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## **ASSDA develops new flexible learning for stainless apprentices**

*Tuesday, 22 Sep, 2009*

At the beginning of 2008, ASSDA was successful in its application for funding from the federal government for a project focused on the integration of e learning into industry. The funding has seen ASSDA create a Workforce Development Strategy and a Flexible Learning Delivery Pathway incorporating e learning, with plans to develop an additional e learning module titled Practical Skills of Surface Treatment to complement the existing Gas Tungsten Arc Welding Module.

The Workforce Development Strategy provides an industry wide framework in which to address the workforce challenges for the stainless steel industry namely skills shortages, staff retention and knowledge retention. This document assisted ASSDA in defining what the industry requires in training, skills development and the retention of employees.

The body of the project sees ASSDA working in conjunction with SkillsTech Australia and multiple industry partners to develop e-learning as a form of theory training for apprentices aiming to acquire their qualification in stainless steel fabrication.

ASSDA created a Flexible Learning Delivery Pathway that gives apprentices and employers the choice of conducting training both online and within the workplace. This form of training is beneficial to the apprentices as they are able to work at their own pace, in a location of their choice and in a non-threatening learning environment. For the employer the pathway is economical as the apprentice can conduct their study in the workplace, therefore reducing time spent away from the workplace.

Using ASSDA's Stainless Steel Specialist Course and existing resources within the TAFE system, SkillsTech Australia has developed an e-learning system based on the required competencies for a qualification in fabrication, with a particular focus on the unique requirements of working with stainless steel. These training modules offer learning through video, audio, text, images and interactive that are interesting to the apprentice whilst teaching them the underpinning knowledge they require to develop a skill.

(Sourced from [www.assda.asn.au](http://www.assda.asn.au))

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