

Certificate 3 Guarantee Program Policy 2020-21

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All documents are available online at:
www.desbt.qld.gov.au/training.

Overview and objectives

The Certificate 3 Guarantee provides eligible individuals with access to a subsidised training place in an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) certificate III level qualification with a pre-approved registered training organisation (RTO) of their choice — otherwise known as a Skills Assure Supplier (SAS).

The government's aim is to assist working-age Queenslanders without a post-school certificate III or higher-level qualification to complete a nationally recognised certificate III qualification that leads to:

- a job outcome for individuals trying to enter the labour market or their desired industry/career; or
- advancement in the workplace or career progression for individuals already employed in their preferred industry.

Under the Certificate 3 Guarantee, foundation skills training (i.e. language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) training) and lower-level vocational qualifications are also subsidised in certain limited circumstances, based on an individual's learning, skilling or support needs, to achieve employment outcomes for students.

Who is eligible to receive training?

To be eligible to enrol in the Certificate 3 Guarantee, prospective students must:

- be aged 15 years or older;
- be no longer at school (with the exception of school students in Years 10, 11 and 12 undertaking a VET in School (VETiS) program — see the VETiS fact sheet for more information);
- permanently reside in Queensland;
- be an Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident (includes humanitarian entrant), temporary resident with the necessary visa and work permits on the pathway to permanent residency, or a New Zealand citizen; and
- not hold, and not be enrolled in, a certificate III or higher-level qualification, not including qualifications completed at school and foundation skills training.

In addition to the standard eligibility requirements, specific restrictions and/or exemptions may apply to participation in certain subsidised qualifications. Any additional eligibility requirements will be based on industry advice or requirements under the relevant national training package and will be detailed in the Priority Skills List.

Queensland Year 12 graduates

To support Queensland's Year 12 graduates to successfully transition to employment, the government is offering free training in high priority qualifications under the Certificate 3 Guarantee.

To be eligible for free training, the student must meet the above Certificate 3 Guarantee eligibility criteria and:

- have evidence of completing Year 12 in Queensland, for example hold a Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority issued Senior Statement or equivalent certification;
- enrol in a high priority qualification under the program with a SAS; and
- commence training within 12 months of graduating Year 12 (i.e. by the end of the calendar year after completing Year 12).

For high priority qualifications funded for Year 12 graduates, see the Priority Skills List.



Other priority students

The Queensland Government may operate other cohort-specific programs or initiatives where participants access their training through the Certificate 3 Guarantee, which include:

1. Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW)
2. Indigenous VET Partnerships
3. Strategic Industry Initiatives.

SAS must ensure these students are accessing Certificate 3 Guarantee funding in accordance with the rules and any exemptions prescribed in the relevant initiative's guidelines.

What training is available?

Under the Certificate 3 Guarantee, the Queensland Government provides a subsidy for a range of certificate III level qualifications. Foundation skills training and lower-level vocational qualifications may also be subsidised in certain limited circumstances.

Additional opportunities may be available in exceptional circumstances where an individual does not meet the eligibility criteria for a program but circumstances indicate the objectives of the program will be met through a confirmed employment benefit. Additional opportunities will be considered on a case-by-case basis, upon request by a prospective student. To learn more, prospective students can contact the department on 1300 369 935.

For all subsidised Certificate 3 Guarantee qualifications, see the Priority Skills List.

Foundation skills training

A student may need to develop LLN skills as either:

- integrated (contextualised) to the vocational qualification training they are undertaking;
- an enabling program prior to enrolling in and commencing training in the vocational qualification (stepping-stone approach);

This means a student does not have to be enrolled in a vocational qualification when undertaking foundation skills training, but must be:

- a pathway to the targeted vocational qualification must be identified in the student's training and support plan; or
- a concurrent program while training in the vocational qualification (parallel learning approach).

The student can undertake a single foundation skills unit of competency or module, multiple units or modules, or a full course, based on the individual's skill gaps identified by the SAS prior to, or at the time of, enrolment. See performance standard 4, item B of the SAS Policy under foundation skills pre-assessment requirements.

