

Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships



For concession-eligible students

If you are aged 15-30 years and eligible for a Smart and Skilled concession fee (concession-eligible), you may receive a Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarship.

A Fee-Free Scholarship is a government subsidy that helps you to complete your training under Smart and Skilled without paying a student fee. All qualifications on the NSW Skills List (see the Course Finder at www.smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au) from Certificate I to Certificate IV level, including qualifications that support apprenticeships and traineeships, are covered.

Who is concession-eligible under Smart and Skilled?

1. To be concession-eligible, you must *first* meet the Smart and Skilled eligibility criteria.

You must be:

- an Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident, humanitarian visa holder or New Zealand citizen; and
- no longer at school; and
- living or working in NSW; and
- aged 15 years or over

OR

- a NSW apprentice or a new entrant trainee undertaking a NSW Skills List qualification that supports your apprenticeship or traineeship.

2. You are then eligible for a Smart and Skilled concession fee¹ if:

- you receive a specified Australian Government payment/allowance (see Table 1) or hold a pensioner concession card issued by Centrelink

OR

- your parent or guardian or spouse or partner receives a specified Australian Government payment (see Table 1) or holds a pensioner concession card, and you are a listed dependant.

You will need to provide evidence of your payment or concession card, or your dependant status.

I am concession-eligible. Am I also eligible for a Fee-Free Scholarship?

To meet the additional criteria for a Fee-Free Scholarship as a concession-eligible student, you must be:

- aged between 15 and 30 years when you start training; and
- enrolling in a Smart and Skilled subsidised Certificate I, II, III or IV level qualification with an approved Smart and Skilled training provider.

How do I apply for a Fee-Free Scholarship?

You do not need to lodge a formal application.

If you meet the criteria above, the Smart and Skilled training provider you choose will advise you when you enrol if you are eligible for a Fee-Free Scholarship.

¹ Concession fees apply to qualifications from Certificate I to Certificate IV level only. There are no concession fees for Diplomas or Advanced Diplomas as you may be able to access VET Student Loans for these qualifications.

You should let your training provider know if you are also living in or on the waitlist for NSW Social Housing as you will be guaranteed a scholarship to start training.

The student declaration at enrolment will ask you to confirm that the information provided, including your social housing status, is true and correct.

Where can I train?

You can enrol with a Smart and Skilled training provider of your choice. Training providers include:

- TAFE NSW
- NSW adult and community education colleges
- private training colleges
- NSW government departments
- employers and industry organisations.

How much is the Fee-Free Scholarship worth?

The Fee-Free Scholarship covers your student fee. It is paid directly to your Smart and Skilled training provider by the NSW Government.

You may still be charged fees for 'incidental expenses', such as for essential tools or for field trips. Your training provider must let you know of any fees for incidental expenses at enrolment.

How many scholarships can I receive?

You may undertake one Fee-Free Scholarship per financial year², and a maximum of two scholarships between 1 July 2015 and 30 June 2019. This means if you undertake Fee-Free Scholarship training in one financial year, you cannot receive another Fee-Free Scholarship for another course if it is in the same financial year.

² A financial year starts on 1 July and finishes 30 June the following year.

What does "NSW Social Housing" mean?

For the purposes of Fee-Free Scholarships, *NSW Social Housing* includes:

- tenants and approved household members or additional occupants living in:
 - public housing (owned and managed by the NSW Government or managed by a community housing provider)
 - community housing (owned and/or managed by community housing providers)
 - Aboriginal housing (owned and/or managed by the Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) and Aboriginal Community Housing Providers)
- individuals receiving:
 - crisis accommodation or supported accommodation (Specialist Homelessness Services)
 - private rental assistance funded by Family and Community Services (for example: private rental subsidy, rental bond loans, tenancy guarantees).

Additional occupants and other household members must be approved by FACS or your Social Housing Provider to be living in NSW Social Housing.

Are there other eligibility categories for Fee-Free Scholarships?

If you do not meet the concession-eligible criteria in this fact sheet, you may still qualify for a Fee-Free Scholarship if you meet the Smart and Skilled eligibility criteria and:

- you are aged between 15 and 30 years and are or have been in out-of-home care; or
- you are aged 15 years or over and are experiencing or have experienced domestic and family violence, or are the dependant of someone who is experiencing or has experienced domestic and family violence.

To find out more about the other eligibility categories for Fee-Free Scholarships, please see the fact sheets *Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships – For young people in out-of-home care* and *Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships – For people who are experiencing or have experienced domestic and family violence*.

Are there other circumstances under Smart and Skilled where I do not have to pay a student fee?

You do not have to pay a student fee if you meet the Smart and Skilled eligibility criteria and:

- you are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (through descent, self-identification or community identification); or
- you meet the Smart and Skilled disability criteria (proof of a disability support pension or documentary evidence from an appropriate medical professional is required); or
- you are the dependant of a disability support pension recipient.

In these cases, you are eligible for a fee exemption.

Go to smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/for-students/students-with-additional-needs to find out more.

Steps for finding a Smart and Skilled course and receiving a Fee-Free Scholarship

1. Check your eligibility for Smart and Skilled at smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/are-you-eligible.
2. Use the Course Finder function at smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/sands/find-a-course to find a training course and a Smart and Skilled provider that offers that course.
3. Once you have selected a course and a training provider, take note of the provider's website and other contact details so that you can contact them to enquire about the course you are interested in.
4. Visit your chosen training provider's website to find out what you need to do to enrol or alternatively call them and advise that you wish to enrol.

General enrolment information is available at smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/for-students/how-to-enrol.

Table 1: Specified Australian Government benefits and allowances

▪ Age Pension	▪ Austudy
▪ Carer Payment (see comment below)	▪ Disability Support Pension
▪ Family Tax Benefit Part A (maximum rate)	▪ Farm Household Allowance
▪ Newstart Allowance	▪ Parenting Payment (Single)
▪ Sickness Allowance	▪ Special Benefit
▪ Veterans' Affairs Pensions	▪ Veterans' Children Education Scheme
▪ Widow Allowance	▪ Widow B Pension
▪ Wife Pension	▪ Youth Allowance

- Note:**
- If you are a NSW Apprentice on a Newstart Allowance or a NSW Apprentice who is the dependant of a person receiving a Newstart Allowance, you are not eligible for a concession fee.
 - If you are a NSW New Entrant Trainee on a Newstart Allowance or a NSW New Entrant Trainee who is the dependant of a person receiving a Newstart Allowance, you are not eligible for a concession fee.
 - The Carer Payment is a specific benefit paid by the Australian Government; this category does not include the Carer Allowance or Carer Adjustment Payment.

For more information

For more information and fact sheets, see smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/for-students/fee-free-scholarships or contact 1300 772 104 or smartandskilled.enquiries@industry.nsw.gov.au.

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