# Department of Education and Training

# Higher Education and Skills Group

# Participation Branch Memo: *2018 / 02 / 13*

**TO: Learn Local organisations - *ALL or RTOs only***

 **Adult Education Institutions**

 **Learn Local Stakeholders**

 **Participation Branch Staff**

**FROM:** Nick Orchard, ActingDirector - Participation Branch

**DATE:** 13 February 2018

**SUBJECT: The Skills First Youth Access Initiative**

## Actions / Critical Dates:

* *The Skills First Youth Access Initiative is available from 1 January 2018 on an ongoing basis*

## Important Notice about the SKILLS FIRST YOUTH ACCESS INITIATIVE

*(referred to in Clause 20 of Schedule 1 of the 2018-19 VET Funding Contract as Program X)*

## Helping young people impacted by Child Protection & Youth Justice Orders participate in education & training

 **Background**

1. The *Skills First Youth Access Initiative* addresses the key aspects of improving awareness of, access to and engagement with vocational education and training opportunities for a high-risk group of young people. Central to breaking the link between disadvantage and poor educational outcomes is ensuring that learners at risk of poor learning outcomes are supported to stay in education and reach their potential for better life opportunities.
2. If a young person is aged under 22 years and ‘has been’ or ‘currently on’ a Child Protection Order or a Youth Justice Order, they may be eligible to study under the *Skills First Youth Access Initiative* and pay no tuition fees.
3. Young people on Child Protection Orders and Youth Justice Orders represent some of the most marginalised young people in our community, often presenting with a history of abuse, mental health problems, drug and alcohol abuse and many other. There is also a disproportionate representation of Indigenous youths within these systems.
4. The *Skills First Youth Access Initiative* is available from 1 January 2018 on an ongoing basis and below are some questions to answers to inform and assist you as a training provider to deliver training under the Initiative.

### Answers to Questions

1. ***Who is the Skills First Youth Access Initiative trying to support?***

The *Skills First Youth Access Initiative* helps young people impacted by Child Protection and Youth Justice Orders by providing them with tuition fee waiver and a viable pathway to education and employment.

To be eligible to study under the *Skills First Youth Access Initiative* and pay no tuition fees, the young person must be:

* under 22 years as at 01 January in the year of first commencing education and training; and
* ‘has been’ or ‘currently on’ a Child Protection Order or a Youth Justice Order.
1. ***Which training providers can deliver training under the Skills First Youth Access Initiative in accordance with the 2018-19 VET Funding Contract?***

In accordance with the Schedule 1 of the 2018-19 VET Funding Contract, the eligible young person can study under the *Skills First Youth Access Initiative* by enrolling at the following training providers:

1. a TAFE Institute or a Dual Sector University;
2. a Learn Local Organisation (LLO) that is a Registered Training Provider (RTO) with a current Skills First VET Funding Contract; or
3. the Centre for Adult Education (CAE) or AMES Australia.

The eligible young person must present a completed Referral Form to the training provider in order to successfully enrol and obtain the fee waiver.

1. ***To which training courses will the tuition fee waiver apply?***

The tuition fee waiver will be provided to eligible young persons to study the following accredited Government subsidised training:

1. the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL);
2. the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE);
3. Certificate I – IV;
4. Diploma or Advanced Diploma courses; and
5. Units of accredited training that allow the young person to be issued with a statement of attainment.
6. ***When did the Skills First Youth Access Initiative come to effect?***

The *Skills First Youth Access Initiative* is available from 1 January 2018 on an ongoing basis.

1. ***What actions must eligible training providers take immediately?***
2. You must kindly inform the rest of your organisation, especially your administration and enrolment areas to ensure that your staff are aware of the *Skills First Youth Access Initiative* and able to effectively support the enrolment and fee waiver process for the eligible young persons.
3. You must report required details to the Department of Education and Training to ensure your organisation is reimbursed for the fee waiver and to support the data collection and evaluation of the take up of the *Skills First Youth Access Initiative*.
4. ***What happened to the Young People Transitioning from Care Initiative?***

The Young People Transitioning from Care Initiative is no longer in operation.

1. ***Where can you access more information?***

Please refer to the Skills First Youth Access Initiative: Guide Book, the Referral Form and additional resources at the bottom of this link: [Skills First Youth Access Initiative](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/Skills-First-Youth-Access-Initiative.aspx)

A copy of the following resources are available at the above link.

1. Skills First Youth Access Initiative: Guide Book
2. Skills First Youth Access Initiative – Referral Form
3. Skills First Youth Access Initiative – A3 Poster
4. Guide Sheet: Matters to consider when a Student Transitioning from School into a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) is under 17 years of age?

Please contact desh Balasubramaniam on (03) 965 14353 or balasubramaniam.desh.d@edumail.vic.gov.au if you have further queries.