



Science & Technology AUSTRALIA

2021 Census Review

3 July 2018

Education and Training

Are the skills from highest qualification achieved by the person used in their primary occupation?

What is the highest qualification achieved by the person in science, technology, engineering or maths?

Has the person undergone any formal professional development of career retraining in the last five years?

Reason for the Topic: The changing nature of the Australian workforce will require an adaptable and flexible workforce, with people willing to retrain for new and different careers. The proposed questions will provide a better national understanding for how successful the education and training system is at providing broad skills to Australians.

It is also essential to know how the current workforce is keeping up with the requirements to retrain, and if formal professional development offered by employers is being utilised by the Australian workforce.

Ensuring a workforce is being given the opportunities to retrain and providing the future workforce with the skills needed to be adaptable and flexible is a national priority. Every sector of the economy will be affected by a changing skills landscape and the growth of the digital economy, and data must be collected regarding the workforce's readiness and preparation.

Its also important to note that these questions can be efficiently collected via the Census, as they do not differ in nature from those already asked in the education and training section.

The data will be valuable in the long-term as there is every expectation the digital disruption of the workforce is likely to continue, and disruptions of a similar nature should be expected for many generations to come.

Other data sources or solutions that could provide information on this are not easily gathered and are typically skewed. The Census is the only forum in which a comprehensive data set of training can be gathered for the workforce as a whole.

Work and Income

How many hours of unpaid overtime did the person undertake last week for all jobs?

How many hours of unpaid (volunteer) work did the person undertake for organisations by which they are not employed?

These questions should be included in the Census to capture a more comprehensive understanding of the work conducted by Australians. Research from some sectors has indicated that a large proportion of work being carried out by Australians is unpaid, and as such, uncaptured by the Census. Without this information other questions in the Work and Income topic may not be a complete representation of the amount of time Australians are working.

This data can be used to better understand the effects of more flexible working conditions as well as the appropriateness of the Australian working week. It can also capture the contributions Australians are making to the community and charity sectors.

It is expected that this question will not prove problematic to households completing the Census as it is comparable current questions within the 2016 Census.

Other organisations have gathered subsets of the information that would be provided in a Census-wide version of this question. Due to the varying nature of employment sectors however, there is not a clear and overarching set of data that can be used to assess or benchmark the overall prevalence of free labour that is occurring within the economy.