



Penrith Skills for Jobs

ABN 80 082 730 210



2022

ANNUAL REPORT

JobQuest
Connecting People and Skills

JOServices

2022
2023

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Our Mission

Through a client focused and community-oriented approach, JobQuest and JQ Services support our clients to:

- Develop skills in a safe and healthy working environment
- Connect with each other
- Engage with the community
- Build strong networks
- Recognise and realise opportunities
- Develop their sense of belonging

Gender Balance

JobQuest and JQ Services have an excellent gender balance.

JobQuest - Youth Programs are dominated by females and JQ Services Employment/Property Services are dominated by males

The overall gender balance taking into account all reported positions is -

58% female

42% male



From: Workplace Gender Equality Agency report for Penrith Skills for Jobs

Employment Services

JQ Services runs property maintenance and cleaning units designed to provide transitional employment opportunities to enable people to gain skills to move on to more permanent work or operate their own small business.

These operate in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains out of our Girraween office and in the Hunter out of our Newcastle office.

These services are offered to a range of customers including:

General public – fee for service

NDIS participants

- House cleaning and other household activities

- House and/or yard maintenance

- Skills development

Aged Care clients

- CHSP [Commonwealth Home Support Program] – Nepean/Hawkesbury and Blue Mountains only

- Home Care Packages

- Department of Veteran's Affairs clients - Hunter Region only

Commercial contracts



Youth Programs & Training

JobQuest Youth Programs are designed to provide alternative learning models for young people who are not engaged well or coping in mainstream education.

These programs assist young people to overcome some of life's hurdles and get on track to achieving their goals.

Some programs may be targeted to specific cohorts such as refugees or recent migrants and others to young jobseekers or young offenders.

Participation in training is an excellent way for people to engage with others and their community. The development of new skills continues to be the key to finding a job and retaining that job as technological and other changes impact on our working communities.

Our Youth Programs link with our Training arm with a focus on employment skills and literacy and numeracy support for young people.

This integration of our training with our other operations provides a more substantial and structured impact on the people who engage with our services.



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Other Community Programs

JobQuest provides a two-year, home-based, early learning and parenting program for families with young children.

It aims to provide a structured, education-focused early learning program at home to help prepare children for their participation in school learning.

The program is run in the Newcastle suburb of Windale.

Community Engagement

Community, heritage and connectedness are important to us at JobQuest and JQ Services. We deliver a range of programs to help build more cohesive and inclusive communities.

These programs are often found in areas with significant growth or with emerging or changing communities including new or expanding cultural groups.

Western and South Western Sydney and the Hunter are major areas targeted.

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Chairman's Report



This year's Annual Report continues to show how our services can have such a profound and positive influence on people who choose to access our services. This is due to the wonderful people who work across the various units of our organisation and their hard work and dedication to our clients, our students and others who are involved in the programs offered.

We continue to attract new workers and try very hard to ensure that their time with us is rewarding and enjoyable.

During the year we registered a new trading name - JQ Services which is used by our social enterprise property services for NDIS participants and Aged Care - home care clients. This is a name that provides more clarity to these clients on what the organisation provides to them - services in household tasks and social support. JQ Services currently has nearly 800 clients and participants being provided with services across the regions of Western Sydney, Nepean/Hawkesbury, Blue Mountains, Newcastle and the Hunter Valley.

Our contracts teams have also been kept busy over the year with our Newcastle team settling in well to their new site at Cardiff.

Changes to the aged care system are expected to have an impact on our service provision but at this stage our CHSP program continues to operate and more and more people are using our services under Home Care Packages. Unfortunately we had to cease providing our yard maintenance service to our NDIS participants this year due to rising costs not covered by the NDIS funding, but we still provide excellent cleaning services under NDIS.

Our RTO and Youth Programs have been very busy over the year with hundreds of high school students participating in our programs with great success. Congratulations to all of our students and to the Youth Consultants and Trainers. Reading the stories provided for this report there are some excellent outcomes being achieved by our students.