To attract a government subsidy under the Certificate 3 Guarantee, units of competency, modules or courses can only be drawn from the approved foundation skills courses on the Priority Skills List.

Where an individual requires significant LLN support, there are alternative programs funded by the Australian Government that exist to address this need for eligible individuals, as detailed below.

Australian and Queensland Government publicly-funded programs should complement each other and not duplicate services. Where necessary, individuals eligible for LLN assistance under an Australian Government program should be redirected by the SAS to the program before enrolling in the Certificate 3 Guarantee. For further information on the Australian Government funded programs refer to:

- [Adult Migrant English Program \(AMEP\)](#)
- [Skills for Education and Employment \(SEE\)](#).

VET in Schools (VETiS)

Some students undertake VET qualifications while they are still at school, through the following options:

- as part of their school studies — delivered and resourced by a school RTO;
- by enrolling in a qualification with an external RTO — funded either by the department's VET investment budget or through fee-for-service arrangements (i.e. where the student or parent pays for the qualification); or
- as a school-based apprentice or trainee.

The VET investment budget will provide funding for students to complete one VETiS qualification listed on the Priority Skills List while at school. Qualifications are primarily at certificate I and II level and are those that have been identified by industry as leading to employment.

Note: foundation skills courses on the Priority Skills List are not approved for VETiS delivery and will not be subsidised as the school is responsible for foundation skills training.

SAS are to check whether a student has previously completed a VET investment funded qualification prior to enrolment.

SAS and schools who enter into arrangements for the delivery of VETiS are encouraged to articulate each party's roles, responsibilities and expectations in a formal agreement.

For more information on the funding rules for VETiS delivered through the Certificate 3 Guarantee — see the VETiS fact sheet. The qualifications approved for VETiS delivery are identified on the Priority Skills List.

Lower-level vocational qualifications

Outside of delivery to VETiS students, certificate I and/or II level vocational qualifications on the Priority Skills List may only attract a government subsidy under the Certificate 3 Guarantee where the training falls within one of the following:

- individual — where the student is assessed as a disadvantaged learner that faces barriers to training participation and requires additional support prior to enrolment in a certificate III vocational qualification (in accordance with Performance Standard 4, item C of the SAS Policy, including the requirement for the SAS to develop a training and support plan for each student);
- pre-apprenticeship — where the qualification provides basic trade skills to facilitate entry into a traditional apprenticeship relevant to the basic trade skills delivered. These are lower-level qualifications on the Priority Skills List that do not have a certificate III pathway subsidised under the Certificate 3 Guarantee; or
- cohort-specific programs — where the qualification is approved for delivery as part of a project funded under SQW, Indigenous VET Partnerships, Strategic Industry Initiatives or where an exemption for a specific qualification is specified on the Priority Skills List.

The SAS must retain evidence of the circumstances that support a student's enrolment in a lower-level qualification, either at the individual or pre-apprenticeship level, or as part of an approved cohort-specific project.

Which RTOs can apply to deliver subsidised training?

RTOs must be pre-approved by the department as a SAS for the Certificate 3 Guarantee to deliver training and assessment services in Queensland under the program.

For information on the SAS application and approval process, see the SAS application fact sheet.

For information on the terms and conditions of funding, see the SAS Policy and SAS Agreement.

What level of subsidy is available?

The Certificate 3 Guarantee will provide a government subsidy towards the training cost for eligible students undertaking a qualification on the Priority Skills List, subject to the conditions set out in the SAS Agreement.

The size of the government subsidy will vary for each qualification based on the relative priority of the occupation aligned to the qualification, and the indicative value of the qualification based on relative length and complexity of training delivery.

This means high priority qualifications will be subsidised at a higher percentage, and generally a higher dollar value than low priority qualifications.

High priority qualifications align to the skills needs of industry and Queensland's economy, and support employment opportunities.

The government will also pay a higher subsidy to encourage and support participation by the following cohorts:

- any student requiring foundation skills (LLN) training;
- concessional students undertaking vocational qualifications;
- Year 12 graduates undertaking high priority qualifications; and
- students residing in country and remote areas in Queensland, and in Cape York and the Torres Strait (when actual local delivery occurs in these areas).

