

Smart and Skilled Policy for the Skilling for Recovery Initiative

Version 1.3

Released April 2021

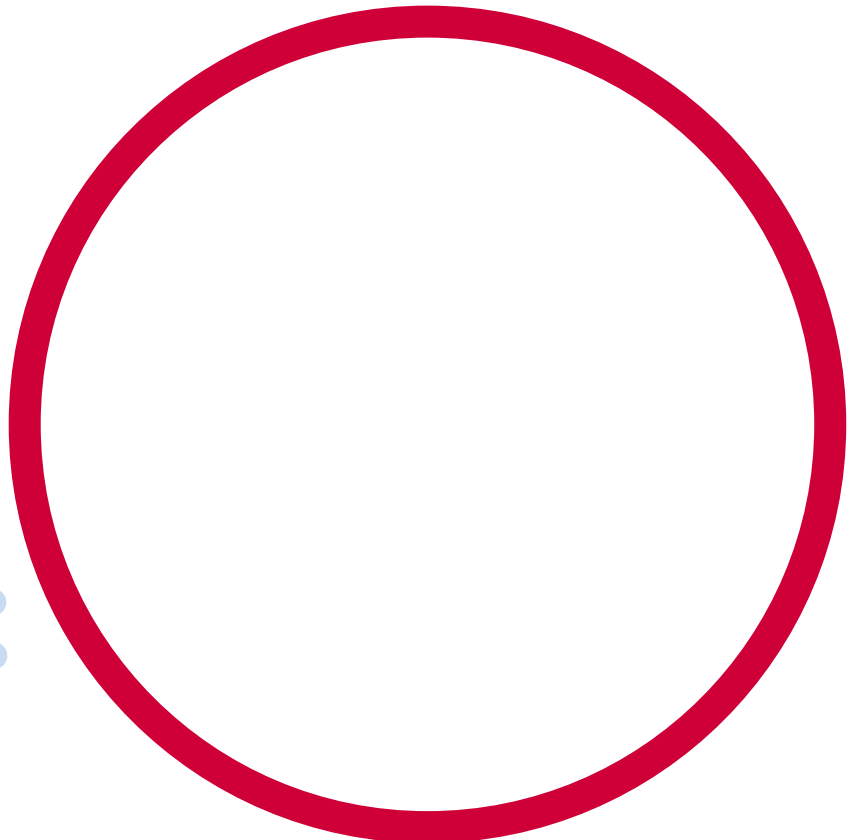
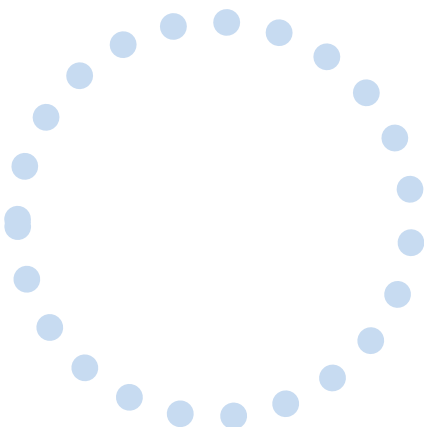
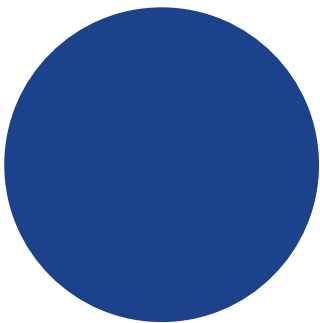


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Smart and Skilled Policy for fee-free priority full and part qualifications under the Skilling for Recovery Initiative

Background

Skilling for Recovery is part of a matched funding commitment of almost \$320 million between the NSW and Australian governments under the JobTrainer Fund. Skilling for Recovery is a key component of the State's COVID-19 Recovery Plan.

It includes an additional 100,000 fee-free full and part qualification training places to reskill, retrain and redeploy the workforce to industries where there are skills shortages and emerging employment opportunities. Skilling for Recovery will help job seekers retrain or up-skill to enhance their credentials and support school leavers to enter the workforce for the first time.

Purpose

This policy sets out the requirements for Skilling for Recovery funding, including: timeframes, the types of full and part qualifications that are eligible for funding and the eligible student cohorts. It also sets out the contractual obligations of Providers accessing Skilling for Recovery funding.