The RTO review that is currently underway is expected to enhance the systems in place to provide our youth programs and training services and ensure our services continuously improve every year.

As another year comes to an end I would, on behalf of the Board of Directors, wish everyone a enjoyable break over the festive season and thank you all for the great work you do every day in our communities. Regardless of where you work and what your job role, everyone contributes to our success and the impact this makes for those who use our services.

Sydney Carr

Chairman of the Board - Penrith Skills for Jobs Ltd

*Phoebe's Story

A journey of growth and resilience

It was during the pandemic that Phoebe discovered a JobQuest program that would set in motion a transformative chapter in her life after having trouble dealing with on-line learning. Once school resumed face-to-face learning, Phoebe found herself grappling with overwhelming emotions and she eagerly joined the program the following year for some respite from the classroom environment.

"I've always enjoyed school but there was something about coming back after the long lockdown period that I was feeling stressed. I really wanted to get away from the classroom a bit," she said looking back at her experience in years 9 and 10.

Phoebe learned a range of practical skills like writing an email ("I can't believe I had no idea how to write an email," she laughed) and how to use Google docs; but what really captured her enthusiasm was the project planning task which fostered her organisational abilities. This proved to be a catalyst for Phoebe's personal growth and prompted her to participate in a second program this year as she entered Year 11.

The focus shifted towards event management and a venture that held a deeply personal significance for her as Phoebe threw herself into organising a fundraiser for breast cancer, an illness her mother succumbed to when Phoebe was just 5-years-old. She honed critical skills in planning and budgeting but it was her progress in communication that Phoebe really made significant strides.

"I had to call local businesses to get donations and that was so nerve-wracking," Phoebe said. "To help us feel a bit more confident, we were encouraged to write a script. After doing it a few times, I got to the point when I just called and didn't use the script at all. I wasn't nervous anymore. I managed to get a \$100 voucher from that call and that felt great."

Phoebe said overcoming her initial apprehensions not only built her confidence but also instilled in her a profound sense of resilience. Looking ahead, she has set her sights on a future in teaching, aspiring to pursue a Bachelor of Education specialising in teaching Personal Development, Health and Physical Education at high school. Reflecting on the impact of the program on her life, Phoebe acknowledged the invaluable support provided by the JobQuest network which she said offered her a sense of belonging unlike anything she has experienced before.

"The trainers are easy to talk to and the guidance and support they have given me has made the biggest difference in my life. I'll always be grateful for that," she said.

*John's Story

From disengagement to inspiration

For a long time, the mere thought of going to school filled John with dread. Not only did he feel he didn't fit in, his sporadic attendance prevented him from forging strong relationships with his peers and he struggled to connect with his teachers.

"I hated it," he said bluntly. "For me it was hell."

Then a lifeline emerged in the form of a JobQuest facilitated program designed for students just like John who were at risk of disengaging from learning.

"I thought it was going to be just another program to try and get me back into school," he said. "I didn't think it would work."

He was surprised to discover a safe haven to engage in open discussions about crucial life matters like goal setting, future aspirations, positive decision making and the power of resilience. "It was somewhere I could talk freely and not feel judged. I could talk about anything," John said. "All of a sudden I was excited to get to school. Every Thursday I would even get to school early."

John said the program was like a "flip of a switch" for him. "It taught me a lot about communication. And it gave me the confidence to talk to other people," he said. "Not just that but also confidence in my own work."

John revealed he was heavily dependent on drugs but the program's strict no-tolerance policy served as a powerful catalyst for change. "They said it wouldn't be tolerated and that was it for me. That was my big wake up call," he said. "I haven't touched drugs since." For John's parents, the transformation was astonishing. "My dad said this was my fork in the road moment. It wasn't the first time he'd said something like that to me. I think this time I realised I had something to lose."

That something was a part-time role with Australia Post that had given John a newfound sense of purpose and belonging. "It's the best job I could have got," he said. Remarkably, the company recognised John's potential and recently offered him a full-time role. For the first time, John is contemplating what lies ahead and the possibilities are expanding.

