

2020 Guidelines about Fees

Skills First Program

Department of Education and Training

PURPOSE

Training Providers that are contracted with the Victorian Government to deliver training subsidised through the *Skills First* Program are bound by the requirements of the VET Funding Contract. The 2020 Guidelines About Fees (the Guidelines) must be read in conjunction with the VET Funding Contract.

The purpose of these Guidelines is to describe requirements regarding tuition fees and other fees associated with government subsidised training and to set out financial and accountability requirements with regard to fees. These Guidelines apply to all enrolments in training subsidised through the *Skills First* Program.

SECTION 1

1. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CALCULATION AND LEVYING OF FEES

- 1.1. The Training Provider must set and publish in a prominent place on its website the standard tuition fee payable for each enrolment in a course and all other fees associated with government funded training including but not limited to those specified in Section 4 of these Guidelines.
- 1.2. Prior to the commencement of training, the Training Provider must supply each Eligible Individual with a Statement of Fees. The Statement of Fees must provide the Eligible Individual with a quote for the total cost to them, for their course of study/enrolment, taking into account their current circumstances (including any eligibility for concession).
- 1.3. The Statement of Fees must include, at a minimum:
 - a. the code, title and currency of the training product in which the Eligible Individual is to be enrolled, as published on the National Register;
 - b. the training and assessment, and related educational and support services, the Training Provider will provide to the Eligible Individual, including the:
 - i. estimated duration;
 - ii. expected locations at which training and assessment will occur;
 - iii. expected modes of delivery;
 - iv. name and contact details of any approved third party that will provide training and/or assessment, and related educational and support services to the Eligible Individual on the Training Provider's behalf; and
 - v. any work placement or practical placement arrangements.
 - c. the hourly tuition fees relevant to the Eligible Individual enrolment taking account of any applicable concessions or waiver/exemptions;
 - d. the approximate value of the government contribution expressed in dollars; and
 - e. any other applicable fees, such as student services, amenities, goods or materials.
- 1.4. The Training Provider may provide the required Statement of Fees electronically, provided that:
 - a. each Eligible Individual can clearly determine the fees relevant to their specific enrolment (e.g. full fee, Entitlement to Funded Training, concession, etc);
 - b. the information is easy to find and easy for each Eligible Individual to understand as it relates to their enrolment;
 - c. Eligible Individuals are able to record (e.g. print or e-mail to themselves) a document confirming their details and relevant fees for future reference;
 - d. a document (electronic or otherwise) is created confirming that a Statement of Fees was generated for each Eligible Individual and providing the content of the Statement, and in such a format that could be audited; and
 - e. the electronic documentation contains all the information described in Clause 1.3.

VET Student Loans where a student is funded under the Skills First Program
- 1.5. Where an Eligible Individual, whose training is funded under the *Skills First* Program, is accessing VET Student Loans to pay the tuition fee, the Training Provider must inform the Department and the Eligible Individual if it charges a tuition fee in excess of the Training Provider's standard tuition fee (as published by the Training Provider in accordance with Clause 1.1 of these Guidelines).

SECTION 2**2. TUITION FEE WAIVERS/EXEMPTIONS**

- 2.1. The Training Provider must allow tuition fee waivers/exemptions in accordance with this Section 2 of these Guidelines.
- 2.2. Prior to the commencement of training, the Training Provider must sight and retain copies of all documentation demonstrating an individual's eligibility for the tuition fee waiver/exemption granted by the Training Provider for audit or review purposes and to meet the record keeping requirements set out in Section 6 of these Guidelines.
- 2.3. The Training Provider must report to the Department all tuition fee waivers/exemptions granted by the Training Provider in accordance with the Victorian VET Student Statistical Collection Guidelines as issued by the Department from time to time.
Judy Lazarus Transition Centre
- 2.4. The Training Provider must not charge a tuition fee for enrolment by an individual who is from the Judy Lazarus Transition Centre (as a prisoner within the meaning of the *Corrections Act 1986*).
- 2.5. The Training Provider must retain a copy of written confirmation from the management of the Judy Lazarus Transition Centre that the individual meets the requirements of Clause 2.4.
Young people on community based orders
- 2.6. The Training Provider must not charge a tuition fee for enrolment by an individual who is required to undertake the course pursuant to a community based order made under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*.
- 2.7. The Training Provider must retain a copy of written confirmation from the relevant Youth Justice Unit of the Victorian Department of Justice and Regulation that the individual meets the requirements of clause 2.6.
Skills First Youth Access Initiative (TAFE, Learn Local Organisations or the Centre for Adult Education or AMES only)
- 2.8. The Training Provider must not charge a tuition fee for enrolment by an individual referred to them with a validly endorsed referral form from either the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department, the Department of Justice and Regulation, or a referring agency (a referring agency is defined for this purpose as an organisation that is based in the State of Victoria that currently receives funding or is contracted by the Victorian Government or the Commonwealth Government to provide services to children, youth or families).
- 2.9. The Training Provider must retain the original referral form, and return a copy to the relevant referring agency.
Free TAFE for Priority Courses (TAFE and Dual Sector universities only)
- 2.10. The Training Provider must not charge a tuition fee for enrolment by an Eligible Individual who commences a course on the Free TAFE for Priority Courses list on or after 1 January 2019 where the individual meets the requirements for this Fee Waiver.

