

Smart and Skilled

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SMART AND SKILLED UPDATE – NO. 181 - 184

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1. NEW SKILLS LIST REVIEW METHODOLOGY: CONSULTATION WEBINARS FOR SMART AND SKILLED PROVIDERS

The Department is updating the way it adds and removes qualifications from the NSW Skills List and would like to hear your feedback. The Department is proposing to create a more data driven process that selects qualifications for government subsidy that will meet the skills needs of the economy.

The Department has organised two webinars where attendees will be given an overview of the proposed approach and have an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback. Webinar details are provided further below.

a. Background

In 2021, the NSW Productivity Commission in its *White Paper 2021: Rebooting the Economy* provided several recommendations, including using labour market data to target subsidies towards qualifications that would meet the skills needs of the economy.

b. Existing Skills List management processes

The Department currently manages the NSW Skills List separately through the Skills List Additions and Skills List Optimisation processes.

The Skills List Additions process is usually conducted twice a year. Stakeholders are invited to submit proposals to add qualifications to the list, describing the need for the qualification along with supporting evidence.

The Skills List Optimisation process reviews qualifications on the Skills List with low Smart and Skilled training activity and/or low student outcomes. The Department identifies in-scope qualifications through data analysis then conducts stakeholder consultation with industry representatives and peak bodies, training providers and students before a decision is made to either remove, retain or move these qualifications to a prequalified list.

c. Proposed Skills List management process

The current process for managing the Skills List treats additions and removals separately, resulting in potential misalignment between qualifications that are removed and added. The proposed new process would consider both additions and removals together, once a year. This would ensure that the number of qualifications on the list stays relatively stable, however ad hoc requests to add qualifications outside of the annual process will still be considered if there is an identified need.

i. Data driven process that uses qualitative data

The Department's proposed data driven approach would initially score all nationally recognised qualifications against three weighted assessment criteria. The proposed assessment criteria are: (1) industry demand, (2) student outcomes and (3) disadvantaged student participation. The quantitative assessment would determine which qualifications would be considered for prioritisation on the Skills List.

The new data driven process would use labour market, skills shortage and student outcomes data from a range of sources including the National Skills Commission (NSC) and National Centre for Vocational Education and Research (NCVER). The Department is also planning to leverage internal data projects such as Pathways data for inclusion in the process.

ii. Qualitative feedback

Stakeholder feedback would still continue to play a role in prioritising qualifications. For example, stakeholders would still be invited to participate in consultations to discuss qualifications that have been identified for potential removal from the Skills List. Similarly, stakeholders would also be invited to complete an application form to request a qualification be added to the Skills List. Stakeholder feedback would also be important in validating the data from the quantitative assessment or filling in any data gaps.

If you have any questions please contact market.design@implementation.det.edu.au

2. SUMMER SKILLS 2022/23 – INTENT TO PARTICIPATE

The Department is inviting Smart and Skilled providers to submit an Intent to Participate in delivering part qualifications for the 2022/23 Summer Skills Initiative.

a. Student eligibility

The strategy supports young people, particularly school leavers, to obtain the skills they need in industries where there are immediate job opportunities.

To be eligible to access Summer Skills training, a person must first meet Smart and Skilled eligibility and also be one of the following:

- Leaving school permanently in 2022, i.e. Year 11 and 12 school leavers; or
- Not at school in 2022 and no more than 24 years old.

b. Priority industry areas

Funding will be available to Smart and Skilled providers to deliver part qualifications from the Skilling for Recovery (SfR) Priority Part Qualifications List in the following priority industry areas:

- Early Childhood Care
- Aged Care
- Disability
- Hospitality
- Construction
- Agriculture
- Business/ Admin
- IT/Digital
- Retail
- Transport and Logistics
- Manufacturing/Engineering
- Sport and Recreation.

Industry needs may differ from region to region. If there is an industry need that is not identified on the list, please contact a Skills Broker or your Strategic Relationship Manager in your local Training Services NSW Regional Office to discuss funding opportunities.

c. Training can commence from Monday 26 September 2022

The training enrolment period is from **26 September to 30 November 2022**.

All training must be completed **by 28 April 2023**.

d. Communications and engagement

2022/23 Summer Skills launched on **19 September 2022** with a focus on informing schools, school students and parents about the opportunities available.

The promotional campaign will run across a variety of media platforms from September 2022 through to the end of January 2023. Students will be able to view the courses on offer via a dedicated Summer Skills 2022/23 webpage on the Department's website.

e. Evaluation process of Summer Skills Intent to Participate

The Department will evaluate Summer Skills Intent to Participate requests based on the demand for courses in each region. Priorities will also vary in each region based on industry demand.

Requests will be assessed against:

- the demand for training in the selected region/regions;
- a provider's past performance under Smart and Skilled; and
- a provider's performance in delivering SfR part qualifications (including funding usage, i.e. enrolment and commencement rates).

Training Services NSW will consider the viability of the requested part qualification delivery in determining which providers are successful and the amount of funding they receive.

All training must be completed by 28 April 2023

f. Further information

If you have any questions regarding Summer Skills 2022/23, please get in touch with your Skills Broker in your local Training Services NSW Regional Office or email skillsbrokers@det.nsw.edu.au.

3. SMART AND SKILLED APPLICATION PROCESS FOR 2023-24

The Smart and Skilled application process opens on 1 November 2022 and will determine which registered training organisations (RTOs) are suitable for a Smart and Skilled contract and allocations for the 2023-24 financial year.

All current Smart and Skilled providers that are **not** High Performing Providers will need to be successful in the Smart and Skilled application process in order to be issued a Smart and Skilled contract for 2023-24 onwards.

RTOs seeking to enter the government-subsidised vocational education and training market in NSW are also being invited to apply.

Smart and Skilled High Performing Providers will be included in the assessment of future funding allocations; however, their status and contract will remain unchanged.

As part of the Smart and Skilled application process, RTOs will be required to supply the programs, regions and qualifications they wish to deliver and the number of students they expect to commence in 2023-24.

Further information about the Smart and Skilled application process, including eligibility criteria, how applications will be assessed and a summary of application questions is available at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/vocational/funding/smart-and-skilled-program-2023>. More information will be added to this page as and when it is available.

Training Services NSW aims to advise RTOs of the outcome of the Smart and Skilled application process and awarding of contracts in April 2023.

4. NORTH COAST EDUCATION FLOOD RECOVERY SUPPORT PACKAGE – RETROSPECTIVE FEE WAIVERS

As previously advised, under the North Coast Flood Recovery Package the NSW Government is providing fee-free training to Smart and Skilled students who have been enrolled with a provider for full qualifications in a Smart and Skilled course from 5 April 2022 to 30 June 2023 and who live, work or study in one of the following seven Local Government Areas (LGAs): Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Kyogle, Lismore, Richmond Valley and Tweed.

On 19 August 2022, the Department emailed affected providers with details of the students who had enrolled prior to the above announcement and for whom a CID had been obtained. In this email, providers were advised the fees for these students had been waived and adjusted in Training Services NSW's records to \$0. Providers were instructed to refund students any fees already paid and advised the student fees would be paid to them as part of their subsidy payments.

The Department will soon be writing to students who have had their fee adjusted retrospectively informing them of their fee adjustment and they should have either received a refund for any fees paid from their provider or should be receiving one in the near future.

The Department reminds providers who have affected students and received the aforementioned email to ensure they have or are taking steps to refund students any fees paid.

Please note that this update is for the information of approved Smart and Skilled Providers only. If Providers require further information for students or employers, please contact Training Market Customer Support, as above, unless otherwise instructed.