

Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships



For people who are experiencing or have experienced domestic and family violence

If you are experiencing or have experienced domestic and family violence, you and your dependants may be eligible for 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.

Am I eligible for a Fee-Free Scholarship?

1. 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 must also be:

- enrolling in a Smart and Skilled subsidised Certificate I, II, III or IV level qualification with an approved Smart and Skilled training provider; and
- able to disclose to the training provider when enrolling that you meet the domestic and family violence Fee-Free Scholarship criteria in this fact sheet.

What are the domestic and family violence criteria?

You must:

- be 15 years of age or over; and
- 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.

How do I apply for a Fee-Free Scholarship?

You do not need to lodge a formal application.

If you meet the criteria in this fact sheet, you should advise your Smart and Skilled training provider when you enrol that you meet the domestic and family violence criteria for a Fee-Free Scholarship. Your training provider will then confirm your eligibility and you will be guaranteed a scholarship to start training.

The student declaration at enrolment will ask you to confirm that the information provided is true and correct. You may also be asked to provide evidence at enrolment or during your training as proof of your eligibility for a Fee-Free Scholarship.

What evidence is required?

You must 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 you are or have been previously receiving support services for domestic and family violence (for example a non-government organisation or charity that is self-funded).

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 year¹, 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.

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

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

If you meet the fee exemption criteria below or one of the other Fee-Free Scholarship eligibility categories (see next section), you do not have to pay a student fee. In this case, you do not have to declare your experience of domestic and family violence when enrolling.

Fee exemptions

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.

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

What are the other eligibility categories for Fee-Free Scholarships?

You may also qualify for a Fee-Free Scholarship if you meet the Smart and Skilled eligibility criteria, are aged between 15 and 30 years, and:

- are eligible for a Smart and Skilled concession fee; or
- are or have been in out-of-home care.

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 concession-eligible students* and *Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships – For young people in out-of-home care*.

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

- Check your eligibility for Smart and Skilled at smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/are-you-eligible.
- 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.
- 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.
- Contact your support agency or service provider (as above) to get a letter of recommendation. (Your support agency or service provider can also help you look for your course).
- Visit your chosen training provider's website to find out what you need to do to enrol or alternatively you can call them and advise them that you meet the domestic and family violence criteria for a Fee-Free Scholarship and wish to enrol.

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

Anyone experiencing domestic and family violence is urged to contact the Domestic Violence Line on 1800 656 463 or Men's Referral Service on 1300 766 491. The Domestic Violence Line is available 24 hours, seven days a week and provides telephone counselling, information and referrals to other services.

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.

Support agencies or service providers can contact one of our Regional Offices on a student's behalf for assistance in selecting an appropriate course and training provider. Go to www.training.nsw.gov.au/about_us/sts_contacts.html for Regional Office contact details.

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