SECTION 3**3. CONCESSION FEES**

- 3.1. The Training Provider must allow concessions on standard fees in accordance with this Section 3 of these Guidelines.
- 3.2. The concession fee must be 20 per cent of the Training Provider's published standard tuition fee as described in Clause 1.1, being the fee that the Training Provider would have charged a non-concession government subsidised student in the same course at that time.
- 3.3. The Training Provider must check an individual's eligibility for concession as part of enrolment and prior to the commencement of training.
- 3.4. Where the Training Provider's business process is such that they do not charge all fees associated with a course of study/enrolment in one instance (for example, if fees are charged for each semester or year of study), then after initially checking an individual's eligibility for concession as part of enrolment, the Training Provider must re-check an individual's eligibility for concession each time a new invoice is issued to the individual for fees associated with that enrolment that have not previously been charged.

- 3.5. Where the Training Provider offers an individual a 'payment plan' (meaning that the individual is charged all fees associated with a course of study/enrolment in one instance, but the Training Provider enters into an arrangement with the individual such that they will pay the amount that is owed 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.
- 3.6. If an individual who was previously eligible for a concession under this Section 3 becomes ineligible for the concession before the completion of the hours for which they have paid tuition fees, this does not affect the tuition fees payable for the enrolment.
- 3.7. The Training Provider must report to the Department all fee concessions granted by the Training Provider in accordance with the Victorian VET Student Statistical Collection Guidelines as issued by the Department from time to time.

General Concessions

- 3.8. For enrolments in courses at the Certificate IV level and below, the Training Provider must charge the concession fee to an individual who, prior to the commencement of training, holds a current and valid:
- Health Care Card issued by the Commonwealth;
 - Pensioner Concession Card; or
 - Veteran's Gold Card; or
 - an alternative card or concession eligibility criterion approved by the Minister for the purposes of these Guidelines.
- 3.9. The concessions provided for in Clause 3.7 (a) and (b) also apply to a dependant spouse or dependant child of a card holder.

Evidence of Eligibility for a General Concession

- 3.10. The Training Provider must sight and retain (electronically or in hard copy) copies of all documentation demonstrating an individual's eligibility for a concession. Documentation must be kept such that an individual's eligibility for concession can be confirmed by the Department for audit or review purposes and such that it meets the record keeping requirements set out in Section 6 of these Guidelines, by:

| | <i>Sighting</i> | <i>Retaining</i> |
|------|---|--|
| i. | a hard copy original | a photocopy or electronic copy of the hard copy original, indicating the date upon which it was sighted. |
| or | | |
| ii. | the concession card displayed on a Digital Wallet through a Centrelink Express Plus mobile application on the cardholder's mobile device. These cards may not be sighted via a screen shot of the card that is e-mailed or otherwise produced | a written declaration attached to the student's file stating that the digital concession card has been sighted. The declaration must include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> name of the authorised delegate who sighted the digital concession card; date the digital concession card was sighted; document number of the concession card; and Name of concession holder; |
| or | | |
| iii. | the equivalent record of a concession card as extracted from Centrelink Confirmation eServices by the Training Provider | an extract from Centrelink Confirmation eServices showing: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the date upon which the extract was made; document number of the concession card; and name of concession holder |
| or | | |