Concessional student status applies when:

- (a) the student holds a Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card issued under Commonwealth law, or is the partner or a dependant of a person who holds a Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card and is named on the card;
- (b) the student provides the SAS with an official form under Commonwealth law confirming that the student, their partner or the person of whom the student is a dependant is entitled to concessions under a Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card;
- (c) the student identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander;
- (d) the student is a school student and is enrolled in a VETiS program (may include young people in detention);
- (e) the student has a disability; or
- (f) the student is an adult prisoner.

For concessional status, it is the responsibility of the SAS to verify at enrolment and hold evidence of a student's eligibility.

Loadings will be paid to SAS to encourage delivery in identified country and remote areas in Queensland, and in Cape York and the Torres Strait. Locations attracting a loading, along with the corresponding loading amounts, can be found in the Localities and Location Loadings List.

What is a co-contribution fee?

A contribution to the cost of training and assessment services — called a co-contribution fee — must be made by students undertaking a certificate III level vocational qualification and non-concessional students undertaking certificate I and/or II level vocational qualifications (see the SAS Policy, Appendix 1 and definition in Appendix 7).

The fee may be paid on behalf of the student by a third party unrelated to the SAS, but cannot be paid or waived by the SAS (whether directly or indirectly), unless approved in writing by the department. The fee amount is a decision for the SAS.

The only exceptions to the fee condition are:

- SQW participants — this training is provided fee-free to students with any additional costs met through SQW funding
- Queensland Year 12 graduates undertaking high priority qualifications — this training is provided fee-free to students
- VETiS students — this training is provided fee-free to students with any additional costs met by the school
- foundation skills — this training can be provided fee-free to students, as determined by the SAS
- lower-level vocational qualifications for concessional students — this training can be provided fee-free to students, as determined by the SAS.

What can students expect from a SAS?

Individuals need access to a range of information to ensure they make an informed choice about a subsidised training place under the Certificate 3 Guarantee.

To support this objective, each SAS must:

- inform prospective students they will no longer be eligible for a government subsidised training place under the Certificate 3 Guarantee once they complete a certificate III level vocational qualification;
- disclose upfront to prospective students and clearly publish on its website the co-contribution fee for concessional and non-concessional students for each qualification it is approved to deliver under the program. The fee must represent the total cost to the student to enrol, undertake training and be awarded the qualification. It is not permissible to offer or publish fee-free training, except for the student categories listed above;
- provide prospective students, prior to enrolling, with its refund policy outlining what the student is entitled to (full or part refunds);
- direct each student to the department's Certificate 3 Guarantee student fact sheet; and
- supply each student with a training fact sheet or written summary of information for the qualification which includes:

- a breakdown of all costs, including how and when fees will be charged and collected at the unit of competency level
- training timelines, delivery mode, delivery location and vocational or work placement when this is a mandatory component of the qualification under the training package
- support services available to assist students to complete training
- a requirement to complete a student training and employment survey within three months of completing or discontinuing the qualification (see the student training and employment survey fact sheet and SAS Policy, performance standard 5, for more information)
- the name and contact details of any third party delivering training or assessment services on behalf of the SAS.

What outcomes are expected?

As a result of participating in the Certificate 3 Guarantee, the department expects students will:

- complete a vocational qualification at the certificate III level; and
- transition to the workforce or advance in their chosen career.

In accordance with these objectives, the department will measure SAS performance against the following key performance indicators and benchmarks:

- Qualification completions — at a minimum achieve a qualification completion rate of 65 per cent of all students who commenced training; and
- Employment benefit — at a minimum achieve 55 per cent of all students who commenced training gaining an employment benefit as a result of the training. This means those unemployed before training gain a job and those employed before training receive some type of job-related benefit.

Employment benefit will primarily be measured for certificate III level students, and students in lower-level qualifications that provide basic trade skills with the preferred employment outcome being recruitment into a related apprenticeship. VETiS students may also be measured.