Priority areas for training

Full qualifications

The full qualifications that are eligible for funding under this Initiative can be found in the *Skilling for Recovery Priority Full Qualifications List*.

This List may be subject to change from time to time to respond to emerging demand and industry growth. Providers will be notified of any changes.

Note:

- Skilling for Recovery priority full qualifications will be delivered under Smart and Skilled Full Qualification Programs (i.e. the Entitlement Foundation Skills and Full Qualifications Programs, the Entitlement Apprenticeship and Traineeship Program, the Targeted Priorities Full Qualifications Program).

Skilling for Recovery priority full qualifications not on the NSW Skills List

Skilling for Recovery priority full qualifications that are not part of the NSW Skills List will appear on a Smart and Skilled Approved Qualifications Activity Schedule (AQAS), but must only be delivered to Skilling for Recovery eligible students.

Part qualifications

Skilling for Recovery part qualifications will be administered under two streams:

- Targeted Priorities Pre-Vocational and Part Qualifications Program – Skilling for Recovery Initiative for the Construction Industry.
- Targeted Priorities Pre-Vocational and Part Qualifications Program – Skilling for Recovery Initiative for Redeployment and Youth.

The part qualifications that are eligible for funding under this initiative can be found in the Skilling for Recovery Priority Part Qualifications List.

The priority part qualifications will be nationally accredited skill sets or locally designed skills groups that have been approved by the Department.

Details for each part qualification on the list will include the units of competency/modules that make up the part qualification and the price for each part qualification.

Smart and Skilled Providers may also submit Training Needs Identification (TNI) Applications to add to part qualifications to the list.

TNIs submitted must be one of the following:

- A skill group comprising one or more units of competency and/or accredited module from one or more qualifications on the Skilling for Recovery Full Qualifications Priority List.
- A nationally accredited skills set not already on the Skilling for Recovery Priority Part Qualifications List that falls within one of the priority industry areas covered by the list.
- An industry endorsed/co-designed skill group that supports a Skilling for Recovery cohort into employment or further study and where possible evidence of an employment outcome.
- A locally designed skills group in one of the Skilling for Recovery industry priority areas.

Note:

- A part qualification can be a pathway into a full qualification but Providers should take care to not enrol a student in a series of priority part qualifications for the purpose of the student obtaining a priority full qualification credential. Students who undertake a part qualification who then want to continue training to obtain the relevant full qualification should be enrolled in the full qualification and granted a Credit Transfer for the units of competency/modules achieved in the part qualification.
- Requests for delivery of more than 50 per cent of units from a single priority full qualification will be considered under the Skilling for Recovery Construction stream.

Training delivery timeframes

Skilling for Recovery will provide access to fee-free training for Skilling for Recovery eligible students who commence in a Skilling for Recovery priority full qualification from 16 September 2020.

All Skilling for Recovery enrolments in full and part qualifications must occur no later than 30 September 2021 and all training must commence no later than 31 December 2021.

Deferral of training

Skilling for Recovery is an initiative of short duration that provides training opportunities to improve employment opportunities as the State recovers following the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the intent of the initiative, a student cannot defer training unless the following circumstances are met:

1. The request to defer training is supported by a medical certificate which explains why the student's medical condition prohibits the student from continuing with the training; and
2. The request is for a deferral period of no more than six months; and
3. The student has commenced training prior to seeking the deferral, i.e. a student cannot enrol and then immediately defer.

Student eligibility

Students that meet Smart and Skilled eligibility criteria as per Schedule 2 of the Smart and Skilled Contract Terms and Conditions that are one of the following four categories are eligible for Skilling for Recovery funded training:

- A young person aged 16 to 24 at commencement of training, regardless of employment status, including Year 12 School leavers.

People aged 16 years old are eligible if they enrolled in an SfR full or part qualification from the 26 April 2021 to 30 September 2021.

- A person who is a recipient of a Commonwealth Government welfare benefit (and their dependants)
- An unemployed person
- An employed person who is 'expected to become unemployed' who falls into one of the following four categories:
 1. Stood down/ furloughed employee
 2. Person who has been employed for 6 months or less
 3. Low skilled/unskilled employee
 4. Workers in declining industries

See definitions below for further detail.

