

PRESS RELEASE

Providing Certainty and Continuity FOR ESI APPRENTICES

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In spite of COVID-19, many Employers in the Electricity Supply Industry (ESI) are continuing to employ apprentices.

In response, Thomson Bridge has refined and expanded our delivery methods for apprenticeship training programs.

Our determined, flexible and industry focused approach, along with our willingness to deliver to small cohorts in niche areas, sees Thomson Bridge taking on these apprentices. This is contrary to the trend set by other training providers, who have failed to adapt to current conditions and postponed or cancelled apprenticeship programs in 2020.

Thomson Bridge Managing Director, Lisa Parkinson said, "We have developed a practical blended approach that conforms to COVID guidelines and can seek to give certainty of delivery for Employers and Apprentices."

In 2020 Thomson Bridge has tripled the size of our apprentice program for ESI apprentices. A high volume of these students have transferred directly from other providers to complete their 2020 training with Thomson Bridge. These apprentices have ranged between 1st year to 4th year, in areas such as rail traction and cable jointing – these two vital skills being important areas for level crossing removal, and rail infrastructure work supporting **Victoria's Big Build**.

July 2020 saw our First Year Cable Jointing students commence the initial practical block of their Certificate III in ESI – Power Systems – Distribution Cable Jointing (UET30819) program at the Rail Academy in Newport. This group of Apprentices, together with students from the ESI across Australia, were provided the opportunity to complete their theory units in our online

school during the first months of COVID-19. Keeping them on track for this practical block.

Our electrical theory virtual school addresses the common theory requirements of all ESI Apprenticeships (Rail, Distribution, Cable Jointing and Transmission) and has been designed to provide scheduled mentoring to support self-paced study.



Based on this success, **Thomson Bridge is seeking expressions of interest from Employers who would benefit from a second intake of Year 1 apprentices during 2020.** Subject to demand and government health directives, we propose to offer a new three-week initial practical block to be held from 12th October to 30th October 2020.

ESI Program Manager, Jamie Ilton said, "our intention is to provide an opportunity for apprentices to undertake this essential practical block before year end, ensuring the first year of their apprenticeship is not forfeited in 2020."

Thomson Bridge is proud to be able to support our apprentices and contribute to the development of a skilled workforce in the Electricity Supply Industry in Victoria.

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Innovative, Practical and Focused on Completion - Our Apprenticeship Approach

Our Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) at Thomson Bridge have combined our ESI learning design and delivery expertise with industry collaboration, providing innovative, practical and sustainable Apprenticeship programs for young entrants and experienced adults across the ESI streams of rail, transmission, distribution and cable jointing.

The objective of our Certificate III programs is to provide high-quality training that students and industry can trust, aligned to industry and workforce needs. We seek to:

- Provide a modern approach to the gaining of Qualifications in the ESI sector so that it is effective and flexible for today's learners and their employing organisation;
- Create a range of Qualification pathways for apprentices and experienced workers that increase the choice of training and can be tailored to their individual needs;
- Maintain a completion rate above 85% for apprenticeships;
- Build capability through mentoring and quality on-the-job experiences into our programs;
- Continue to engage with industry and improve the validation of training and learning outcomes.

Programs draw on our SME trainers and from our clients who contribute their depth of industry skills and experience.

While our apprenticeship programs are focused on technical skills, our flexible formats provide apprentices the opportunity to bond, forge relationships while developing the self-management and communication skills, essential for the modern workplace environment. This approach ensures that the apprentices receive a

broad understanding of their chosen industry; form networks that can be sustained throughout their career and participate in contextual hands on experiences.

To support our clients and their apprentices, Thomson Bridge is developing an easily accessible **eLogbook app** to assist in the capture and validation of on-the-job work experiences and evidence. Providing both the apprentice and their supervisors with visibility of course progress via their smart phone devices.

