

# The User Choice Program

## Implications for school based apprentices and trainees (SATs) Information for schools

### THE USER CHOICE 2010–2015 PROGRAM

The User Choice Program provides public funding for the delivery of accredited, entry level training to apprentices and trainees, **including school based apprentices and trainees.**

The Queensland User Choice Program enables apprentices, trainees and their employers to select a preferred Registered Training Organisation from a list of Pre-qualified Suppliers for the delivery of accredited training to meet their specific needs.

Pre-qualified Suppliers can claim payment from the Department of Education, Training and Employment for training delivered to eligible apprentices and trainees.

Under the User Choice 2010-2015 program, funding specifically targets the occupational outcomes of the apprenticeship or traineeship.

The funding priority of a qualification usually determines the level of public funds contributed to training regardless of whether the qualification is an apprenticeship or traineeship.

From 1 July 2013, the User Choice Policy was changed to remove the 100% Government contribution to SATs and align future funding to the priority level of the qualification.

- Priority One (100 percent subsidised) – lead to occupations deemed to be critical priorities in the Queensland.
- Priority Two (75 percent subsidised) – lead to occupations not deemed critical in Queensland but considered as high priorities.
- Priority Three (50 percent subsidised) – lead to occupations not deemed critical in Queensland but considered as medium priorities.

A link to the 2013-14 User Choice Price List which includes information on priority level, government contribution and pricing accorded to qualifications can be found at:

<http://training.qld.gov.au/training-organisations/user-choice/documents-2010-2015.html>

This change of funding will provide an opportunity for successful SATs to enter a training pathway that will provide greater opportunities for employment and sustainable job outcomes.

Existing students will not be disadvantaged and existing subsidy levels will be honoured.

## IMPORTANT POINTS FOR SCHOOLS TO NOTE

- Apprentices and trainees can only receive one government contribution for a User Choice funded qualification at any single point in time i.e. a student is not funded to undertake two school based traineeships at the same time.
- A maximum of two government contributions will be funded per participant. This includes apprenticeships or traineeships undertaken whilst the young person is at school and after they leave school.

A second qualification is funded **only** if it is:

- A Priority One qualification, or
- A higher priority than the first qualification.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL BASED APPRENTICESHIPS AND TRAINEESHIPS

SATs support student vocational learning and employment pathways. A key purpose is to provide a clear pathway from school to employment after school. However, some SATs, while providing valuable workplace exposure and the development of a student's vocational skills and knowledge, do not provide as a direct pathway into employment as others.

For example, many students who participate in some lower priority SATs such as retail, sport and recreation and business, do not transition directly into employment after school and often wish to access funding for a second apprenticeship or traineeship.

Under the User Choice arrangements, students, schools, parents and employers need to carefully consider any potential impacts a SAT may have on a student's future entitlement to another funded apprenticeship or traineeship.

As only one more apprenticeship or traineeship qualification (in a Priority One qualification or a higher priority than the first qualification) will be funded by the Government, schools are encouraged to discuss this issue with their students and parents and incorporate this consideration into the student's Senior Education and Training Plan.

It is important to remember that there are only "two bites of the cherry" in relation to government funded apprenticeships and traineeships.

## **SCENARIOS HIGHLIGHTING HOW THE USER CHOICE 2010-2015 PROGRAM OPERATES**

### **Scenario 1**

A student commences and completes a Certificate II in Hospitality (Priority Three qualification) as a school based trainee.

The student leaves school and then decides to undertake a Certificate II in hairdressing (Priority Three qualification).

*Will the student be funded for their second qualification?*

No. The second qualification is not a higher priority. This student will be funded for a second qualification if they select a qualification that is either a Priority One or Priority Two qualification.

### **Scenario 2**

A student commences a school based traineeship, Certificate II in Sport and Recreation (Priority Three qualification), at the beginning of Year 11.

The student completes this traineeship and then decides to undertake a Certificate III in Community Services Work (Priority Two qualification) whilst in Year 12.

*Will the student be funded for their second qualification?*

Yes. The student will be funded for the second qualification as it is a higher priority than the first qualification. The student will not be eligible for any more funding under the User Choice program, so it is important that the second qualification provides a transition to the workforce after school.

### **Scenario 3**

A student has a school based traineeship with the Department of Health undertaking a Certificate II in Business (Priority Three qualification).

The student also works part-time at a local fast-food outlet. The fast-food outlet suggests that the student sign up for a school-based traineeship, Certificate II in Retail (Priority Three qualification).

*Will the student be funded for the second qualification?*

No. Apprentices and trainees can only receive one Government contribution for a User Choice funded qualification at any single point in time. The student can sign up for the second school based traineeship but the registered training organisation will not be able to claim payment from the Department of Education, Training and Employment for training provided. Even if the student undertakes the certificate II in Retail after they complete the Certificate II in Business, they will not receive funding as the second qualification is not a higher priority than the first.

#### **Scenario 4**

A student completes a school based traineeship, Certificate II in Business (Priority Three qualification).

The employer offers the student the opportunity to undertake a school-based traineeship at the next level, Certificate III in Business (Priority Three qualification).

*Will the student be funded for the second qualification?*

No. As the second qualification is only at the same priority level as the first, it will not be funded. A second qualification is only funded if it is a Priority One qualification or if it is a higher priority than the first qualification undertaken.

#### **Scenario 5**

A student completes a Certificate II in Retail (Priority Three qualification) and then commences a Certificate III in Roof Tiling (Priority One qualification) as a school-based apprentice.

The student then cancels their Training Contract and instead decides to undertake a Certificate III in carpentry (Priority One) as a school-based apprentice.

*Will they be funded for the second qualification?*

Yes. The second qualification was not completed, so therefore it does not form part of the contribution count.

#### **CONTACTS**

For more information, contact Apprenticeships Info by telephone on 1800 210 210 or visit <http://training.qld.gov.au/training-organisations/user-choice/index.html>