Definition of an employed person who is 'expected to become unemployed'

Skilling for Recovery primarily seeks to help unemployed people to re-train or for young people to start their career but it will also support people expected to become unemployed. This can cover instances such as: companies in declining industries, people whose employment is conditional on immediately undertaking work relevant training, and workers who have been stood down or furloughed. While NSW will not set limits on the number of people trained under this category, it will monitor activity to ensure that school leavers and the unemployed remain a priority.

Below are definitions for each of the four categories:

- **Stood down/ furloughed employee:** Employee that has been stood down or an employee who previously would have been on JobKeeper and is at risk of becoming unemployed and requires upskilling or reskilling for new role and employment elsewhere.
- **Person starting a job (employed for 6 months or less):** employed on condition of receiving training to build capacity and capability for the job role. This would be within the first 6 months of employment.

- **Low skilled/unskilled employee:** Existing employee, with or without relevant skills or previous qualification up to Certificate III, that requires training to upskill to secure ongoing employment or future employment.
- **Workers in declining industries:** Workers at any company in an agreed declining industry (e.g. international travel industry) who require upskilling/reskilling for redeployment.

If a Provider would like to enrol a student under the “Workers in declining industries” category, they must seek approval from the Department before doing so and have evidence that demonstrates the person is working in an industry that is in decline and the person is at risk of becoming unemployed. The Provider should contact their Strategic Relationship Manager

The Department will consider whether other workers can be considered covered by the four categories on a case by case basis. The Provider should contact their Strategic Relationship Manager.

Note:

- There may be some Smart and Skilled students undertaking Skilling for Recovery priority qualifications that meet Smart and Skilled fee-free eligibility criteria who do not meet Skilling for Recovery student eligibility criteria. These students will continue to access fee-free training for all qualifications on the NSW Skills List, including Skilling for Recovery priority full qualifications.
- Fee-free Apprenticeships and Traineeships and free Foundation Skills training under the Entitlement Foundation Skills Program will continue to be available under Smart and Skilled.
- Please read the Fact Sheets carefully for instructions on how to enrol students undertaking Skilling for Recovery priority full or qualifications that meet existing Smart and Skilled fee-free eligibility criteria (such as Aboriginal students, students with a disability, fee-free scholarship students and refugees and asylum seekers, fee-free apprenticeships and traineeships) who also meet Skilling for Recovery student eligibility criteria.

Evidence of eligibility

See *Appendix 1 - Proof of eligibility for Skilling for Recovery – Acceptable evidence* for the forms of evidence that are acceptable as proof of eligibility under Skilling for Recovery.

School students

For Skilling for Recovery part qualifications, eligibility will be extended to school students in specific circumstances.

The Department may from time to time introduce strategies under the Skilling for Recovery Initiative that targets school students. In such cases, Smart and Skilled eligibility exemptions will be granted for participating school students.

Requests outside of the targeted strategies may also be considered on a case by case basis.

Qualification prices

Full qualifications

Smart and Skilled prices for Skilling for Recovery priority full qualifications on the NSW Skills List apply. Please refer to the *Smart and Skilled Prices and Fees Schedule*.

Skilling for Recovery Priority Qualifications not on the NSW Skills List have been priced using the Smart and Skilled pricing methodology. Pricing details for these qualifications can also be found in an appendix to the *Smart and Skilled Prices and Fees Schedule*.

Part qualifications

Prices for part qualifications will be set as per current program streams under the Targeted Priorities Pre-Vocational and Part Qualifications Program.

Prices for part qualifications on the Skilling for Recovery Priority Part Qualification List will be published in the appendix to the *Smart and Skilled Prices and Fees Schedule*.

Loadings

Loadings payments will be paid to providers for eligible students as per the Smart and Skilled Loadings Policy.

Smart and Skilled contractual obligations

This policy forms part of the Smart and Skilled Contract. Provider must comply with this Policy, the Smart and Skilled Contract Terms and Conditions, Operating Guidelines and all other relevant Smart and Skilled policies.

The Smart and Skilled Contract Terms and Conditions will apply to the delivery of the training and assessment and reporting of training activity to the Department.

