

Contract Notification

CN No.	2019-16	Date:	6 August 2019
To:	Chief Executive Officer or equivalent		
Purpose:	Variation to Contract		
Scope:	All 2018-19 VET Funding Contracts		
Subject:	'Curated' 2018-19 VET Funding Contracts (extended to 31 December 2020) (version 3.0) Updated versions of key supporting Guidelines		

For all Training Provider staff

Purpose

- This Contract Notification is to advise training providers that:
 - The 2018-19 VET Funding Contracts version 2.0 have been replaced with version 3.0. The Contracts have been:
 - updated to reflect variations already made throughout the 2019 calendar;
 - reviewed and varied for the purpose of continuous improvement and clarity; and
 - re-named to include the phrase '(extended to 31 December 2020)' to reflect the extension of the Contracts for an additional calendar year.
 - **two** of the three key Guidelines supporting the Contract have also been updated:
 - Version 1.0 of the 2019 Guidelines About Fees (the Fees Guidelines) is replaced with version 2.0; and
 - Version 1.0 of the 2019 Guidelines About Determining Student Eligibility and Supporting Evidence (the Eligibility Guidelines) is replaced with version 2.0.

Background

- The Department is committed to engaging with training providers and strengthening our relationships and understanding of your experience to help better inform our work and decision making.
- A key part of this commitment is to identify opportunities for continual improvement in our work based on your feedback and taking into account common enquiries or issues that are raised.
- To assist training providers, and in response to feedback that it would be beneficial to receive detailed information to keep track of Contract changes, the Department of Education and Training (the Department) has once again prepared 'curated' versions of the Contracts that:
 - incorporate all variations made to date in 2019 via Contract Notifications; and
 - include a number of additional variations to improve the clarity of requirements. These variations do not make significant alterations to any of the core terms and conditions of the Contracts or to any policy settings of the Skills First program.

- The Department has also made a number of changes to the Fees and Eligibility Guidelines, to align with the curated Contracts or to otherwise provide additional clarity. (**Note:** The 2019 Guidelines About Apprenticeship/Traineeship Delivery have **not** been amended and remain as version 1.0)
- It is recognised that some of the changes will require adjustments to business processes or systems, therefore information about implementation times for particular changes is provided within this Contract Notification.

Main Points

Key changes to note

- All changes to the Contracts and Guidelines and the reasons for the changes are summarised in **Attachment 1** to this Contract Notification. Key points to note are:
 - **Training Plans** – for **non-Apprentice/Trainee students**, there is a reduction in administrative burden by removing requirements to have formal sign off on Training Plans and allowing more flexibility in how Training Plan information is distributed.
 - **Evidence of Participation** – the requirements have been edited to improve clarity. The requirements have also been reviewed for consistency with the NCVET Non-Financial Audit Guidelines. Victoria has at times chosen to include additional requirements above these nationally agreed requirements published by NCVET, to provide greater assurance in light of issues observed in the market. These include requiring a student signature on evidence of work submitted and requiring additional teacher endorsed supporting documentation for a record of assessment. The Department has determined that these additional requirements can now be removed.
 - **Practical Placement requirements** – the Contract now includes a clear definition of a Practical Placement and clearer information about when a Practical Placement agreement is required.
 - **Use of the Document Verification Service (DVS)** – This is already an option that can be used to check particular forms of student's evidence of citizenship/permanent residence when assessing eligibility. This is now also included as an option for checking a student's evidence of concession entitlement. The Department has also made some adjustments to the wording to clarify what is to be sighted and retained when using the DVS.
 - **Additional clarity about checking concession entitlement** – The Guidelines now include a side-by-side table to make it clearer what evidence of concession entitlement should be sighted and retained under various options.

It has also been clarified that training providers should note the date upon which they check a student's concession entitlement, to be able to demonstrate that it was current and valid at the time it was checked.

The Guidelines also include clarification of when a concession entitlement should be checked again after it is checked initially as part of enrolment.

Training providers need to re-check a student's entitlement if their business process is such that all fees associated with a course of study/enrolment are **not** charged in one instance. For example, if fees are charged for each semester of study or each year, then after initially checking concession entitlement as part of enrolment, the Training Provider must re-check each time a new invoice is issued to the individual for fees associated with that enrolment that have not previously been charged.

Note: Where a training provider offers an individual a 'payment plan' (meaning that the individual is charged all fees for their course of study/enrolment and incurs all debt in one instance, but the Training Provider allows the student to pay in instalments), the training provider does not need to re-check concession entitlement each time an invoice is issued when an instalment amount is due to be paid.

- **Evidence of Eligibility and Student Declaration Form** – the form has been redesigned to improve readability and encourage and support its full and accurate completion.
- **Students under 17** – training providers are advised the Contract is amended to clarify that they must both sight and retain evidence that a student under 17 has received an exemption from school attendance. The Contract has also been clarified to state that if a student is under 17 at the time of enrolment, but will be 17 or over at the time of commencement of training, the training provider does not have to sight an exemption from school attendance.

- **Attachment 2** to this Contract Notification provides a detailed list of specific changes to the Contracts, including additions and deletions.

Implementation timeframes for particular changes

- Training providers are advised that given the following changes may have implications for business processes or systems, additional lead time can be taken to implement them. Training providers are advised these requirements can be implemented no later than **1 January 2020**:
 - Requirement to have a clear and documented business process for authorisation of Training Plans for non-Apprentices/Trainees and changes to the items that are required to be included in a Training Plan (**Clause 7.3 of Schedule 1**).
 - Adopt the new *Evidence of Eligibility and Student Declaration* form (**Attachment 3 of the Eligibility Guidelines**).
 - Ensure that concession testing practices align with the clarification provided in the Fees Guidelines (**Clauses 3.4 and 3.5 of the Fees Guidelines**)
- As all other changes are simply clarifications to existing requirements, they take effect immediately.

Resources

- Version 3.0 Contracts and version 2.0 of the 2019 Fees and Eligibility Guidelines are available in the 'Documents' section of SVTS. All variations within the documents are highlighted in grey.
 - 2018-19 TAFE VET Funding Contract (extended to 31 December 2020) (version 3.0)
 - 2018-19 Dual Sector VET Funding Contract (extended to 31 December 2020) (version 3.0)
 - 2018-19 Standard VET Funding Contract (extended to 31 December 2020) (version 3.0)
 - 2018-19 Restricted VET Funding Contract (extended to 31 December 2020) (version 3.0)
 - 2018-19 VET Funding Contract (extended to 31 December 2020) Non-Victorian Based Training Provider Delivering to a National Enterprise (version 3.0)
 - 2019 Guidelines About Fees (version 2.0)
 - 2019 Guidelines About Determining Student Eligibility and Supporting Evidence (version 2.0)

Critical dates

- **1 January 2020** to implement the following requirements:
 - Requirement to have a clear and documented business process for authorisation of Training Plans for non-Apprentices/Trainees and changes to the items that are required to be included in a Training Plan.
 - Adopt the new *Evidence of Eligibility and Student Declaration* form.
 - Ensure that concession testing practices align with the clarification provided in the Fees Guidelines.

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