



# Plumbers

## ANZSCO 3341

Queensland  
September 2018

### Current labour market rating: Regional shortage

Employers in regional Queensland experience difficulty recruiting plumbers, while most Brisbane vacancies were filled with ease.

#### Key research findings

- The majority of vacancies for plumbers in this year's survey were for both domestic and commercial plumbers and gas fitters.
- Across Queensland, around 60 per cent of surveyed vacancies were filled. There was, however, significant difference between the recruitment experiences of employers in regional Queensland and Brisbane.
  - Regional employers fill 38 per cent of surveyed vacancies, compared to nearly 80 per cent filled by their Brisbane counterparts.
  - There was an average of 3.1 applicants per vacancy in regional Queensland compared to 14.8 in Brisbane.
- Regional employers reported an inability to compete with the remuneration offered by the mining industry.
- Applicants were considered unsuitable if they did not have formal qualifications, could not demonstrate experience in a broad range of tasks (such as fault diagnostics and pipe laying) or did not have the necessary licences (such as gas fitting licence, workplace health and safety certificates and restricted electrical certification).

#### 2018 Survey Results <sup>1</sup>



**59%**  
of vacancies filled



**9.3**  
Applicants per vacancy



**8.5**  
Qualified applicants per vacancy



**2.1**  
Suitable applicants per vacancy

#### Demand and supply

- At the time of the 2016 Census, there were around 12,500 plumbers employed in Queensland.
- In Queensland, construction activity has been relatively stable over the past three years, remaining well below peak levels recorded in December 2013.<sup>2</sup>
- While the number of advertised internet vacancies for plumbers declined by 10 per cent over the year to September 2018, vacancy numbers remain at a relatively high level.<sup>3</sup>
- Employers report that while demand and the retention rate for plumbers is steady, recruiting a qualified plumber is increasing in difficulty.
  - Over the five years to March 2018, plumbing apprenticeship commencements across Queensland averaged around 900 per annum, while completions averaged around 500.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The methodology underpinning this research is outlined at [Skill Shortage Research Methodology | Department of Jobs and Small Business - Document library, Australian Government](#) and can also be accessed by the QR code.

<sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Construction Work Done, Australia, Preliminary, June 2018

<sup>3</sup> Department of Jobs and Small Business, Internet Vacancy Index, September 2018, 12 month moving average

<sup>4</sup> National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Apprentices and Trainees, March 2018, estimates (limited to certificate III)