

# Sighting and retaining evidence of eligibility

This fact sheet explains what must be sighted and retained when you check a student's evidence of eligibility for the Skills First program. Read it alongside the VET Funding Contract and Guidelines About Eligibility.

## Background

Before you enrol a student in Skills First training, you must make sure they're eligible. This includes confirming they're an Australian or New Zealand citizen or a permanent resident of Australia. You also must confirm their age (if it's relevant to their eligibility).

You must establish eligibility in a robust way that we can verify at an audit or review. This includes sighting and retaining copies of documents.

## Types of evidence we accept

### Proving citizenship/permanent residence

We accept these documents as proof of citizenship/ permanent residence:

If the student is:	You can accept <b>ANY</b> of these:
an Australian citizen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Australian birth certificate (not birth extract)</li> <li>✓ Current Australian Passport</li> <li>✓ Australian citizenship certificate</li> <li>✓ Current green Medicare card</li> <li>✓ Australian certificate of registration by descent</li> </ul>
a NZ citizen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Current New Zealand Passport</li> <li>✓ New Zealand birth certificate</li> <li>✓ New Zealand citizenship certificate</li> <li>✓ Current green Medicare card</li> </ul>

If the student is:	You can accept <b>ANY</b> of these:
a permanent resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Current green Medicare card</li> <li>✓ Formal confirmation of permanent residence granted by the Department of Home Affairs <b>AND</b> the student's foreign passport or ImmiCard</li> </ul>
an asylum seeker enrolling under the Asylum Seeker VET program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ a 'Referral to Government Subsidised Training - Asylum Seekers' form from the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre or the Australian Red Cross</li> <li>✓ Confirmation through the Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) system that the student has a valid visa type accepted for participation</li> </ul>
in exceptional circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A proxy declaration signed by the training provider CEO or a government or community services provider, approved by the Department</li> </ul>

## Proving age

You **only** need to collect proof of age if:

- the document used to prove citizenship/residence doesn't include it
- age is relevant to eligibility, for example, if the student is under 20 years of age and you need to show they don't need to meet the upskilling requirement.

We accept these documents as proof of age:

- ✓ current drivers licence
- ✓ current learner permit
- ✓ Proof of Age card
- ✓ 'Keypass' card
- ✓ Current foreign passport.

## Using a proxy declaration

If a student doesn't have any of the accepted forms of evidence of eligibility, they may be able to make a case to show they're in exceptional circumstances.

You must firstly make all reasonable efforts to help them prove their eligibility in the conventional way. If the student is simply unwilling to bear the cost or inconvenience of obtaining documents, this won't be considered exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances might include where a student:

- grew up in a remote location and their birth was not registered
- is experiencing disadvantage or estrangement from family or guardians and they don't have access to identity documents.

If the student is in exceptional circumstances, we may accept a proxy declaration signed by your CEO, or a representative from a government department or community service provider.

You must lodge an SVTS enquiry and ask us to approve using a proxy declaration. You need to include any supporting evidence and information to make the case for the student.

If we approve the proxy declaration, you must keep a copy of it and the Department's approval.

## Using eligibility evidence again for future enrolments

If you keep a copy of the student's eligibility evidence on file, you can use it again the next time they enrol with you.

The document must still be current and valid. You must continue to keep a copy of the evidence for audit or review purposes.

You must also make all other assessments of the student's eligibility for the new enrolment.

## Ways to sight and retain evidence

There are **seven** ways to sight and retain evidence of eligibility.

SIGHT:	RETAIN:
1. An original document, presented in person	A photocopy or electronic copy
2. An <b>original</b> certified copy of the document, presented in person or sent by post	A photocopy or electronic copy
3. Confirmation the student's details are verified to match a current and valid document in the Document Verification Service (DVS)	A transaction record showing the document was verified in the DVS
4. A green Medicare card displayed on a Digital Wallet through the Express Plus Medicare mobile app	A written declaration
5. A digital 'Keypass' card using the Australian Post Digital iD mobile app	A written declaration
6. An email or pdf document the student has obtained from the VEVO system that confirms they hold a permanent visa  <b>AND</b> An original or certified copy of the student's foreign passport or ImmiCard	Electronic or paper copies of both documents
7. Your own VEVO check on the student's behalf, that shows they hold a permanent visa and that the details on the VEVO check match the details on their foreign passport or ImmiCard	The VEVO transaction record that shows the student's details and permanent visa status

## Sighting certified copies of a document

A certified copy is made when a student presents their original document and a photocopy of it to a 'certifier'.

The certifier will examine:

- the original, to check it isn't a copy or forgery
- the copy, to check it's identical to the original.

The certifier writes or stamps the copy with the words: 'Certified to be a true copy of the original seen by me.' They sign and date it and write or stamp their details.

For information about who can be a certifier, see the [Guidelines About Eligibility](#), or the [Department of Justice and Community Safety website](#).

## Formally confirming permanent residence

In most cases, permanent residents will have a green Medicare card and can use this as evidence of eligibility for Skills First.

If the student doesn't have a green Medicare card, you can confirm permanent residence through VEVO.

There are two ways this can be done:

1. The student can log in to their own VEVO account and generate a summary of their visa information.
2. If you're registered with the Department of Home Affairs, and if the student gives you their permission and identifying information, you can do a VEVO check on their behalf.

If a student gives you a self-generated VEVO check, this may be in the form of an email or pdf document. You'll need to:

- look for the logo of the Department of Home Affairs on the VEVO check
- look for information in the VEVO check that clearly shows the student has a permanent visa
- make sure the student's name on the VEVO check is the same as it is on their passport or ImmiCard.

## Using the DVS

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

We encourage you to use the DVS as an efficient and secure way to check Skills First eligibility.

You can use it to check a range of Australian government-issued documents, including citizenship, birth certificates and drivers' licences.

### Engage a Gateway Service Provider

To use the DVS, you must engage a Gateway Service Provider.

This is an organisation authorised by the Commonwealth Government to match information requests to and from the DVS. For more information about how to become a DVS user, refer to the [Commonwealth Government's website](#).

## Sighting and retaining evidence

When you use the DVS, you **don't** have to sight and retain a copy of the student's document. Instead, you sight confirmation from the Gateway Service Provider that the details on the student's document match a current and valid record in the DVS database

You must retain a transaction record that shows the student's details, and that they were verified to match a valid and current document in the DVS. You don't need to print this – you can retain it electronically. An electronic record can usually be kept within the Gateway Service Provider's administrative platform. But if not, keep a secure electronic version that can't be easily altered.

### If a document can't be verified

If a student's evidence can't be verified through the DVS, you need to give them the opportunity to provide it in another way before making a final decision about their eligibility.

## Further information

Submit an enquiry via [SVTS](#)

[Fact sheet: Skills First Eligibility](#)

[Fact sheet: Using electronic signatures](#)

[Fact sheet: Recordkeeping requirement](#)