



"SKILLING TOMORROW'S  
WORKFORCE TODAY"

# Australian Skills Group Newsletter

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## Trade Qualification vs University Qualification

Australians are being told 'get into a trade' if they want to retire by 50, as tradies candidly reveal their pay and university graduates grapple with finding a job worth the HECS debt they've incurred.

**From a plumber earning \$50/hr and a diesel fitter making \$80/hr, to a carpenter earning \$3,000 a week and FIFO tradies pocketing a minimum of \$160,000 a year, those in the trades are breaking taboo by talking about their pay which has sparked debate, leaving many Australians now unsure about their chosen career paths.**

While some tradies admit to putting in 80-hour weeks and FIFO workers do two weeks on/two weeks off, it's the 'white collar' workers with the easier hours that are now wondering if it's worth it.

"There are people literally half my age making nearly as much with only a few years' experience ... the idea that you have to be in some kind of 'white collar' professional job to make a lot of money is old and inaccurate but still widely believed in some quarters," one said.

"The construction industry is by far the best place you can work to earn good money with basically no education. Doing an apprenticeship often earns you more than any graduate jobs." added another.

"I tell as many parents as possible, 'Get your kids into a trade'. That's where the money is".

"A lot of these guys start their own businesses further down the track and, by the time they are 50, they are retired."

