

Skilling Queenslanders for Work

Work Start

Guidelines for funding 2020–21

The highly successful *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* initiative represents a total funding commitment of \$420 million over six years from its reintroduction in 2015–16 up until 2020–21, to support up to 54,000 Queenslanders into work.

Skilling Queenslanders for Work represents a commitment to increasing workforce participation, driving job growth and strengthening the performance of the Queensland economy by improving work opportunities for disadvantaged Queenslanders.

The initiative comprises the following suite of programs:

- Community Work Skills
- Work Skills Traineeships
- Get Set for Work
- Ready for Work
- Youth Skills
- First Start
- Work Start incentives.

Overview and objectives

Skilling Queenslanders for Work plays a critical role in increasing workforce participation and the overall performance of the Queensland economy by improving work opportunities for disadvantaged Queenslanders.

Skilled workers support industry to increase productivity, drive innovation and improve workplace performance.

Skilling Queenslanders for Work represents the Queensland Government's commitment to support strategies that encourage equitable participation by a broad range of groups that generally face barriers or challenges to their participation in skills development and the labour market.

In 2020–21, disadvantaged Queenslanders will benefit from targeted training initiatives that help to ensure they gain the skills they need to find new jobs. The

Queensland Government is working to identify current and future sustainable employment and skills needs, aligned to economic and social development and creating relevant training opportunities to meet those needs.

Training that improves an individual's skill level, employment prospects and social inclusion is a priority for the Queensland Government.

Work Start incentives

Work Start incentives is one of seven programs that make up the *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* initiative.

The aim of the program is to encourage the engagement of additional trainees and apprentices and provide unemployed persons with the necessary skills and workplace opportunities to ensure sustainable employment and long-term career opportunities.

Work Start provides a one-off incentive payment to private sector employers who employ a participant from a *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* program in a traineeship or apprenticeship.

In 2020-21, up to \$4 million will be available for eligible private sector employers across Queensland.

Work Start incentives is administered by the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT).

Where will the program be delivered?

Work Start incentives complements the Queensland Government's expanded *Back to Work* program. From 1 July 2020, Work Start incentives will be available to private sector employers across Queensland who are ineligible for the employer support payments under *Back to Work*.

Work Start incentives will be available throughout Queensland, however it is a demand driven program and funding is capped in 2020-21.



Who can apply for an incentive?

Eligible private sector employers, including group training organisations and non-government organisations, who sign up an eligible person as a trainee or apprentice from 1 July 2020 will be able to apply for a one-off incentive payment of \$10,000. GST does not apply to the Work Start incentive.

Youth Boost

A Youth Boost component of \$20,000 is available for eligible young people aged 15 to 24 years and commencing a traineeship or apprenticeship between 1 July 2019 until 30 June 2020. Youth Boost is not available in 2020-21 for any new trainees or apprentices employed on or after 1 July 2020.

When will the incentive be paid?

The Work Start incentive of \$10,000 is paid after the eligible trainee or apprentice completes:

- three months (defined as 91 days) of employment (full time); or
- six months (defined as 182 days) of employment (part time).

The Youth Boost represents a second payment of \$10,000 that is paid after the eligible trainee or apprentice completes 12 months of employment (full time or part time) and is still employed at the time of claiming a payment.

The Youth Boost attracts a maximum level of funding of \$20,000.

Payments may take up to ten working days to process after required documentation is received by DESBT. Payments are also subject to availability of funds.

Who will attract an incentive?

People who have undertaken a *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* program will attract a Work Start incentive for their private sector employer. An eligible person is someone who meets all of the following criteria:

- has participated for a **minimum two months** on Community Work Skills, Work Skills Traineeships, Get Set for Work, Youth Skills; or Ready for Work (Shorter participation times may be considered on a case-by-case basis upon application)
- is registered in a Queensland declared traineeship or apprenticeship
- has commenced the traineeship or apprenticeship from 1 July 2020
- has commenced the traineeship or apprenticeship after exiting the *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* program i.e. is not an existing trainee or apprentice

- has commenced the traineeship or apprenticeship no more than six months after their exit date from a *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* program
- has not displaced an existing worker
- has not previously worked for the employer
- has completed three or six months of employment in the traineeship or apprenticeship, and is still employed at the time of claiming a payment.

Additional criteria for Youth Boost

In addition to the above eligibility criteria, to attract a Youth Boost an eligible person must meet the below:

- is a former *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* participant
- is aged between 15 to 24 years at the time of commencement of the traineeship or apprenticeship
- commenced the traineeship or apprenticeship between 1 July 2019 and 30 June 2020
- has completed 12 months of employment in the traineeship or apprenticeship
- is still employed at the time of claiming a payment.

