SKILLS FIRST YOUTH ACCESS INITIATIVE: GUIDE BOOK

HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE IMPACTED BY CHILD PROTECTION & YOUTH JUSTICE ORDERS PARTICIPATE IN EDUCATION & TRAINING

### Skills First Youth Access Initiative

### Creating endless possibilities for young people!

### Background

**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.**

## 

## *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.

## 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. The Department of Education and Training (the Department) has made a commitment to creating a better future for Indigenous people through the Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan 2016 – 2026.

## *The Skills First Youth Access Initiative* is one of a number of programs across Government that aim to provide educational opportunities for young people who may have disengaged or struggled in mainstream education.

**SKILLS FIRST YOUTH ACCESS INITIATIVE**

**PLACING the needs of young people first!**

**Three Principles**

## The *Skills First Youth Access Initiative* focuses on creating a viable pathway to education and employment that greatly improves the young person’s chance to break out of the cycle of disadvantage.

## The *Skills First Youth Access Initiative* was developed with the following three principles to support young people:

**SKILLS FIRST YOUTH ACCESS INITIATIVE**

**PATHWAYS for BETTER FUTURE FOR young people!**

**Summary of the Program**

**Purpose**

**SKILLS FIRST YOUTH ACCESS INITIATIVE**

**Tuition fee waiver** –eligible young person will not have to pay tuition fee for undertaking government subsidised accredited training.

* The young person must be eligible for training subsidised through the Skills First Program in accordance with the eligibility requirements specified in the VET Funding Contract.
* Schools are best placed to work with learners vulnerable to disengaging from school: *The Skills First Youth Access Initiative* would only be appropriate if all school-based options have been exhausted. The National Youth Participation Requirementrequires all young people under the age of 17 to complete Year 10 and then participate in full-time education, training or employment.

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.

**Additional Eligibility Matters**

**Where can you study?**

**What?**

**Who is eligible for the Initiative?**

**What can you study?**

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.

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**.

To reduce barriers and increase access for disadvantaged young people to participate in education and training.

**Government Departments & THE Community Sector Working Together to Deliver Outcomes**

**Focus on Outcomes**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Questions | Responses | Outcomes |
| ***Who is eligible?*** | 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. **Increase in awareness of the Initiative and its eligibility and enrolment processes** |
| ***Where are the potential students that we need to connect with?*** | * Transitioning from school * Connected to Children Welfare Services * Connected to Youth Justice Services * Disengaged from educational and/ or unemployed * Currently in employment (or underemployed) | 1. **Increase in student enrolment numbers in the Initiative** |
| ***Is the available support services fit for purpose?*** | * Ability of sector to utilise and connect existing support services * Ability to identify gaps, and develop and provide necessary support services | 1. **Increase in availability of suitable support arrangements to enable students to participate in the Initiative** |
| ***Is there enough support for the potential student to engage in the program?*** | * Awareness of support services that are available * Ability to obtain the support services | 1. **Increase in use of support services to enable students to participate in the Initiative** |
| ***What activities need to be improved within the sector to increase the number of students participating in the program and transitioning to further education or employment?*** | * Pre-enrolment process * Enrolment process * Ongoing education and training at the training provider * Employment (ongoing) | 1. **Increase in the number of students transitioning to further education and/or employment after participating in the Initiative** |

**SKILLS FIRST YOUTH ACCESS INITIATIVE**

**ADVICE TO CASE MANAGERS & OTHERS**

**Step-by-Step Guide: How to enrol a young person for the *Skills First Youth Access Initiative*?**

STEP 1: Is the young person eligible?

***STEP 1 (a) relates to ensuring eligibility for the Skills First Youth Access Initiative. STEP 1(b) relates to ensuring eligibility for government subsidised training.***

1. **Is the young person eligible for the *Skills First Youth Access Initiative*?**

The young person will be eligible for the *Skills First Youth Access Initiative* if he/she is:

* 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**.

Definitions of Orders

*‘Youth Justice Order’* means a probation order, youth supervision order, youth attendance order (YAO), youth residential centre order (YRCO), youth justice centre order (YJC) or a youth parole order (YPO) imposed under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic), or a community correction order defined in the Sentencing Act 1991 (Vic).