| | <i>Sighting</i> | <i>Retaining</i> |
|-----|--|---|
| iv. | <p>if the Training Provider engages a Gateway Service Provider¹ to access the Commonwealth Government's Document Verification Service (DVS)² to check concession entitlement:</p> <p>A. a unique verification number or code issued by the Gateway Service Provider after it has connected to the DVS and has verified the details an individual has entered into an online form or provided to the training provider to evidence their concession entitlement; and</p> <p>B. confirming via securely logging into the administrative platform provided by the Gateway Service Provider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the type of concession card that the individual holds and that it is an accepted type of concession card; and • that the issuing of the unique number or code by the Gateway Service Provider has verified that an individual's name and date of birth matches a valid and current document number in the DVS. | <p>a transaction record that can be viewed by securely logging in to the administrative platform provided by a Gateway Service Provider, that:</p> <p>A. indicates the type of concession card that was checked;</p> <p>B. indicates the date upon which it was checked; and</p> <p>C. confirms that the individual's name and date of birth were verified to match a valid and current document number in the DVS.</p> |

- 3.11. Training Providers should exercise reasonable judgement where a prospective student is not able to produce appropriate proof of concession as part of enrolment and prior to the commencement of training. For example, the Department would consider it reasonable to allow an individual a grace period to provide their proof of concession, provided that this was documented within a business process and able to be audited. If a grace period is applied for an individual to provide proof of concession after the commencement of training, when that individual does provide proof of concession, the Training Provider must ensure the concession was valid at the time of commencement of training.

Concession Entitlement Under Particular Government Initiatives

Indigenous Completions Initiative

- 3.12. Under the Indigenous Completions Initiative, for enrolments in a course at any level the Training Provider must charge the concession fee to individuals who self-identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent (and are reported as such through the "Indigenous Student Identifier" field of the Student Statistical Report).
- 3.13. The Training Provider must retain a copy of the enrolment form on which the individual self-identified as indigenous.

Asylum Seeker VET Program

- 3.14. Under the Asylum Seeker VET program, for enrolments in courses at the Certificate IV level and below, the Training Provider must charge the concession fee to an asylum seeker or trafficked person enrolled on or after 1 July 2016.
- 3.15. The evidence of eligibility for concession that should be sighted and retained by the Training Provider is:
- a. a validly endorsed referral form – *Referral to Government Subsidised Training – Asylum Seekers* from the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre; or
 - b. a validly endorsed referral form – *Referral to Government Subsidised Training – Asylum Seekers* from the Australian Red Cross Victims of Human Trafficking Program; or

¹ A Gateway Service Provider is an organisation authorised to direct information match requests to and from the Commonwealth Government's Document Verification Service.

² The Document Verification Service (DVS) is a national online system that allows organisations to compare an individual's identifying information with a government record.

- c. where a TAFE Institute or Learn Local Organisation has confirmed a student's eligibility for the Program, evidence the individual holds a valid Visa type obtained by using the Commonwealth Visa Entitlement Verification Online.

Back to Work Scheme

- 3.16. Under the Back to Work Scheme, if the Training Provider is a TAFE Institute or Dual Sector University as defined in the Act, for enrolments in courses at any level, the Training Provider must charge the concession fee to an Eligible Individual, whether or not the individual holds a relevant concession card specified at Clause 3.6.
- 3.17. The evidence of eligibility for concession that should be sighted and retain by the Training Provider is a copy of the standard email by the State Revenue Office to the individual's employer that confirms the individual's status as a Back to Work participant.

SECTION 4

4. OTHER FEES

- 4.1. The Training Provider must publish on its website all other fees associated with government subsidised training including but not limited to any student services and amenities fees, fees for goods, services or materials and administration fees.
- 4.2. If the Training Provider imposes any other fees, including but not limited to those outlined in Clause 4.1, the Training Provider must supply the individual with itemised details of the fees *prior* to the commencement of training as part of a Statement of Fees.

SECTION 5

5. REFUNDS

- 5.1. The Training Provider must supply each individual with a clear refund policy *prior* to enrolment that is fair, reasonable and covers scenarios relating to withdrawal by the student, course cancellation, closure of the Training Provider and any other reasonable matter and that meets the standards of the Training Provider's relevant regulator.
- 5.2. Notwithstanding Clause 5.1, enrolments in courses eligible for VET Student Loans are subject to VET Student Loan requirements.

SECTION 6

6. ACCOUNTS AND RECORDS OF TUITION FEES AND OTHER FEES

- 6.1. The accounts and records kept by the Training Provider must clearly distinguish income for fee-for-service training from government subsidised training.
- 6.2. The Training Provider must establish and maintain a separate general ledger account to record receipt of income from fees for tuition and the payment of refunds of tuition fees.
- 6.3. The Training Provider shall keep records, including evidence and the date upon which evidence was sighted, to support any claim for a contribution towards revenue foregone as a result of granting concessions or waivers/exemptions.

