

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 2009-10**

Outcome 3

DEEWR Question No. EW484_10

Senator Cash provided in writing.

Question

What is the definition of a “green skill?” Please provide examples of green skills that an electrician might employ? Please provide examples of green skills that a plumber might employ? Please provide example of green skills that a hairdresser might employ?

Answer

What is the definition of a green skill?

The term “green skill” is used to describe *Skills for sustainability in a low carbon economy*. Skills for sustainability are defined as the technical skills, knowledge, values and attitudes needed in the workforce to develop and support sustainable social, economic and environmental outcomes in business, industry and the community.

Reference: Draft National Green Skills Agreement, November 2009.

Occupations in a low carbon economy will require skills which involve preserving or restoring environmental quality; protecting ecosystems and biodiversity; reducing consumption of water, energy and materials; minimising the creation of waste and pollution; and managing waste removal.

The emphasis on environmental considerations is having an impact in the workforce through redefining skills in existing occupations (for example electrician, plumber and hairdresser), which has clear implications for continuing training.

Generic skills are an important basis on which to build; they allow people to learn about sustainability more quickly.

Training opportunities will place plumbers, electricians and hairdressers in a better position to advise and inform consumers on topics such as:

- the benefits of energy efficiency;
- water conservation;
- waste reduction; or
- the most appropriate and cost effective appliances to suit individual needs.

Industry Training programs are designed to assist workers in these sectors in understanding their role in a low carbon economy, and to provide their customers with up to date information and advice on:

- latest technology and energy saving appliances;
- practical appliances and installation knowledge;
- environmental impacts of plumbing services, appliances and household practices

- consumer information; and
- energy/water/cost savings (short term and long term cost comparisons and environmental benefits).

A key skill required will be the ability to communicate ideas and concepts relevant to environmental concerns.

How will an electrician employ skills for sustainability?

An electrician might:

- provide sustainable energy solutions for energy reduction in appliances, new and existing buildings and households;
- specify, install and maintain renewable energy systems;
- implement and monitor environmental and sustainable energy management policies and procedures; and
- promote the use of renewable sources of energy.

How will a plumber employ skills for sustainability?

A plumber might:

- promote and install water and energy efficient devices and systems, including renewable energy devices such as solar hot water;
- specify, install and maintain recycled water or rainwater harvesting systems;
- implement and monitor environmental and sustainable water management policies and procedures; and
- promote contained, sustainable systems, where buildings collect and re-use water and energy supply as well as receive them, and dispose of waste sustainably.

How will a hairdresser employ skills for sustainability?

A hairdresser might:

- offer customers sustainable products and or services;
- identify and practice energy or resource efficient processes;
- use water and energy efficient devices; and
- implement waste reduction and pollution minimisation practices.