More information

For more information on the Certificate 3 Guarantee, phone 1300 369 935 or visit www.desbt.qld.gov.au/training.

Higher Level Skills Program Policy 2020-21

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Version control:	1.0

All documents are available online at:
www.desbt.qld.gov.au/training.

Overview and objectives

The Higher Level Skills program provides eligible individuals with access to a subsidised training place in selected Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) certificate IV level or above qualifications and priority skill sets, with a pre-approved registered training organisation (RTO) of their choice — otherwise known as a Skills Assure Supplier (SAS).

The principal aim is to help individuals gain the higher-level skills required to secure employment or career advancement in a priority industry or transition to university to continue their studies. The Higher Level Skills program also provides eligible employers or industry with the capacity to address current workforce development needs that are adversely impacting on productivity, where individual employees meet the program's eligibility requirements.

Foundation skills training (i.e. language literacy and numeracy training) may also be subsidised in certain circumstances, based on an individual's learning, skilling or support needs, and in accordance with the Certificate 3 Guarantee Program Policy 2019-20 and the SAS Policy 2019-20.

While it is primarily industry's role to train its workforce, there is a role for government to invest in training that meets emerging

industry needs if it will benefit Queensland's economy and support industry to boost productivity.

Who is eligible to receive training?

To be eligible for the Higher Level Skills program, individuals must:

- be aged 15 years or over;
- be no longer at school;
- permanently reside in Queensland;
- be an Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident (includes humanitarian entrant), temporary resident with the necessary visa and work permits on the pathway to permanent residency, or a New Zealand citizen; and
- not hold, and not be enrolled in, a certificate IV or higher-level qualification, not including qualifications completed at school and foundation skills training.

In addition to the standard eligibility requirements, specific restrictions and/or exemptions may apply to participation in certain subsidised qualifications. Any additional eligibility requirements will be based on industry advice or requirements under the relevant national training package and will be detailed in the Priority Skills List.

Other priority students

The Queensland Government may operate other cohort-specific programs or initiatives where participants will access their training through the Higher Level Skills program.

SAS must ensure these students are accessing Higher Level Skills program funding in accordance with the rules and any exemptions prescribed in the relevant initiative's guidelines.

How can employers participate?

For the program to achieve the desired outcomes for government and industry, participating employers would be expected to:

- undertake workforce development planning and identify skills needs and training requirements;
- determine the qualifications or skill sets that match their identified skills needs;
- identify if these qualifications or skill sets are



subsidised under the program, and how many employees require the training and meet the program's eligibility criteria;

- select a SAS that can best meet their training needs based on price, delivery mode and location, trainer experience, resource requirements or other identified needs;
- support eligible employees to participate in the training and achieve the desired outcome; and
- make a co-contribution towards training costs, which may include SAS fees, wages, supervisors, trainers or facilities.

What training is available?

Under the Higher Level Skills program, the Queensland Government provides a subsidy for selected certificate IV level, diploma and advanced diploma qualifications aligned to critical occupations for industry and the economy.

Subsidised Higher Level Skills qualifications are listed on the Priority Skills List.

Priority skill sets

The government recognises that sometimes a full qualification is not required to address the skills needed for a critical occupation in the workplace.

In some instances, addressing skills needs may only require training in a specific skill set to increase the productivity and/or safety within the workforce, while still providing transferable or portable skills within the industry.

Eligibility for accessing training in a priority skills set is the same as the standard eligibility requirements for the Higher Level Skills program.

For the majority of priority skill sets, specific restrictions and/or exemptions will be included on the Priority Skills List to identify the students targeted by industry.

Skill sets that align with statutory or licensing requirements will generally not be funded under the program as industry and individuals are primarily responsible for achieving these outcomes.

Subsidised priority skill sets subsidised under the Higher Level Skills program are listed on the Priority Skills List.

Which RTOs can apply to deliver subsidised training?

RTOs must be pre-approved by the department as a SAS for the Higher Level Skills program to deliver training and assessment services in Queensland.

For information on the SAS application and approval process, see the SAS application fact sheet.

