Questions about your eligibility for Smart and Skilled training

Here are the answers to questions people often ask about eligibility for Smart and Skilled training.

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Who is eligible for subsidised training under Smart and Skilled?

If you are:

- 15 years old or over, and
- no longer at school, and
- living or working in NSW (or an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person living in specific NSW border areas), and
- an Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident, Australian humanitarian visa holder or New Zealand citizen

or

- a NSW apprentice or trainee

you may be eligible to enrol in a government-subsidised course with an approved Smart and Skilled training provider.

Providing you meet the personal eligibility criteria for Smart and Skilled, you're entitled to enrol in a subsidised course up to Certificate III level.

You can also enrol in subsidised training in targeted priority areas at Certificate IV, Diploma or Advanced Diploma level, depending on the availability of funding for these courses.

NSW apprentices and most new-entrant trainees are eligible for a government subsidy for the training that supports their apprenticeship or traineeship.

Previous qualifications do not affect eligibility, but may affect the student fee.

For more information, view Are you eligible for Smart and Skilled training?

How does Smart and Skilled affect apprentices and trainees?

All NSW apprentices and trainees in traineeships on the NSW Skills List are eligible for a government subsidy under Smart and Skilled for the qualification that supports their apprenticeship or traineeship.
Apprentices, eligible new-entrant trainees and their employers can choose an approved Smart and Skilled training provider that best meets their needs. Their choice of training provider does not affect the fee that is paid. The fee they pay is the same regardless of which approved Smart and Skilled training provider they choose.

Rather than paying yearly or by semester, apprentices and eligible trainees under Smart and Skilled pay a fee for the qualification. They may still pay in instalments over a number of years, but the fee is an amount for the qualification, fixed at the time the apprentice or trainee commences.

Under the NSW Government fee-free apprenticeship initiative, NSW apprentices that commence their training on or after 1 July 2018 may be eligible for fee free training. For more information, go to vet.nsw.gov.au. For eligible apprentices there will be no requirement to pay the fee.

If you're starting a traineeship that's on the NSW Skills List, your Smart and Skilled fee for the whole qualification will not be more than $1,000.

For more information, view Smart and Skilled apprenticeship and traineeship qualifications.

I've completed one vocational qualification since leaving school and I'd like to enrol in another. Am I eligible for a subsidy for the new course under Smart and Skilled?

If you have a post-school qualification at any level, including a university qualification obtained overseas, you're still entitled to enrol in a subsidised course up to Certificate III level providing you meet the personal eligibility criteria for Smart and Skilled, but you will pay a higher fee than someone who has not achieved any qualifications since leaving school.

Providing you meet the personal eligibility criteria for Smart and Skilled, you are also eligible to enrol in a subsidised course at Certificate IV or above, but you will pay a higher fee than someone who does not have any qualifications.

These conditions do not apply for apprentices or trainees who are new entrants undertaking specific traineeships. These students are eligible for a government subsidy for the qualification that supports their apprenticeship or traineeship, regardless of any previous qualification they have, and they will pay the lower student fee.

Also, most foundation skills courses do not count as a post-school qualification. For a list of these courses, view Smart and Skilled training for people who want extra learning support.

Many years ago I completed a qualification outside Australia that is the equivalent to a Diploma. Does that make me ineligible for a subsidised Smart and Skilled course at Certificate III level or lower?

From 2016, if you have a Certificate IV or higher qualification you are able to access subsidised Smart and Skilled training up to Certificate III level, providing you meet the personal eligibility criteria for Smart and Skilled. As you already have a post-school qualification, you will pay a higher fee for your Smart and Skilled training than someone who does not have any qualifications.

You may also be eligible for subsidised training in targeted priority areas at Certificate IV level or higher, depending on funding availability.

If you commence an apprenticeship or new-entrant traineeship, you may be eligible for a government subsidy under Smart and Skilled for the qualification that supports the apprenticeship or traineeship.
I’m an Aboriginal person and have completed a Certificate IV qualification. Can I now enrol in a subsidised Smart and Skilled course at Certificate III level or lower?

From 2016, if you have a Certificate IV or higher qualification you are still able to access subsidised Smart and Skilled training up to Certificate III level, providing you meet the personal eligibility criteria for Smart and Skilled.

If you commence an apprenticeship or new-entrant traineeship you may be eligible for a government subsidy under Smart and Skilled for the qualification that supports the apprenticeship or traineeship.

You may also be eligible for subsidised training in targeted priority areas at Certificate IV level or higher, depending on funding availability.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who are eligible are exempt from fees for any Smart and Skilled courses.

For more information view Smart and Skilled training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

How many subsidised entry-level qualifications, up to Certificate III level, can I commence or complete under Smart and Skilled?

If you meet the Smart and Skilled eligibility conditions to undertake a qualification up to and including Certificate III, and if you don’t have any post-school qualifications, you will pay the lower fee for your first Smart and Skilled subsidised course at Certificate III level or lower.

You will pay a higher fee for any subsequent Smart and Skilled courses you undertake.

When I was still at school, I enrolled independently with TAFE and completed a vocational qualification. Does this affect my eligibility for Smart and Skilled training?

Any VET qualification obtained as part of your secondary education does not affect your eligibility for Smart and Skilled training. This is because it is not considered to be a post-school qualification.

If you independently enrolled in a VET qualification that was not a requirement of your secondary schooling and you obtained it after turning 17, this won’t affect your eligibility for Smart and Skilled training but your fee will be higher because your previous qualification is considered to be a post-school qualification.

For more information about your specific situation, contact an approved Smart and Skilled training provider. Go to the Course Finder to find the contact details for approved Smart and Skilled training providers that deliver your preferred course.

I’m not an Australian citizen or permanent resident, but I currently hold a humanitarian visa. Am I eligible to enrol in a Smart and Skilled course?
You are eligible to enrol in Smart and Skilled training if your immigration status falls under one of the Refugee and humanitarian or Onshore - Protection Refugee and humanitarian visa categories listed on the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

You and your approved Smart and Skilled training provider are advised to review these categories on the Immigration Department website at the time of your enrolment.

NOTE: If you are on a current temporary humanitarian stay visa, temporary humanitarian concern visa or bridging visa, you are eligible to enrol in Smart and Skilled where your training commences on or after 1 January 2017.

For further information, view Asylum seekers and refugees under Smart and Skilled training.