"My next goal is to buy a house. I've already started looking," he said proudly.

Asked where he believes he would be today if he hadn't participated in the JobQuest program, John turns silent. After a pause, he said: "It scares me to even think about it.

"I could be anywhere. Most probably in juvie. It would have been the end of me."

*not his real name

*Margaret's Story

A garden of resilience

A meticulously tended garden surrounding a charming family home was husband and wife, Robert and Margaret's pride and joy.

It was a lush, vibrant oasis filled with attractive evergreen shrubs with exquisite blooms. But it was also a lot to maintain for the elderly couple and Margaret would often jest that Robert was "not a handy man at all."

Their haven was maintained with the help of JobQuest whose property maintenance crew assisted with everything from keeping the garden in pristine condition to mowing the lawns and even tackling odd jobs that inevitably cropped up around the house.

When Robert died suddenly, the support from JQ Services became invaluable to Margaret. It wasn't just the physical help; it was the companionship and sense of community that warmed her heart.

"Everyone has been great," Margaret, 69, said. "Nothing is a problem and they really help me get on top of everything."

While Margaret enjoys doing a little trimming herself and potting new plants, the more labour-intensive tasks are handled by the JQ team.

"There are so many trees and bushes," she said. "It looks lovely but it is a lot to maintain and I simply cannot do the manual work anymore. "Without their help, I wouldn't be able to do it."

Their visits also provide Margaret with a vital social connection, a gesture that makes her feel safe and valued. Most of all, the support is empowering Margaret's independence to live in the home she shared with Robert for almost 40 years.

"It puts a big smile on my face to see the garden looking so well kept and tidy," she said.

*not their real names



*Daniel's Story

From wildlife to wild gardens

In the ever-evolving tapestry of careers and life paths, sometimes the most unexpected detours lead to the most fulfilling destinations. Like Daniel's journey. It took him from the wilds of the Symbio Wildlife Park to the serene world of landscaping and gardening, all thanks to JobQuest and JQ Services.

Daniel was feeling unsatisfied with his career as head keeper at the zoo. Despite his love of caring for a menagerie of animals, he was craving change and his transition began after a friend, who was employed at JobQuest, presented him with a new opportunity in the world of landscaping and gardening. As a humble trainee, Daniel delved headfirst into a new venture and discovered he had an innate talent for transforming ordinary spaces into vibrant, thriving gardens.

Daniel honed his skills and earned his Certificate 3 in Horticulture and gained immense joy being outdoors, tending to the gardens of aged care and NDIS clients, bringing beauty and tranquillity to those who needed it most.

"Some of these clients would be stuck at home and loved looking at or sitting in their gardens," Daniel said. "Making it look pretty for them might have just been a job for us but for them it meant more than that. "For some of them, it was all that they had so I saw it as an important job to deliver them a nice, tidy garden they could enjoy."

With the seed of entrepreneurship planted in him, Daniel decided to start his own landscaping business. Venturing out on his own allowed him to take on a wide array of projects, from crafting gardens from scratch to breathing new life into neglected landscapes. And he took immense pride in the transformative before-and-after results that became his trademark.

In a full-circle moment, Daniel returned to JobQuest as a contractor. He now looks after JobQuest's aged care and NDIS clients, leveraging his expertise to provide them with the serene and thriving outdoor spaces they deserve.

"JobQuest definitely gave me the foundation to build what I have achieved today," he said. Daniel's journey, from wildlife enthusiast to landscaper, is a testament to the transformative power of JobQuest to empower individuals to explore their passions, discover their hidden talents, and shape their career paths. For Daniel, the transition has proven to be a beautiful and fulfilling journey—one that he continues to nurture with care and dedication.

*not his real name



*Rebecca's Story

Nurturing a love for learning

Navigating the labyrinth of parenting is a challenging journey, especially when you're facing unique circumstances. Rebecca knows this very well. As a single parent overcoming the aftermath of family violence, she found solace and hope through JobQuest's Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY).