Attachment 1**FREE TAFE FOR PRIORITY COURSES LIST**

The following list will be updated from time to time as determined by the Department.

NON-APPRENTICESHIP COURSES

| Course code | Qualification |
|--------------------|--|
| AHC20116 | Certificate II in Agriculture |
| AHC30116 | Certificate III in Agriculture |
| AHC30216 | Certificate III in Agriculture (Dairy Production) |
| AHC30716 | Certificate III in Horticulture |
| AHC40116 | Certificate IV in Agriculture |
| CHC30113 | Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care |
| CHC30213 | Certificate III in Education Support |
| CHC32015 | Certificate III in Community Services |
| CHC33015 | Certificate III in Individual Support |
| CHC40213 | Certificate IV in Education Support |
| CHC40313 | Certificate IV in Child, Youth and Family Intervention |
| CHC40413 | Certificate IV in Youth Work |
| CHC42015 | Certificate IV in Community Services |
| CHC43015 | Certificate IV in Ageing Support |
| CHC43115 | Certificate IV in Disability |
| CHC43215 | Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs |
| CHC43315 | Certificate IV in Mental Health |
| CHC43515 | Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work |
| CHC50113 | Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care |
| CHC52015 | Diploma of Community Services |
| CPC30313 | Certificate III in Concreting |
| CPC30318 | Certificate III in Concreting |
| CPC31411 | Certificate III in Construction Waterproofing |
| CPC40110 | Certificate IV in Building and Construction (Building) |
| CPC40912 | Certificate IV in Plumbing and Services |
| CPC50210 | Diploma of Building and Construction (Building) |
| CPC60115 | Advanced Diploma of Building Surveying |
| FNS40217 | Certificate IV in Accounting and Bookkeeping |
| FNS50217 | Diploma of Accounting |
| FNS60217 | Advanced Diploma of Accounting |
| HLT33015 | Certificate III in Allied Health Assistance |
| HLT33115 | Certificate III in Health Services Assistance |
| HLT35015 | Certificate III in Dental Assisting |
| HLT43015 | Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance |

| Course code | Qualification |
|--------------------|--|
| HLT45015 | Certificate IV in Dental Assisting |
| HLT54115 | Diploma of Nursing |
| MEM40105 | Certificate IV in Engineering |
| MEM40119 | Certificate IV in Engineering |
| RII30815 | Certificate III in Civil Construction Plant Operations |
| RII30915 | Certificate III in Civil Construction |
| RII40715 | Certificate IV in Civil Construction Supervision |
| SIT30116 | Certificate III in Tourism |
| SIT30616 | Certificate III in Hospitality |
| SIT30816 | Certificate III in Commercial Cookery |
| TLI32515 | Certificate III in Rail Infrastructure |
| 22320VIC | Diploma of Justice |
| 22334VIC | Certificate IV in Cyber Security |

APPRENTICESHIP PATHWAY COURSES

| Course code | Qualification |
|--------------------|--|
| AUR20218 | Certificate II in Automotive Air Conditioning Technology |
| AUR20916 | Certificate II in Automotive Body Repair Technology |
| AUR20516 | Certificate II in Automotive Servicing Technology |
| AUR20716 | Certificate II in Automotive Vocational Preparation |
| FBP20217 | Certificate II in Baking |
| 22338VIC | Certificate II in Building and Construction Pre-apprenticeship |
| CPC20211 | Certificate II in Construction Pathways |
| 22499VIC | Certificate II in Electrotechnology (Pre-vocational) |
| UEE22011 | Certificate II in Electrotechnology (Career Start) |
| MEM20413 | Certificate II in Engineering Pathways |
| 22470VIC | Certificate II in Engineering Studies |
| MSF20313 | Certificate II in Furniture Making |
| MSF20413 | Certificate II in Glass and Glazing |
| AHC20416 | Certificate II in Horticulture |
| AMP20117 | Certificate II in Meat Processing (Food Services) |
| 22304VIC | Certificate II in Plumbing (Pre-apprenticeship) |
| ICP20115 | Certificate II in Printing and Graphic Arts (General) |
| ICP20120 | Certificate II in Printing and Graphic Arts |
| AHC20716 | Certificate II in Production Nursery |
| SHB20216 | Certificate II in Salon Assistant |
| 22285VIC | Certificate II in Signage and Graphics |