

Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships



Information for Providers

The NSW Government's Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships mean that students can get the skills they need to help get the job they want and they may not have to pay a student fee.

Students who meet the Fee-Free Scholarship criteria are exempt from paying a student fee. All qualifications on the NSW Skills List from Certificate I to Certificate IV level, including qualifications that support apprenticeships and traineeships, are covered.

Which students are eligible for a Fee-Free Scholarship?

To be eligible for a Fee-Free Scholarship, a student must:

- meet the Smart and Skilled eligibility criteria, and
- be enrolling in a Smart and Skilled subsidised Certificate I – IV level qualification on the NSW Skills List.

They must also meet the criteria for one of the eligibility categories below, which are explained in this fact sheet.

Concession-eligible (Category A)

be aged between 15 and 30 years when they start training and be eligible for a Smart and Skilled concession fee

Out-of-home care (Category B)

be aged between 15 and 30 years when they start training and meet the out-of-home care criteria

Domestic and family violence (Category C)

be aged 15 years or older when they start training and meet the domestic and family violence criteria.

How much is the Fee-Free Scholarship worth and how will it be paid?

A Fee-Free Scholarship covers the student fee.

The student receives no payment and does not need to lodge a formal application. The fee the student would have paid is paid to the provider as part of the subsidy, as for other fee-exempt students.

How many Fee-Free Scholarships are available?

There are 200,000 scholarships available over four years to 30 June 2019. Priority will be given to individuals who meet the Category A eligibility criteria and are living in or on the waitlist for NSW Social Housing, or who meet the Category B or C criteria. These students are guaranteed a scholarship to start training even if the maximum number of available scholarships is reached.

Eligible students are entitled to one Fee-Free Scholarship per financial year and a maximum of two scholarships between 1 July 2015 and 30 June 2019. This means a student who undertakes Fee-Free Scholarship training in one financial year cannot be awarded another Fee-Free Scholarship for another course if it is in the same financial year.

The scholarship is awarded at enrolment, specifically when the notification of enrolment is undertaken. If a student enrolls in two courses at the same time, they can only receive one scholarship. The scholarship will be awarded for the course for which the notification of enrolment is completed first. The scholarship cannot be transferred between courses.

CATEGORY A: CONCESSION-ELIGIBLE

Australian Government Welfare recipients on specific benefits and their dependants are eligible for a Smart and Skilled concession fee. For further details, please

refer to the fact sheet *Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships – For concession-eligible students*.

Priority will be given to these students where they are living in or on the waitlist for NSW Social Housing. Training providers must therefore ensure that students understand what is meant by social housing.

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 the relevant Social Housing Provider to be living in NSW Social Housing.

CATEGORY B: OUT-OF-HOME CARE CRITERIA

If the student is aged 15-17 years and currently in out-of-home care or aged 18-30 years and has previously been in out-of-home care, they meet the out-of-home care criteria.

‘Out-of-home care’ is as defined in section 135 of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1985* and refers to children or young people who are cared for by a person other than their parent, in a place that is not their usual home.

There are two main types of out-of-home care:

- **Statutory care** - where the Children’s Court has made a Care Order placing the child or young

person in the parental responsibility of the Minister for Family and Community Services

- **Supported care** - where the Secretary of Family and Community Services forms the opinion that the child or young person is in need of care and protection.

Training providers must ensure that students understand what is meant by out-of-home care and whether they meet the eligibility criteria. Please refer to the *Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships - Arrangements for processing enrolments for young people in out-of-home care* fact sheet in STS Online for further details of eligibility/evidence and instructions on how to enrol these students.

CATEGORY C: DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE CRITERIA

The student must:

- be experiencing or have experienced domestic and family violence, or be the dependant of a person who is experiencing or has experienced domestic and family violence; and
- have a letter of recommendation from a domestic and family violence service, refuge or other support agency such as:
 - Legal Aid NSW through their Women’s Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services
 - Organisations who provide Integrated Domestic Family Violence Services
 - Organisations who provide Staying Home Leaving Violence services
 - Organisations who deliver Specialist Homelessness Services (ie: refuges and crisis accommodation)
 - Domestic Violence NSW
 - Any other organisation which clearly shows that the student is or has been previously receiving support services for domestic and family violence (for example a non-government organisation or charity that is self-funded).

Please refer to the *Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships - Arrangements for processing enrolments for people experiencing domestic and family violence* fact sheet in STS Online for further details of eligibility/evidence and instructions on how to enrol these students.

Provider enrolment processes and systems

Students who are eligible under Category A are automatically provided with a scholarship when processed through the Smart and Skilled Provider Calculator, until the scholarship limit is reached. At this time, priority will be given to those students who are living in or on the waitlist for NSW Social Housing. Providers are therefore required to identify eligible students who are living in or on the waitlist for NSW Social Housing in the Notification of Enrolment process, to allow for monitoring of the place limit on scholarships.

Students who are eligible under Categories B and C will need to declare this at enrolment. Providers may need to ask a question to identify whether a student meets the out-of-home care or domestic and family violence criteria. Smart and Skilled training providers should read the Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarship fact sheets available on the Training Services NSW secure portal, STS Online, at training.nsw.gov.au/about_us/login.html, to find out if their enrolment arrangements will need to be amended for these students.

For more information

This fact sheet is available at:

smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/for-training-providers

The following fact sheets for providers are available in STS Online > Smart and Skilled Contract Management > Support Documents:

- *Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships - Arrangements for processing enrolments for young people in out-of-home care*
- *Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships - Arrangements for processing enrolments for people experiencing domestic and family violence*

Additional information on Fee-Free Scholarships, including the following fact sheets for students, can be found at smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/for-students/fee-free-scholarships:

- *Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships – For concession-eligible students*
- *Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships – For young people in out-of-home care*
- *Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships – For people who are experiencing or have experienced domestic and family violence*

For assistance, Smart and Skilled training providers should contact Training Market Customer Support on training.market@industry.nsw.gov.au or 1300 772 104.

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