Designed to empower parents to become their child's first teacher, HIPPY provides regular activity packs filled with engaging and accessible tasks aimed at fostering a love for learning and building confidence in both parents and children.

Introduced to HIPPY two years ago when Ava was five years old, Rebecca found that Ava's diagnoses of autism and ADHD made it challenging to keep up. "She was scared to try new activities because she didn't want to get it wrong," Rebecca recalled. "She would get upset at the idea of disappointing anyone and I had to keep reminding her it was ok, that sometimes it takes a few attempts before something new sinks in and it's alright if it takes us a bit longer.

"Ava has always been a late bloomer. Whether it was walking or talking. She's a very serious child. So when she started to make some progress, it was wonderful for both of us. She felt so proud of her achievements." Rebecca said it was the program's nurturing and relaxed learning style that allowed Ava to progress at her own pace.

A firm believer in the program's benefits and driven by a determination to make a positive difference, Rebecca made the decision to become a HIPPY tutor and support other parents to build their skills and confidence. It was also an opportunity for Rebecca to return to work.

As she prepared activities for other families, Rebecca noticed a shift in Ava's re-engagement with the program and shapes, colours and counting became familiar concepts. She said HIPPY was more than just an educational resource for her family; it offered Ava the tools and encouragement she needed to thrive.

"HIPPY has become a family outside of our family," Rebecca said. "Especially for Ava, who isn't one to feel comfortable around new people, she loves everyone here. It has built her confidence, not just her learning. "When we first started with HIPPY, I wasn't in the best head space and I honestly felt like I was failing as a parent. Then when HIPPY came to us, I realised I had found the right learning program for her and it has made all the difference.

"Through HIPPY Ava has found a love of books. She is super excited to read and still grabs a book for us to read before bed every night.

After two years, Rebecca will part ways with HIPPY at the end of this year and hopes to pursue a new career in child care. "The program has gone so fast and we've come so far," she said proudly.

*Mark, Sam and Ethan's Story

Transforming into confident leaders

A remarkable group of Year 10 students with diverse abilities, including those with physical and intellectual disabilities and behavioural challenges, have embarked on a JobQuest program that not only honed their vocational skills but also transformed them into confident leaders.

The highlight of their journey was organising a fundraiser for Red Nose Day. One of the significant challenges they faced was communication, however, they worked together to brainstorm, design promotional material, distribute flyers within the school and pull together the entire installation over a short two-week period.

Three students - Mark, Sam and Ethan - expressed how much they enjoyed the program, saying it pushed them far beyond their comfort zones.

Mark said he wrote a speech about families impacted by SIDS and beautifully delivered it to an audience - a task that was previously unimaginable for him because it challenged his communication skills and ability to maintain eye contact.

"I was nervous at the start," he recalled. "I've never talked to anyone like that before. I never thought I could do that. That boosted my confidence."

Asked what the experience taught him, he said: "That I can actually speak up. I feel proud." Sam took on the role of greeting people at the event, which was initially uncomfortable for him. But he said successfully executing the task gave him a tremendous sense of accomplishment and boosted his confidence.

"It made me feel good about myself," he said, adding his favourite part of the program was the collaborative teamwork.

Ethan said he enjoyed creating the poignant Red Nose Day art installation – a nest adorned with painted birds to symbolise hope emerging from tragedy. Reflecting on the skills he gained, Ethan emphasised the significance of preparing a risk assessment.

Teachers commented that the JobQuest program empowered students to break down personal barriers, fostered teamwork, and, most importantly, instilled a strong sense of self-belief.

*not their real names



*Tom's Story

Unleashing potential and empowering growth

While his peers were going about their regular school life, Tom had bigger dreams. The spirited 15-year-old never found his groove in the classroom. His true ambition was to dive headfirst into the workforce but he still had months ahead of him before he could leave school. Then a careers advisor saw an opportunity for Tom to acquire invaluable skills and chart a different path.

