Smart and Skilled

SMART AND SKILLED UPDATE – NO. 290 4 November 2026

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1. SMART AND SKILLED STUDENT ELIGIBILITY POLICY

An updated version of the *Smart and Skilled Student Eligibility Policy (Released November 2026)* is now available at https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/vocational/funding/policies-smart-skilled and is attached to this update.

a. Exemption for Year 12 Students

The policy has been updated to provide an exemption for Year 12 students to enrol in Smart and Skilled training prior to completing the HSC, where the subsidised training commences after the HSC examination period.

This change will improve Year 12 students' access to subsidised training that can be delivered by Smart and Skilled providers and TAFE NSW. The change will bring the enrolment arrangements for subsidised training into closer alignment with early university offers.

A new Eligibility Waiver (W802) has been created and should be used where relevant in the Smart and Skilled Notification of Enrolment process.

Student eligibility waiver **W802** applies to Year 12 students to enrol in:

- Targeted Priorities Prevocational and Part Qualifications (TPPPQ) and part qualifications programs (including Prevocational, Pre-Apprenticeship, Pre-Traineeship, Targeted Skills funded training); and

- Smart and Skilled funding available through Entitlement Full Qualifications (EFQ) or Targeted Priorities Full Qualifications (TPFQ) (noting the separate requirements associated with Trade Related Qualifications below).

b. Trade Related Qualifications

Providers are reminded to comply with the *Smart and Skilled Trade-Related Qualifications Policy V5.2* (the Trade-Related Policy). The qualifications covered by the Trade-Related Policy are listed on the NSW Skills List, marked with a "T" for Trade Related in the "Additional Arrangements" column.

Students must meet the additional eligibility requirements including prior industry experience set out in the policy. Therefore these qualifications may not be suitable for enrolment by Year 12 students.

Further information on the Smart and Skilled Trade-Related Qualifications Policy is available here: https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/resources/trade-related-quals-policy.

The NSW Skills List can be accessed at https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/resources/nsw-skills-list.

For questions about changes to the Smart and Skilled Eligibility Policy, please contact your Regional Provider Support Manager.

2. 2026-27 SMART AND SKILLED TARGETED PRIORITIES PREVOCATIONAL AND PART QUALIFICATIONS OPERATING GUIDELINES – VERSION 2 RELEASED

The *2026-27 Smart and Skilled Targeted Priorities Prevocational and Part Qualifications Operating Guidelines* has been updated. This update clarifies the categories of existing workers eligible under the Smart and Skilled Targeted Priorities Prevocational and Part Qualifications (TPPPQ) program, as advised in Smart and Skilled Update No. 288 (12 October 2026).

a. Summary of the changes

The following sections have been added to the guidelines:

Section	Heading	Change
2.4	Eligible Existing Worker categories	New section added
2.4.1	TNI applications seeking funding for existing worker training	New section added
2.4.2	Requirements	New section added
2.4.3	Exclusions	New section added
2.4.4	Exceptions	New section added

b. Version 2 attached

The following program documents are attached to this update:

- *2026-27 Smart and Skilled Targeted Priorities Prevocational and Part Qualifications Operating Guidelines V2*

The attached document will also be available on STS Online.

3. REGISTER FOR THE SMART AND SKILLED PROVIDER WEBINAR – 10:00 AM FRIDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2026

Please join us for a Smart and Skilled Provider Webinar, hosted by Amanda Lawrence, Executive Director, Training Services, to hear the latest on Smart and Skilled and NSW Fee Free programs. The webinar will be held at **10:00am to 11:00am Friday 13 November 2026**.

You can register to participate here.

The department asks providers to please refrain from using AI tools when joining the webinar as these have caused technical issues with the broadcast in the past.

A recording of the webinar will be made available for those unable to attend. We will advise of the availability of this recording subsequent to the webinar date.

4. APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR ROUND 2 OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Applications for Round 2 of the 2026 Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Scholarship Program are **open until 10 am on 14 December 2026.**

Whether new to the early learning sector or already working in it, a scholarship can help students gain the skills and qualifications they need by reducing the cost of study.

Up to $6,000 is available to successful applicants who are enrolled in an eligible ECEC VET qualification with a Smart and Skilled provider, **commencing their first unit of study between 1 October 2026 and 31 March 2027.** Additional financial support is available for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students and those living in regional, remote and rural NSW.

Scholarships awarded to successful Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander applicants will be funded through the NSW Childcare and Economic Opportunity Fund.

a. How to apply

Applicants should:

- be aware that they can only submit one application and that submitted applications are final and cannot be updated, changed or added to once submitted.
- thoroughly review the program guidelines to ensure they understand eligibility and enrolment evidence requirements.
- Log in or create a MyServiceNSW account, which is required to apply, and review their MyServiceNSW profile to ensure information is up to date.
- submit their application online.

b. Share the opportunity

A toolkit with downloadable resources is available, including flyers and social media content, to help you share information about this opportunity with your network.

Unless otherwise directed in the information above, please refer enquiries regarding specific operational matters such as Financial Caps and programs/initiatives to your Regional Provider Support Manager.

Please contact Training Services Customer Service & Operations at TSCust.Service@det.nsw.edu.au for:

- technical support with issues such as system/information access and functionality and reporting
- further information for students or employers (unless otherwise directed).

Please note that this update is for the information of approved Smart and Skilled Providers only.