*‘Child Protection Order’* has the meaning given to it in the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic), including permanent care orders.

***If the answer is YES to STEP 1(a), proceed to STEP 1(b).***

1. **Is the young person eligible for training subsidised through the Skills First Program in accordance with the eligibility requirements specified in the VET Funding Contract?**

***Read the information below or answer simple yes or no questions at this link to confirm eligibility:*** [***www.skills.vic.gov.au/victorianskillsgateway/Students/Pages/vtg-eligibility-indicator.aspx***](http://www.skills.vic.gov.au/victorianskillsgateway/Students/Pages/vtg-eligibility-indicator.aspx)

SKILLS FIRST PROGRAM – ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

*Excerpts from Schedule 2018-19 Standard VET Funding Contract – Schedule 1*

*Eligibility Requirements*

*2.2 In order to be an Eligible Individual in respect of any training, an individual must be:*

1. *either:*
2. *an Australian citizen;*
3. *a holder of a permanent visa; or*
4. *a New Zealand citizen;*
5. *enrolling and commencing training in a course or qualification provided by the Training Provider between the Commencement Date and 31 December 2019 inclusive; and*
6. *either:*
7. *under 20 years of age (as at 1 January in the year of commencement of training) and enrolling in nationally recognised training;*
8. *over 20 years of age (as at 1 January in the year of commencement of training) and enrolling in nationally recognised training in a Foundation Skills List course;*
9. *over 20 years of age (as at 1 January in the year of commencement of training) and enrolling in nationally recognised training as an Apprentice (not Trainee);*
10. *over 20 years of age (as at 1 January in the year of commencement of training) and enrolling in training in the Victorian Certificate of Education or the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (Intermediate or Senior); or*
11. *over 20 years of age (as at 1 January in the year of commencement of training) and enrolling in nationally recognised training in a course that is at a higher qualification level than the highest qualification held at the time of the scheduled commencement of training.*

*2.3 In addition to meeting the requirements of Clause 2.2 of this Schedule 1, an individual is only eligible to:the individual is only eligible to:*

* + 1. *commence a maximum of two courses subsidised through the Skills First Program in a calendar year. Where an individual is enrolled in a course(s) that is scheduled to commence at a later date in that calendar year, this course(s) must be counted for the purpose of this clause when assessing eligibility;*
    2. *undertake a maximum of two courses subsidised through the Skills First Program at any one time;*
    3. *commence a maximum of two government subsidised courses at the same level within the AQF in their lifetime; and*
    4. *commence a maximum of two government subsidised accredited courses with the title ‘Course in…’ in their lifetime.*

*Eligibility Exclusions*

*2.4 Subject to Clause 2.5 of this Schedule 1, an individual is not eligible for training subsidised through the Skills First Program under this VET Funding Contract if the individual is:*

* + 1. *a student enrolled in a school (excluding a school based Apprentice/Trainee). This includes:*

1. *any government, non-government, independent or Catholic school; or*
2. *a student registered for home schooling in Victoria.*

*Government schools are responsible for funding these opportunities for VET within the school curriculum through their Student Resource Package (SRP) allocation, including targeted VET in schools funding. Non-government schools make similar decisions for students on the basis of the resources available to them;*

* + 1. *within the meaning of the Corrections Act 1986 (Vic), a prisoner held at a prison, including:*

1. *Hopkins Correctional Centre (Ararat);*
2. *Barwon Prison;*
3. *Beechworth Correctional Centre;*
4. *Dame Phyllis Frost Centre;*
5. *Dhurringile Prison;*
6. *Langi Kal Kal Prison;*
7. *Loddon Prison Precinct;*
8. *Marngoneet Correctional Centre;*
9. *Tarrengower Prison;*
10. *Metropolitan Remand Centre;*
11. *Melbourne Assessment Prison*
12. *Fulham Correctional Centre;*
13. *Port Phillip Prison; or*
14. *Karrenga Annex*
15. *a person who is detained under the Mental Health Act 2014 (Vic), or the Crimes (Mental Impairment and Unfitness to be Tried) Act 1997 (Vic) or the Sentencing Act 1991 (Vic) at the Thomas Embling Hospital; or*
16. *a person who is detained (other than on weekend detention) under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) or the Sentencing Act 1991 (Vic) or who is held on remand in one or more of the following youth justice facilities:*
17. *Malmsbury Youth Justice Centre;*
18. *Parkville Youth Residential Centre; or*
19. *Melbourne Youth Justice Centre.*

