



**n e c a**

**APPRENTICE  
AWARDS  
2026**

**Apprentice Awards  
Submission Guide**



national  
electrical and  
communications  
association

# About the Awards



## A HISTORY OF EXCELLENCE

NECA has led the electrotechnology industry's Apprentice Awards for over three decades and continues to work to achieve an ever increasing level of awareness and respect for electrical and communications apprentices and their employers.

NECA recognises the essential role apprentices play in the future of our industry. The NECA Apprentice Awards showcase the outstanding contribution an apprentice can make to the projects they work on and to their employer's business.

The Awards also acknowledge achievement in personal development, effort, academic attainment and workplace competency.

## SUBMISSION DATES:



### **NECA Awards (ACT, TAS, NSW, QLD, WA)**

Submissions Open - Monday, 12 January 2026

Submissions Close - See page 4

### **NECA Awards (SA/NT and VIC)**

Submissions Open - Monday, 2 February 2026

Submissions Close - See page 4

# Awards Presentation Event Dates



The NECA Awards are open to all NECA members and their apprentices. The NECA Awards celebrate achievements across the entire industry through three dedicated awards programs:

- NECA Apprentice Awards
- NECA Small Business Awards
- NECA Excellence Awards

The submissions are judged at a state level, with each state hosting a gala event between July and September. State winners then progress to the National Awards as finalists.

**Queensland** | Friday, 17 July 2026

**Western Australia** | Friday, 31 July 2026

**Tasmania** | Friday, 7 August 2026

**Victoria** | Friday, 28 August 2026

**New South Wales** | Friday, 4 September

**South Australia / Northern Territory** | Friday, 11 September 2026

**Australian Capital Territory** | Friday, 18 September 2026

**National Awards** | Friday, 20 November 2026

# Important Dates



## APPRENTICE INTERVIEW DATES

The dates below indicate the periods during which interviews will be scheduled. Dates will be scheduled promptly on submission to ensure swift progress.

A NECA representative will be in touch to confirm the exact date and time following the submission closing date, but please mark your calendar with this indicative timeframe so that you can ensure a suitable team representative will be available to attend.

### QLD

Submission closing date: Thursday 2 April 2026

Interview schedule: Monday 20 April - Friday 24 April 2026

### TAS

Submission closing date: Thursday 2 April 2026

Interview schedule: Monday 20 April - Friday 24 April 2026

### WA

Submission closing date: Thursday 2 April 2026

Interview schedule: Monday 27 April - Friday 24 1 May 2026

### NSW

Submission closing date: Thursday 2 April 2026

Interview schedule: Monday 4 May - Friday 12 May 2026

### ACT

Submission closing date: Thursday 2 April 2026

Interview schedule: Monday 4 May - Friday 12 May 2026

### VIC

Submission closing date: Friday 1 May 2026

Interview schedule: Monday 11 May - Friday 29 May 2026

### SA/NT

Submission closing date: Friday 3 July 2026

Interview schedule: Monday 13 July - Friday 31 July 2026

# Step-by-Step Guide



- 1** Create a log in to the NECA Awards platform and read through the category criteria and submission requirements.

**CLICK HERE** to access the NECA Awards platform or visit:  
<https://necaawards.awardsplatform.com>

(NOTE: If you are an employer / host employer / trainer with an existing NECA Awards portal login, you will be able to use the same account)
- 2** Start to collate your submission content: reference letters, academic results, personal statement and on-the-job photograph.
- 3** Upload all the required content and supporting documents to the portal before the closing date. Please check the closing dates and mark your calendar as there are strictly no extensions to the submission timeframe.
- 4** Immediately following the closing date, judges will be given access to the online portal to begin reviewing your submission.

You will then be contacted to schedule your interview which may be in-person or an online meeting.

# 1st / 2nd / 3rd Year Apprentice of the Year (WA ONLY)



## CATEGORY DESCRIPTION:

### 1st, 2nd & 3rd Year Categories

Apprentices are likely to have worked in one or more of the major fields within the electrical and communications industry i.e. commercial/domestic, ELV, communication and industrial.

Commercial/domestic work covers the field of construction type electrical light and power wiring, factory general light and power wiring, commercial light and power and domestic light and power.

ELV / Communication covers communication, networking, fibre optics, data cabling systems, voice and data, wireless communication, home automation.

Industrial work covers the field of machine wiring, control systems, variable speed drives, switchboards, programmable logic controls (limited exposure) and motor control systems.

**Applicants must have a minimum of 4 months experience (at the time of the submission closing date) in the category that they wish to apply.**

**Section 1** - Essential Details

**Section 2** - Training & Employment

**Section 3** - Supporting Documents (see below)

**Section 4** - Confirmation

### Criteria

The applicant shall demonstrate competence in the following area of the commercial/domestic, ELV/communications or industrial field of work.