For traineeships completed in less than 12 months, the individual must continue to be employed for the full 12 month period with the private sector employer to be eligible.

Work Start incentive payments are not eligible for casual employment.

Other requirements

Former *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* participants are ineligible for a Work Start incentive if they:

- have completed a First Start Traineeship
- are undertaking a school-based traineeship or apprenticeship.

An eligible person can only attract one Work Start incentive. If the eligible person leaves or cancels their traineeship or apprenticeship after a Work Start incentive has been paid, and then re-commences another traineeship or apprenticeship with a second employer, the second employer is not eligible for a Work Start incentive.

Payslips

Employers must provide evidence of current employment, a minimum of four payslips is required. Payslips must meet the minimum requirement as set out by Fair Work Australia under the *Fair Work Act 2009* and the *Fair Work Regulations 2009*.

Information on legal requirements for payslips is available through the Fair Work Australia website at:

<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/pay/pay-slips-and-record-keeping/pay-slips>

Past performance

DESBT will review previous incentive payments and employment patterns of the employer. Employers assessed as having a pattern of cancelling trainees and apprentices after Work Start incentive payments have been paid, will not be eligible for a Work Start incentive.

Annual cap

Each eligible employer may claim a maximum of five Work Start incentive payments each financial year. Once a total of five payments have been made, no further registrations can be accepted.

The annual cap does not apply to group training organisations.

Benefits of Work Start

Skilling Queenslanders for Work participants will be attractive to employers, having already undertaken a skills and training program that provides transferable vocational and employability skills, work experience and self-confidence.

Many young people will be ready for open employment at the end of their time on a *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* program, while others will benefit from the mixture of paid work and structured training that a traineeship or apprenticeship offers.

Skilling Queenslanders for Work participants have already demonstrated their commitment to improving their skills and motivation to work.

What about other government funding?

Private sector employers are eligible to also apply for other incentives offered by the Queensland and Australian Governments.

A private sector employer cannot receive funding under First Start, Work Start incentives or the *Back to Work* program for the same person.

What outcomes are expected?

Work Start aims to encourage businesses to employ trainees and apprentices, including those employers who may not have previously considered this approach to staffing.

The decision to employ trainees and apprentices is at the discretion of the employer and must be a business decision that is independent of the availability of the Work Start incentive payment.

DESBT expects private sector employers to use their best endeavours to retain the Work Start trainee or apprentice in open employment on completion of the training contract.

What is the application process?

Private sector employers must complete a Work Start incentive registration form within one month of the trainee or apprentice commencing employment. The registration form needs to be signed by the employer and the trainee or apprentice.

Completed registration forms are to be emailed to sqwapps@desbt.qld.gov.au.

What happens next?

Once an application is lodged, the private sector employer will receive an email from DESBT with the following information:

- acknowledging receipt of the application
- advising if the application has been accepted and the trainee or apprentice is eligible
- advising that the Work Start incentive will be paid to their nominated bank account once the qualifying period has been met and eligibility reviewed
- advising that payments under the program are subject to the availability of funding.

Payments will be made on a first come, first serve basis due to the funding cap and therefore, not all registrations will automatically result in a payment.

Youth Boost – second payment

For the Youth Boost, DESBT will follow up after 12 months of employment to verify that the individual is still employed and all other eligibility criteria has been met.

The Youth Boost payment of \$10,000 will be paid into the nominated bank account.

Youth Boost is not available in 2020-21 for trainees and apprentices employed on or after 1 July 2020.

Appeals process

Private sector employers may request a review of a decision made by DESBT in relation to the provision of funding under Work Start.

Appeals must be lodged in writing to:

Appeals Officer
Investment Division
Department of Employment, Small Business and Training
PO Box 15483
CITY EAST QLD 4002

Private sector employers will be notified in writing of the appeal outcome within 21 business days from receipt of the appeal.

More information

For more information about Work Start incentives:

Phone: 1300 369 935

Email: training@desbt.qld.gov.au

Visit: desbt.qld.gov.au/training/community-orgs/funded/sqw

Policy Owner:	Deputy Director-General Investment Division
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Related Documents:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Community Work Skills Guidelines for funding 2020-212. Work Skills Traineeships Guidelines for funding 2020-213. Get Set for Work Guidelines for funding 2020-214. Ready for Work Guidelines for funding 2020-215. Youth Skills Guidelines for funding 2020-21
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