*2.5 The exclusions described in Clauses 2.4(b), (c) and (d) of this Schedule 1 do not apply to:*

1. *young people on community based orders made under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic); or*
2. *individuals held in Judy Lazarus Transition Centre,*

*who, subject to otherwise complying with the requirements in this Clause 2, may be eligible for training subsidised through the Skills First Program as they are able to physically access training outside of a custodial setting without supervision.*

*Additional Apprentice/Trainee Eligibility Requirements*

*2.6 If the Training Provider is to deliver training to eligible Apprentices and/or Trainees through an Approved Training Scheme, thein addition to individual eligibility requirements detailed in Clauses 2.2 and 2.3 of this Schedule 1, to be eligible for training subsidised through the Skills First Program under this VET Funding Contract as an Apprentice or Trainee and thereby be an Eligible Individual for the purposes of this VET Funding Contract, the individual must be:*

1. *employed in Victoria in either a full time or part time capacity under an award or registered agreement;*
2. *undertaking an Approved Training Scheme;*
3. *a signatory to a Training Contract with their employer which is registered with the VRQA;*
4. *a signatory, jointly with the employer and the Training Provider, to a Training Plan; and*
5. *involved in paid work and Structured Training: Workplace-based or Structured Training: Off-the job.*

*2.7 Whether an individual is an Apprentice or a Trainee depends on how the qualification they are undertaking is designated in the relevant Approved Training Scheme. Information on current Approved Training Schemes can be found at:* [*http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/apptrain/Pages/schemes.aspx*](http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/apptrain/Pages/schemes.aspx)

*Exceptions to the Skills First Program eligibility criteria under particular arrangements*

*2.8 Individuals referred to training under particular arrangements may be exempted by the Training Provider from certain eligibility criteria in accordance with Part C of this Schedule 1.*

***If the answer is YES to STEP 1(a) and (b), the young person is eligible for the Skills First Youth Access Initiative and government subsidised training. Proceed to STEP 2 to select the appropriate course.***

STEP 2: What courses can you study under the *Skills First Youth Access Initiative*?

***STEP 2 focuses on selecting the suitable course of study.***

1. **What courses can you study under the *Skills First Youth Access Initiative*?**

The tuition fee waiver will be provided under the *Skills First Youth Access Initiative* 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.

The list of **Accredited Government subsidised training** can be identified by referencing the current **Funded Course List** here (i.e. **2018 Funded Course List**): <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/skillsfirst/Pages/fundedcourses.aspx>

***Please ensure the selected course of study is on the current Funded Course List. After selecting the suitable course of study from the Funded Course List, proceed to STEP 3 to select the appropriate training provider.***

***STEP 3 focuses on selecting the appropriate training provider in which to enrol.***

1. **Where can you study under the *Skills First Youth Access Initiative*?**

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 (refer to further details here: [www.skills.vic.gov.au/victorianskillsgateway/Students/Pages/tafe.aspx](http://www.skills.vic.gov.au/victorianskillsgateway/Students/Pages/tafe.aspx))
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) (refer to further details here: [www.cae.edu.au](http://www.cae.edu.au)) or AMES Australia (refer to further details here: [www.ames.net.au](http://www.ames.net.au)).

***After selecting the appropriate training provider, proceed to completing the REFERRAL FORM and enrolling the eligible young person.***

STEP 3: Where can you study under the *Skills First Youth Access Initiative*?

**SKILLS FIRST YOUTH ACCESS INITIATIVE**

**Help & Advice**

www.education.vic.gov.au

Call 131 823