Their competence will be assessed through the interview process and a review of their submission.

### Competencies

- Understanding of Work Health and Safety requirements for the industry.
- Understanding of regulatory requirements.
- Should have practical knowledge of wiring methods used in commercial/domestic installation.
- Ability to carry out simple tasks and produce a quality result.
- Understanding the levels of supervision.

### Supporting Documents:

- **References and/or Letter/s of Support** - There are a number of people that the applicant has worked with over their apprenticeship and they can also provide relevant details on the applicant.
- **Academic Results** - Training results to indicate how the applicant performs off the job and should include actual school results, ie. not profiling.
- **Applicants Statement** - This is a very important statement, it enables the judges to learn more about the applicant, the type of work they have done so far and their ambitions for the future.
- **Photo** - Provide an on-the-job photograph of apprentice (for use in Awards presentation and marketing material) in high res JPEG format. Please ensure the photo conforms with WHS requirements.

# 5th Year Dual Trade Apprentice of the Year (SA/NT ONLY)



## CATEGORY DESCRIPTION:

### Dual Trade - Electrical/Refrigeration

By definition dual trade covers the core skillsets of both electricians, refrigeration and air conditioning technicians working in the building and construction sectors, with a particular emphasis on the application of both disciplines of work related to refrigeration and air conditioning plants and equipment.

### Criteria

The applicant shall demonstrate competence in both disciplines in the installation and/or service and maintenance of refrigeration and air conditioning plant and equipment.

***Please note that South Australia is the only state or territory with the Dual Trade Apprenticeship scheme in place. Therefore, submissions for this category will only be accepted for the South Australian state awards. Please be advised that the winner will not progress to the National Awards.***

**Section 1** - Essential Details

**Section 2** - Training & Employment

**Section 3** - Supporting Documents (see below)

**Section 4** - Confirmation

### Competencies

- Understanding of Work Health and Safety requirements of both industry sectors
- Understanding of relevant regulatory requirements of both sectors.
- Should have practical knowledge of wiring methods used in HVAC&R installation.
- Ability to carry out design of a simple circuit.
- Should have practical knowledge of the installation and maintenance requirements of RAC plant and equipment.
- Should have a sound knowledge of the environmental requirements for the safe handling and containment of Global Warming Potential (GWP) and Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) Refrigerants.
- Should have a sound knowledge of the dangers associated with the use of natural refrigerants as alternatives to synthetic refrigerants.
- Ability to carry out tests required to ensure the integrity of both the electrical and refrigeration components to enable power connection and commissioning of the system.
- Should have some practical knowledge in fault finding.
- Ability to carry out simple tasks and produce a quality result.

### Supporting Documents:

- **References and/or Letter/s of Support** - There are a number of people that the applicant has worked with over their apprenticeship and they can also provide relevant details on the applicant.
- **Academic Results** - Training results to indicate how the applicant performs off the job and should include actual school results, ie. not profiling.
- **Applicants Statement** - This is a very important statement, it enables the judges to learn more about the applicant, the type of work they have done so far and their ambitions for the future.
- **Photo** - Provide an on-the-job photograph of apprentice (for use in Awards presentation and marketing material) in high res JPEG format. Please ensure the photo conforms with WHS requirements.

# 4th Year Commercial / Domestic Apprentice of the Year



## CATEGORY DESCRIPTION:

### Commercial / Domestic

By definition commercial/domestic work covers the field of construction type electrical light and power wiring, factory general light and power wiring, commercial light and power and domestic light and power.

**Section 1** - Essential Details

**Section 2** - Training & Employment

**Section 3** - Supporting Documents (see below)

**Section 4** - Confirmation

### Criteria

The applicant shall demonstrate competence in the following area of the commercial/domestic field of work. Their competence will be assessed through the interview process and a review of their submission.

### Competencies

- Understanding of Work Health and Safety requirements for the industry.
- Understanding of regulatory requirements.
- Should have practical knowledge of wiring methods used in commercial/domestic installation.
- Ability to carry out the tests required to enable power to be connected and also to determine faults within an installation.
- Ability to carry out simple tasks and produce a quality result.

### Supporting Documents:

- **References and/or Letter/s of Support** - There are a number of people that the applicant has worked with over their apprenticeship and they can also provide relevant details on the applicant.
- **Academic Results** - Training results to indicate how the applicant performs off the job and should include actual school results, ie. not profiling.
- **Applicants Statement** - This is a very important statement, it enables the judges to learn more about the applicant, the type of work they have done so far and their ambitions for the future.
- **Photo** - Provide an on-the-job photograph of apprentice (for use in Awards presentation and marketing material) in high res JPEG format. Please ensure the photo conforms with WHS requirements.