For information on the terms and conditions of funding, see the SAS Policy and SAS Agreement.

What level of subsidy is available?

The Higher Level Skills program will provide a government subsidy towards the training cost for eligible students undertaking a subsidised certificate IV, diploma level or advanced diploma qualification or priority skill set.

The size of the government subsidy will vary for each qualification (or skill set) based on the relative priority of the occupation aligned to the qualification, and the indicative value of the qualification (or skill set) based on relative length and complexity of training delivery.

The government will pay a higher concessional subsidy to encourage and support participation by disadvantaged students.

Concessional student status applies when:

- (a) the student holds a Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card issued under Commonwealth law, or is the partner or a dependant of a person who holds a Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card and is named on the card;
- (b) the student provides the SAS with an official form under Commonwealth law confirming that the student, his or her partner, or the person of whom the student is a dependant, is entitled to concessions under a Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card;
- (c) the student is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander;
- (d) the student has a disability; or
- (e) the student is an adult prisoner.

For concessional status, it is the responsibility of the SAS to verify at enrolment and hold evidence of a student's eligibility.

Loadings will also be paid to SAS to encourage delivery in country and remote areas in Queensland, and in Cape York and the Torres Strait. Locations attracting the loading, along with the corresponding loading amounts, can be found in the Localities and Location Loadings List.

What is a co-contribution fee?

A contribution to the cost of training and assessment services — called a co-contribution fee — must be made by students undertaking a certificate IV level and above qualification or priority skill set (see the SAS

Policy, Appendix 1 and definition in Appendix 7).

Given the increased benefits that students and industry accrue from higher-level training, there is an expectation of higher levels of co-contribution under the Higher Level Skills program.

The fee may be paid on behalf of the student by a third party unrelated to the SAS, but cannot be paid or waived by the SAS (whether directly or indirectly), unless approved in writing by the department. The fee amount is a decision for the SAS.

What can students expect from a SAS?

Individuals need access to a range of information to ensure they make an informed choice about a subsidised training place under the Higher Level Skills program.

To support this objective, each SAS must:

- inform prospective students they will no longer be eligible for a government subsidised training place under the Higher Level Skills program once they complete one certificate IV level or higher qualification;
- disclose upfront to prospective students and clearly publish on its website, the co-contribution fee for concessional and non-concessional students for each qualification it is approved to deliver under the program. The fee must represent the total cost to the student to enrol, undertake training and be awarded the qualification. It is not permissible to offer or publish fee-free training;
- provide prospective students, prior to enrolling, with its refund policy outlining what the student is entitled to (full or part refunds)
- direct each student to the department's Higher Level Skills student fact sheet; and
- supply each student with a training fact sheet or written summary information for the qualification or skill set which includes:
 - a breakdown of all costs including how and when fees will be charged and collected at the unit of competency level;
 - training timelines, delivery mode, delivery location, and vocational or work placement when this is a mandatory component of the qualification under the training package;
 - support services available to assist students to complete training;
 - a requirement to complete a student training and employment survey within three months of completing or discontinuing the qualification or skill set (see the student training and employment survey fact sheet and SAS Policy, performance standard 5, for more information); and
 - the name and contact details of any third party delivering training or assessment services on behalf of the SAS.

What outcomes are expected?

As a result of participating in the Higher Level Skills program, the department expects students will:

- complete a higher-level qualification or approved skill set; and
- transition to the workforce, advance in their chosen career or transition to university to continue their studies.

In accordance with these objectives, the department will measure SAS performance against the following key performance indicators and benchmarks:

- Qualification / skill set completions — at a minimum achieve a qualification or skill set completion rate of 65 per cent of all students who commenced training; and
- Employment benefit — at a minimum achieve 55 per cent of all students who commenced training gaining an employment benefit as a result of the training. This means those unemployed before training gain a job, those employed before training receive some type of job-related benefit, and those successfully transitioning to university and enrolling in their chosen course.

More information

For more information on the Higher Level Skills program, phone 1300 369 935 or visit www.desbt.qld.gov.au/training.