



Fibrous Plasterer ANZSCO 3332-11

New South Wales September 2018

Current labour market rating: Shortage

Previous labour market rating (September 2017): Shortage

Comments

There is a shortage of fibrous plasterers in metropolitan and regional NSW. Employers were generally unable to fill vacancies in metropolitan and regional NSW.

Survey results¹

- The Department of Jobs and Small Business surveyed employers who had recently advertised for fibrous plasterers in the following areas: commercial and residential construction and maintenance sectors.

Employer Requirements

- In general, employers sought the following in applicants:
 - Experience in plastering where a minimum of two years' experience was required, with some employers requiring more.
 - Some employers required specific industry experience, for example in domestic, or fire protection plastering.
 - Employers also sought specific technical skills, however, some employers were willing to train suitable applicants.

Vacancies filled

- Across NSW, 11 per cent of vacancies were filled within the survey period compared with 30 per cent in September 2017.
- Employers who were unable to fill their vacancies planned to fill their vacancies through re-advertising or through word-of-mouth.
- Some employers reported being more selective in the work they took on due to the limited number of staff available.

Applicants per vacancy

- Across NSW, there was an average of 3.3 applicants per vacancy of whom an average of 0.1 applicants were considered suitable by employers.
- By comparison, in 2017 there was an average of 4.5 applicants per vacancy of whom an average of 0.4 applicants were considered suitable by employers.

¹ The methodology for this research is outlined at [Skill Shortage Research Methodology | Department of Jobs and Small Business](#).

Metropolitan and regional results

- In metropolitan regions, there was an average of 2.4 applicants per vacancy and 8 per cent were considered suitable by employers.
 - Employers in metropolitan areas were able to fill 15 per cent of vacancies.
- In regional areas, there was an average of 5.2 applicants per vacancy and no applicants were considered suitable by employers.
 - Employers in regional areas were not able to fill any vacancies.
- The average number of applicants in regional areas has been inflated due to one employer receiving a large pool of applicants.
- On average, metropolitan vacancies attracted 0.2 applicants with qualifications compared to no applicants with qualifications per vacancy in regional areas.
 - It should be noted that only a small number of vacancies required qualifications, hence the small number of applicants with qualifications per vacancy.
 - Only 16 per cent of all vacancies required applicants to be qualified.

Unsuitable applicants

- The reasons given by employers on why an applicant was considered unsuitable include:
 - Lacking the required length of experience.
 - Poor technical skills or those who failed a skills test.
 - Not possessing the communication or presentation skills sought by employers.
 - Lack of employability and reliability such as, not leaving accurate contact details and being difficult to contact.
 - Where qualifications were required, applicants lacked the qualification in plastering.

Demand and supply trends

- Demand for fibrous plasterers has been boosted by strong construction activity over the past few years.
 - The total, inflation adjusted, value of building work done in NSW grew by 6.8 per cent in the year to September 2018, with growth stronger than the Australian average of 4.5 per cent. This was the sixth consecutive year where growth in NSW has been above the national average.²
 - The value of residential work increased by 6.1 per cent over the year to September 2018, which followed five years of annual growth in excess of 10 per cent. The growth in the value of work done for the construction of new houses (8.1 per cent) was higher than for new other residential work (6.6 per cent). For the previous five years, the growth in the latter had been higher.³
 - The value of non-residential building work increased by 8.3 per cent in the year to September 2018. This followed a fall of 5.7 per cent in the previous year.⁴

² ABS, *Construction Work Done, Preliminary*, September 2018 (8755.0), chain volume measures, original.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

- The value of engineering construction increased by 20.4 per cent in the year to September 2018. This followed a rise of 17.9 per cent in the previous year.⁵
- The Australian PCI (state data are not available) had a modest expansion in September 2018 with a 12 month average of 53.7. Within all sub-sectors of the Australian PCI, the 12-month average, had readings above 50 apart from apartments recording a contraction at 46.2. This indicates a slowing down and cooling of apartment building activity. An Australian Performance of Construction Index (PCI) reading above 50 indicates that construction activity is generally expanding and below 50, declining. The distance from 50 indicates the strength of increase or decline.⁶
 - Engineering construction and Commercial construction had the strongest average annual activity growth at 57 and 55.1 respectively, driving industry growth with a strong expansion of major infrastructure projects.⁷
- Entry into these trades is commonly through the completion of a Certificate III in Wall and Ceiling Lining.⁸
 - National Centre for Vocational Education Research data shows there were 95 completions (limited to the certificate III level) in the year ended March 2018. This was above the average of 58 over the previous four years.⁹
 - Commencements remain relatively steady at around 160 over the year to March 2018. This is only slightly above the average of 157 per annum recorded over the four years to March 2017.¹⁰
- Over the year to September 2018, the number of vacancies advertised on the internet for plasterers in NSW have declined by 19 per cent.¹¹
- The number of temporary resident (skilled) visas granted for plasterers (individual data is not available) averaged around 30 per annum over the five years ending 2017-18.¹²
 - Please note, on 18 April 2017, the Government announced that the Temporary Work (Skilled) visa (subclass 457 visa) was abolished and replaced with the completely new Temporary Skill Shortage visa in March 2018 to address the genuine skill shortages.¹³

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ai Group, *Performance of Construction Index September 2018*, 5 October 2018, <https://www.aigroup.com.au/policy-and-research/mediacentre/releases/PCI-September-2018/> (accessed 4 December 2018).

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ NCVET, *Apprentices and Trainees*, March 2018, estimates (limited to certificate III qualifications).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Department of Jobs and Small Business, *Internet Vacancy Index*, October 2018, 12 month moving average.

¹² Department of Home Affairs, *Temporary Work (Skilled) visa programme*, <https://data.gov.au/dataset/visa-temporary-work-skilled> (accessed 4 December 2018).

¹³ More information can be found here <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/work/457-abolition-replacement>.