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Media release



Hairdressers, barbers and beauty therapists encouraged to have their say on proposed training changes

Hair and Beauty Industry Training Organisation (HITO) Chief Executive Kay Nelson said the vocational education reforms announced by Government yesterday could have significant impact on the hair and beauty industries.

“While we support some changes to the current vocational training system, other proposed changes seem a backward step.”

Under the proposed changes, Industry Training Organisations would be disbanded and the arrangement of apprenticeship training shifted to the New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology. Ms Nelson said HITO had concerns that a single government institution would not be as responsive to the needs of the hair and beauty industry.

“The hairdressing and barbering industries have a long history of apprenticeship training and the current system is working well for employers. It would be a shame to lose this in the wider reform,” she said.

Industry Training Organisations were established in 1992 in response to concerns that public tertiary institutions were not meeting industries’ needs for skills.

The number of new hair and beauty apprentices and industry trainees has increased by 26% over the last two years. There are currently 886 hairdressing, barbering and beauty therapy apprentices.

Ms Nelson said HITO had strong industry representation and engagement, ensuring the qualifications and training were meeting the industries’ needs.

“The connections we develop with employers and apprentices through the management of apprenticeship training mean we get a high level of engagement in our standard-setting role. By separating the training arrangement and standard-setting roles of ITOs, there’s a risk this valuable input from people at the coalface will be lost.”

She said the organisation worked closely with Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics across the country, who currently delivered off-job training for hairdressing and barbering apprentices.

“We support a reform of New Zealand’s ITP system to ensure it is sustainable and can deliver quality training in all regions.”

Over the next few weeks HITO Board will hold face-to-face consultation sessions around the country. People can also complete online surveys and provide written feedback directly to Government.

“It’s imperative that everyone in the industry has their say on these important reforms.”

Feedback must be submitted by March 27.

“It’s our responsibility to ensure the voices of our industries’ employers, trainers, apprentices, trainees and leaders are heard in this process. We look forward to working with all parties to ensure our future professionals get the training they deserve,” said Ms Nelson.

In the meantime, apprentice training will continue as usual in 2019, including off-job training arrangements.

For more detail on the proposed changes and for links to submission forms, see the Ministry of Education website:

<https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/reform-of-vocational-education/have-your-say>

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