



Fibrous Plasterer ANZSCO 3332-11

South Australia September 2018

Current labour market rating: Shortage

Previous labour market rating (September 2017): Shortage

Comments

The labour market for fibrous plasterers continues to be difficult and has followed the same trend as the previous 12 months. The vast majority of employers contacted were unable to attract a sufficient number of suitable applicants for their advertised vacancies.

Survey results¹

- Of the businesses surveyed, all were specialist providers of plasterboard fixing services, mostly in the residential and commercial sectors.
- Employers surveyed who had recently advertised fibrous plasterers vacancies reported that only 17 per cent of vacancies were filled. This was a 10 per cent improvement from 2017 when only 7 per cent of vacancies were filled.
- In 2018 the average number of applicants who applied for positions was 6.5 which was much lower than 2017 (11.9). There were more qualified applicants with an average 15 per cent in 2018 in comparison to only 6 per cent in 2017.
- Employers reported receiving an average of 0.3 suitable applicants per vacancy in 2018 compared to 0.5 suitable applicants per vacancy in 2017.
- Employers surveyed in 2018 identified that 67 per cent of qualified applicants were unsuitable in comparison to 100 per cent of applicants being unsuitable in 2017. Several employers advised it was very hard to find qualified fibrous plasterers and gyprockers that have the required skill level and experience.
- Overall, employers reported substantial difficulties in finding tradespeople with the technical skills and experience to perform the fibrous plasterer role. The survey responses indicates there continues to be a shortage of fibrous plasterers in South Australia.

Unsuitable applicants

- Employers surveyed required applicants to hold a trade qualification in addition to experience within the occupation, and were willing to take on labourers and teach them on the job if necessary.
- The main reasons for unsuitability were lack of appropriate experience and lack of quality technical skills. The majority of employers ran small plasterboard installation businesses and required staff to work autonomously and to have quality finishing skills. Employers reported that both qualified and unqualified applicants were unsuitable because they could not demonstrate these skills. Several applicants failed to present for trial.

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

Demand and supply trends

- According to 2016 ABS Census data there were 1400 fibrous plasterers employed in South Australia, of which 50.5 per cent were self-employed. The Census indicated that 87 per cent were in capital cities and 13 per cent were in the rest of the state. The highest level of education for Fibrous Plasterers was Certificate III and IV in Wall and Ceiling Lining at 42 per cent with 47.9 per cent having no post-school qualification.²
- According to the HIA Trades Report in 2018, approximately 94 per cent of fibrous plasters were employed in the Construction industry and therefore demand was driven by development in this sector. According to the HIA, South Australia has maintained a relatively balanced supply of trades in recent years, but the deterioration in the availability of trades in South Australia reflects a growth in the number of multi-story apartment projects in the market.³
- Annually trade availability was down in both Adelaide and Regional South Australia by -0.22 in June 2017 and continues to decrease by -0.37 in June 2017.⁴
- Overall, the construction sector in South Australia appears strong despite some recent indicators of steady activity.
 - The total value of building work done in South Australia improved in the year to March 2018 compared with the previous 12-month period and is above the five-year average.⁵
 - The value of building work commenced in South Australia was above the five-year average as at March 2018, this was a 19.2 per cent increase compared with the previous 12 months.⁶
 - The value of South Australian residential building approvals increased slightly in the year to May 2018,⁷ which provides an indication of future demand, the number of building approvals remain well above the five-year average.⁸
- The value of building work yet to be done has increased by 39 per cent from March 2017 compared to March 2018.⁹
- A source of supply to the trade is new graduates who have completed a Certificate III.¹⁰
- NCVER estimates indicate commencements into training were low for the year ending March 2018, however there has been improvements in with a result of 31 commencements, compared to 2016 when there was approximately 17 commencements.
- An average of 14 fibrous plasterers completed training in a Certificate III in Wall and Ceiling Lining to four quarters to March 2018 compared to an average of 11 for the four quarters to March 2017.

² ABS, Census of Housing and Population, 2016

³ HIA Trades Report June 2018.

⁴ HIA Trades Report June 2018.

⁵ ABS, Building Activity, Australia, Cat. No. 8752.0, Table 16, estimates based on four quarter totals

⁶ ABS, Building Activity, Australia, Cat. No. 8752.0, Table 44, estimates based on four quarter totals

⁷ ABS, Building Approvals, Australia, Cat. No. 8731.0

⁸ ABS, Building Approvals, Australia, Cat. No. 8731.0, Table 33, estimates based on 12 month totals

⁹ ABS, Building Activity, Australia, Cat. No. 8752.0, Table 50, estimates based on four quarter totals

¹⁰ NCVER, Apprentices and Trainees, March 2018, Estimates