Additional Financial Caps for Skilling for Recovery priority full qualifications

Providers who receive additional Financial Cap allocation(s) for the delivery of Skilling for Recovery Priority Full Qualifications must use the additional cap to enrol and deliver training to Skilling for Recovery eligible students.

Apprenticeship and Traineeship qualification delivery

The Skilling for Recovery Priority Full Qualifications List includes apprenticeship and traineeship qualifications. Delivery of apprenticeship and traineeship qualifications that are a priority under this initiative continue to be uncapped.

Allocation of funding for Skilling for Recovery priority part qualifications

Funding for part qualifications may be allocated through various mechanisms:

- A Provider Activity Schedule (PAS), following a TNI request
- A PAS, following successful application under an invitation by the Department to submit an Expression of Interest
- A Financial Cap allocation.

Contractual compliance

The Department will monitor compliance with this policy, in accordance with Clause 12 of the Smart and Skilled Contract Terms and Conditions.

Where the Department identifies a failure to comply with the Smart and Skilled Contract (including the terms and conditions, operating guidelines and associated Smart and Skilled policies), this will be considered an Event of Default which may lead to suspension or termination of a Provider's Smart and Skilled Contract.

Further Information

If you have any questions, contact the Department on 1300 772 104, or SmartandSkilled.Enquiries@det.nsw.edu.au.

Appendix 1: Proof of eligibility for Skilling for Recovery – Acceptable evidence

“Youth (16-24)”

Requirement	Evidence	Evidence requirements
Date of birth	USI data	USI checks date of birth
Year 10 completion or equivalent (if under 17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that student has met school leaving age requirement 	Student declaration/signature at enrolment

“Commonwealth Benefit Recipient”

Requirement	Evidence	Evidence requirements
Commonwealth Government Benefit Recipient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a letter from the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) confirming receipt of the benefit. The letter should clearly show the Centrelink Reference Number (CRN) and the benefit or allowance category; or a current concession card that shows the CRN and clearly shows the benefit or allowance category; or a current Centrelink income statement that clearly shows the CRN and the benefit or allowance category; or any other evidence that clearly shows the CRN and the benefit or allowance category; or documentary evidence from the Department of Veterans' Affairs stating their pension/benefits status; or for people applying for Austudy or Youth Allowance, an approval letter from Centrelink that shows the CRN and indicates that commencement date of their benefit is within two weeks of their enrolment or two weeks within the date of the first class attendance or participation in training 	Evidence sighted or collected by Provider
Dependant of Commonwealth Government Benefit Recipient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A dependant child, spouse or partner of someone who is receiving a specified Commonwealth Government benefit or allowance, must provide documentary evidence that Centrelink recognises the student as the dependant <p>The evidence must clearly show the CRN of the benefit or Commonwealth Government benefit recipient.</p>	

Requirement	Evidence	Evidence requirements
Unemployed (Not a Commonwealth Benefit Recipient)	A letter of separation from the employer at enrolment. If this is not available, the student must sign a declaration at enrolment that they are unemployed. (See note below)	Evidence sighted or collected by Provider
A person expected to become unemployed	<p>Evidence indicating the person meets the criteria for one of the four categories described above in the eligibility section.</p> <p>This could be a letter, email, employment contract, notice of redundancy or other documentation relating to employment</p> <p>Evidence can be supplied by the student or employer.</p> <p>Note: For a person who meets the “returning to work (employed for six months or less)” category the evidence of employment will need to show that the start date of employment is no more than six months before the training commencement date</p>	<p>Evidence sighted or collected by Provider</p> <p>Note: If evidence is not available, then a signed declaration by the current employer, confirming the employee meets the relevant “expected to become unemployed” category as per the <i>Smart and Skilled Policy for Skilling for Recovery Initiative</i>, will suffice</p>

Note:

The ‘NAT00080 – Client’ file, reported through eReporting, collects employment status. Please ensure that the labour force status is recorded and reported in the data file via eReporting following commencement of training.

Value	Description	Labour Force Status Identifier
Unemployed		
06	Unemployed – seeking full-time work	
07	Unemployed – seeking part-time work	
Not in the labour force		
08	Not employed – not seeking employment	