# 4th Year Industrial Apprentice of the Year



## CATEGORY DESCRIPTION:

### Industrial

By definition Industrial work covers the field of machine wiring, control systems, variable speed drives, switchboards, programmable logic controls (limited exposure) and motor control systems.

**Section 1** - Essential Details

**Section 2** - Training & Employment

**Section 3** - Supporting Documents (see below)

**Section 4** - Confirmation

### Criteria

The applicant shall demonstrate competence in the following area of the industrial field of work. Their competence will be assessed through the interview process and a review of their submission.

### Competencies

- Understanding of Work Health and Safety requirements for the industry.
- Understanding of regulatory requirements.
- Should have practical knowledge of wiring methods used in Industrial installation.
- Should have some practical knowledge in fault finding.
- Ability to carry out the tests required to enable power to be connected and also to determine faults within an installation.
- Ability to carry out design of a simple circuit.

### Supporting Documents:

- **References and/or Letter/s of Support** - There are a number of people that the applicant has worked with over their apprenticeship, and they can also provide relevant details on the applicant.
- **Academic Results** - Training results to indicate how the applicant performs off the job and should include actual school results, ie. not profiling.
- **Applicants Statement** - This is a very important statement, it enables the judges to learn more about the applicant, the type of work they have done so far and their ambitions for the future.
- **Photo** - Provide an on-the-job photograph of apprentice (for use in Awards presentation and marketing material) in high-res JPEG format. Please ensure the photo conforms with WHS requirements.



# 4th Year ELV / Communications Apprentice of the Year



## CATEGORY DESCRIPTION:

### ELV / Communications

By definition this covers communication, networking, fibre optics, data cabling systems, voice and data, wireless communication and home automation.

**Section 1** - Essential Details

**Section 2** - Training & Employment

**Section 3** - Supporting Documents (see below)

**Section 4** - Confirmation

### Criteria

The applicant shall demonstrate competence in the following areas related to communications and extra low voltage installations. Their competence will be assessed through the interview process and a review of their submission.

### Competencies

- Understanding of Work Health and Safety requirements for the industry.
- Understanding of regulatory requirements for all the areas in which the applicant works.
- Should have practical knowledge of wiring methods in all the areas the applicant works in.
- Ability to prepare terminations.
- Ability to carry out the tests required to certify installations.

### Supporting Documents:

- References and/or Letter/s of Support - There are a number of people that the applicant has worked with over their apprenticeship and they can also provide relevant details on the applicant.
- Academic Results - Training results to indicate how the applicant performs off the job and should include actual school results, ie. not profiling.
- Applicants Statement - This is a very important statement, it enables the judges to learn more about the applicant, the type of work they have done so far and their ambitions for the future.
- Photo - Provide an on-the-job photograph of apprentice (for use in Awards presentation and marketing material) in high res JPEG format. Please ensure the photo conforms with WHS requirements.



# Conditions of Entry



## ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must be in their fourth year of training or have completed their apprenticeship within the 12 months prior to the closing date for submissions. During their apprenticeship, they must be or have been employed by a NECA member or a NECA Group Training apprentice company. Applicants may only enter one category and must not have been previously nominated in that category.

## CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

- All entries must be completed online via the Awards portal.
- All required questions must be completed for an entry to be valid.
- Entrants must adhere to the criteria of the Awards Category being entered.
- By entering a project, you give NECA permission to use photographs on the NECA website, magazine, promotional material, social media and media.

## THE APPLICATION

The employer plays an important part in the training of the applicant and they can provide information in regards to the applicant, his/her training, management skills and many other details. It is advisable that the employer considers addressing some items in the criteria. Please include details on the type of work the applicant has done during his/her employment.

## NATIONAL APPRENTICE AWARDS

Fourth year state apprentice winners in each category will be invited to enter the National Apprentice Awards. Information will be provided in September to those that qualify.

## JUDGING PROCESS

### State

Applicants will initially be assessed at a state level, with finalists being invited to an interview with a judging panel. Finalists will be invited to receive their award at a state gala awards event. State winners from each category will then be invited to submit a project to be judged for the NECA National Apprentice Awards.

### National

Each State winner will be forwarded application details in September regarding the project they will be required to submit. They will also be interviewed by the national judging panel.

Winners for each category will be selected following the interview. Winners and runners up will receive their award at NECA's National Awards presentation dinner in November 2026 in Adelaide.



# Contact Information

## Local Branch Contacts

VIC

Ph: 1300 300 031

Email: [necavic@neca.asn.au](mailto:necavic@neca.asn.au)

SA / NT

Ph: 08 8272 2966

Email: [neca@necasa.asn.au](mailto:neca@necasa.asn.au)

NSW / ACT / QLD / TAS / WA

Ph: 1300 361 099

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**neca**

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