network Infrastructure/Facilities and Equipment for Distribution, Transmission and LPG</b>		
<b>Type of Work</b>	<b>Apprentice/Trainee Typical Trainee/Apprentice Stage</b>	<b>Supervision Required</b>
Commissioning, decommissioning and isolation of mains/services	One Two Three Four	Direct Direct/General General Broad
Maintaining and performing alterations to mains/services	One Two Three Four	Direct Direct/General General Broad
Conducting Systems Operations Activities /Reconnect small capacity gas meters	One Two Three Four	Direct Direct/General General Broad
Transmission Pipeline Operations	One Two Three Four	Direct Direct/General General Broad
Cathodic Protection operations	One Two Three Four	Direct Direct/General General Broad
Filling/refurbishing LPG cylinders	One Two Three Four	Direct Direct/General General Broad
Processing LPG and performing minor maintenance/alterations to LPG facilities and equipment	One Two Three Four	Direct Direct/General General Broad

Over a 24 month nominal traineeship/apprenticeship stage one is 1-6 months; stage two 7-12 months; stage three is 13-18 months, stage 4 is 19-24 months.

In some states of Australia an apprenticeship in Gas industry Operations has a nominal duration of 36 months,  
 Stage 1 - 1 – 6 months  
 Stage 2 - 7 – 12 months  
 Stage 3 - 13 – 24 months  
 Stage 4 - 25 – 36 months

# Special Supervision Provisions

The following provisions are suggested in relation to specific high risk work activities.

## Testing for System integrity and operability whilst commissioned

Testing for system integrity should not be undertaken by trainees, but where it is absolutely necessary, it must be undertaken under the direct supervision of a skilled person. All such work should always include:

- compliance with any legislation, regulation(s), standard(s) or code(s) of practice
- the establishment and use of safe systems of work, including safe work practices<sup>1</sup>
- the development and use of a written risk assessment, and Job Safety Analysis (JSA)
- use of appropriate tools and equipment, and
- work processes are in place to assure safety of the installation, personnel, and property.

## Working on live gas infrastructure

Trainees/apprentices in their training program will work with live gas infrastructure subject to skilled, direct supervision. This work will be carried out in accordance with the relevant

Australian Standards which include the following:

- ASNZS 4645.2:2018 – Gas distribution networks – steel pipe systems
- AS 2885.0:2018 – Pipelines – Gas and Liquid Petroleum – general requirements
- ASNZS 4645.3:2018 – Gas distribution network – plastics pipe systems
- ASNZS 4645.1:2018 – Gas distribution networks – network management

***With respect to Gas industry work, the respective supervising worker is obligated in taking all reasonable steps to ensure that all Gas industry work is checked and tested and complies with the appropriate Acts, Regulations, Codes of Practice, and Australian Standards.***

The following provisions are suggested in relation to specific high risk work activities.

Under no circumstances should an apprentice assist or act as a Safety Observer for a live HV work party.

## Competent Assistant

Trainees/apprentices who are new entrants into the industry and who have not acquired relevant skills and knowledge are not to be used as competent assistants in their initial period of training as per Commonwealth, State or Territory legislative or regulatory

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<sup>1</sup> Company Standard Operating Procedures, Safety Cases, Established Procedures and Codes of Practices may also be in force covering this area. Advice should be sought from Gas industry Companies and other relevant authorities (eg Regulators) when performing this work.

requirements. Thereafter, they may be appropriately utilised as a competent assistant, but only if they have been suitably trained and have attained an adequate and equivalent level of knowledge and skill as required by the work to be performed and any legislation and/or prevailing industry guideline/s.

## School based apprenticeships

The typical patterns of supervision assume a full time apprenticeship. School based apprenticeships are not full time and so the columns relating to “Time served” should be read as relating to the period spent doing electrical apprentice specific training (on-the-job with the employer and undertaking electrical qualification training at the RTO).

*For example: A school based apprentice doing 80 days of paid work over a year with 20 days of RTO electrical training has the equivalent of 20 weeks of experience in a year compared to a full time apprentice with a nominal 45 weeks (allowing for leave) per year. Further, allowance must be given to the school based apprentices potential slower acquisition of competency due to the fact that they are not in the electrical work environment on a daily basis. On this basis, this example apprentice could take up to 18 months to reach the same point as an equivalent full time apprentice at the end of 6 months.*

Specific considerations and judgements will be required for each school based apprenticeship case.