"She signed me up for JobQuest's EVET program and I was so excited," Tom said. "I never had a big interest in school so this was something I wanted to do."

Before delving into the program, Tom said he found solace in his own company. Communication wasn't his strong suit, he said. But the group activities aimed at organising a school-based event encouraged him to break out of his shell, become more social and embrace interactions with others. It also sharpened his communication skills and kindled a new found confidence and self-assuredness.

"Before I wasn't really good at communicating but since (taking part in the program), I ask for help more, I get involved more and I've definitely been more communicative," Tom said. He said the program played a pivotal role in honing his ability to express his ideas clearly and articulately in a team setting, and encouraged him to collaborate with others to achieve a common goal. The confidence he gained also helped him build a rapport with others.

As he gears up to leave school at the end of the year, Tom has his sights set on securing an apprenticeship with a construction company, with a particular interest in carpentry. Alternatively, he is also excited about the prospect of joining the Australian Army, viewing it as a potential pathway to learning a trade.

Reflecting on the changes he has experienced since taking part in the program, Tom expressed that he used to feel isolated and lacked the confidence to ask for help. "Now I know it's perfectly ok to ask for help," he said. "The staff are great. I think because it feels like a family, they've been really great to talk to and have made it easy for me to be more communicative."

Tom added that other practical skills like problem solving, team work, and planning had bolstered his prospects of securing an apprenticeship post-graduation. "This has helped with my communication so much that I know I have more of a chance now than I did before," he said.

*not his real name



Annual Compliance Report

JobQuest and JQ Services' operations are carried out within 4 quality frameworks which enable our customers to be assured that our services remain at the highest quality. In order to meet the required standards of operation, continuous improvement is embedded into everything we do.

The 4 quality frameworks are:

- ISO 45001:2018 Work Health and Safety Management Systems
- National Standards for Registered Training Organisations
- Aged Care Standards – Home Care
- National Disability Insurance Scheme [NDIS] Quality and Safeguarding

WORK HEALTH & SAFETY

In August this year JobQuest completed the re-certification audit for ISO45001:2018 WHS Management Systems. There were no non-conformances.

AUSTRALIAN SKILLS QUALITY AUTHORITY

The on line assessment system for students is now fully operational to enhance excellence in and productivity of, our training services. Continuous monitoring against the RTO standards continues to assist those involved in training to ensure that each student's journey with JobQuest meets with their satisfaction and results in their desired achievement.

AGED CARE QUALITY AGENCY

JobQuest has not been subject to an assessment from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission but we continue to monitor our systems and services against the Aged Care Standards to ensure that our elderly clients receive services of the highest standard.

NDIS PRACTICE STANDARDS

JobQuest successfully undertook a re-registration audit against the NDIS Practice Standards in early 2023 with no non-conformance recorded. The next surveillance audit is due before 2 February 2025.

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Community Partners

365Care	Greek Welfare Centre	NSW Department of Industry
A&Js Auto Body Repairs Salamander	H&D Heatherbrae	NSW Department of Primary Industries
A360 DS	Hammond Care	NSW Fire and Rescue
Ability Hub	Hawkesbury City Council	NSW Police Force
Ability Options	Hawkesbury Hospital	NSW State Debt Recovery Office
ACU	Hawkesbury Leisure & Learning	Our Lady of Consolation
ADRA - Cessnock	Hawksbury Skills Inc	Pacific Link Housing
Afford	HBA	PEARL
AI Group	Headspace Maitland	Penrith City Council
Anglican Parish of Telarah	Home Caring	Peppercorn Services Inc
Anglicare	Home Instead	Port Stephens Mower and Outdoor Center
Animal Welfare League of NSW	Housing NSW	Portside Electrical Services
Annecto	Hunny Pots Early Learning Centre	Premium Strategies
Apprenticeship Careers Australia	Hunter Botanical Gardens	Probus: Rutherford, Metford
Apprenticeships R Us	Hunter Multi Cultural Centre	Productivity Bootcamp - Penrith
Attorney General's Department	Hunter Womens Centre	Ronald McDonald House
Australian Catholic University	IGA	Salamander Bay Recycle Centre
Australian Chinese Community Assn Home Care	Immigration & Border Protection	Salvation Army
Australian Defence Force	International Child Care College	Salvation Army- Oasis Hamilton
Australian Unity	Ivy Health Care	Schools Industry Partnership
Baptist Care at Home	Jax Marketown	SES Western Sydney
Baptist Care Services	Joblink Plus - Cessnock and Kurri Kurri	Share the Dignity
Baptist Care- Hope Street	JPH Built	Skilling and Employment
Barnardos	Just Better Care	SNL Building Constructions
Barr Group	Juvenile Justice NSW	Springwood MidBiz [Chamber]
Benevolent Society	Kincare	Squad
Best & Less	Kmart	St Simeon Healthcare
Big W	Kogan	STARTTS
Blacktown City Council	Kogo	Sunnyfield
Bob Jane T-Mart Kotara	Lake Macquarie City Council	Survivors R Us
Break Thru People Solutions	Lendlease	Sydney Zoo
Brotherhood of St Lawrence	Lets Get Care	Sydwest
Bunnings	Lifeline - Maitland, Hamilton,	Sydwest Multicultural Services

Community Partners

Butterworth Constructions	Little Beginnings Hillsborough	TAFE NSW
Camera House Kotara	Live Well at Home	Taronga Zoo
Care Connect	Living Care, Ashwood & Green Hills	The Art Gallery of New South Wales
Castle Personnel	The Field of Mars Environmental Education Centre	
Catholic Education Office	Medowie Hardware	The Good Things Foundation
Catholic Healthcare	Medowie MX	The Hills Shire Council
Cessnock Leagues Club	MEGT Newcastle	The Mount Druitt Hub,
City of Parramatta Council	Merrylands Home Care	The Parliament of New South Wales
Coles Refrigeration & Air Conditioning	Mikey's Tables	The Place: Charlestown Community Centre
Coles Supermarkets	Milabah - Schools as Community Centre	The Skill Engineer
Community Junction	Museum of Contemporary Art	Tillies Childcare
Community Migrant Resource Centre	My Gateway	Training Services NSW
Corporate Partners	My Guardian	Trilogy Care
Creative Childcare	My Home Care	Uniting Care Aging NSW
Department of Social Services	NECA Training and Apprenticeships	UPA Sydney Home Care
Dept of Defence	Nelson Bay Air Conditioning and Refrigeration	Ventia
Dept of Jobs & Small Business	Newcastle Auto Electrics & Mechanical	Verto
Eastway Carpentry	Newcastle City Council	Wahroonga Corporation
Ella Bache - Sydney	North Penrith Neighbourhood Centre	Wellman Strata
Elly Kare	North St Marys Neighbourhood Centre	Wesley Mission
EMPOWERability Inc	North West Disability Services, The Secret Garden	
Endota	Northcott	Western Sydney University
Event Cinemas Kotara and Glendale	Notre Dame University	Western Sydney Zoo
Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre	Nourish- Oz Harvest	Westmead Childrens Hospital
Forsythes Training - Newcastle	NovaSkill	WISE Employment
Glow Healthcare Agency	NSW Department of Education	Woolworths Supermarkets
Good360	NSW Department of Family and Community Services	
Gotcha 4 Life	NSW Department of Health	Workskil - Cessnock

Special thanks to all our partnering high schools and public schools.

Your dedication and resourcefulness are an inspiration both to our students and our staff.

We also acknowledges the assistance from our peak bodies including Community Colleges Australia, Aged & Community Providers Assn, National Disability Service, Social Traders, the Western Sydney Community Forum, the Blue Mountains Interagency and many local Chamber of Commerce organisations.

As member, JobQuest and JQ Services continue to find their support invaluable.

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