

# Certificate 3 Guarantee Program Policy 2021-25

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Related documents:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills Assure Supplier Policy 2021-25</li> <li>Vocational Education and Training Skills Assure Supplier Agreement</li> <li>Skills Assure marketing and disclosure directive 2021-25</li> <li>SAS Third Party Arrangements Directive 2022-2025</li> <li>Skills Assure Supplier Audit Evidence Requirements (VET Investment Programs)</li> <li>Skilling Queenslanders for Work</li> </ol>
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All documents are available online at: [www.desbt.qld.gov.au/training](http://www.desbt.qld.gov.au/training).

## Overview and objectives

The Certificate 3 Guarantee provides eligible individuals with access to a subsidised training place in an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) certificate III level qualification with a pre-approved registered training organisation (RTO) of their choice — otherwise known as a Skills Assure Supplier (SAS).

The government's aim is to assist working-age Queenslanders without a post-school certificate III or higher-level qualification to complete a nationally recognised certificate III qualification that leads to:

- a job outcome for individuals trying to enter the labour market or their desired industry/career; or
- advancement in the workplace or career progression for individuals already employed in their preferred industry.

Under the Certificate 3 Guarantee, foundation skills training (i.e. language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) training) and lower-level

vocational qualifications are also subsidised in certain limited circumstances, based on an individual's learning, skilling or support needs, to achieve employment outcomes for students.

## Who is eligible to receive training?

To be eligible to enrol in the Certificate 3 Guarantee, prospective students must:

- be aged 15 years or older;
- be no longer at school (with the exception of school students in Years 10, 11 and 12 undertaking a VET in School (VETiS) program — see the VETiS fact sheet for more information);
- permanently reside in Queensland;
- be an Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident (includes humanitarian entrant), temporary resident with the necessary visa and work permits on the pathway to permanent residency, or a New Zealand citizen (for more information see [Visa eligibility under VET investment programs](#));
- not hold, or not be enrolled in, a certificate III or higher-level qualification, not including qualifications completed at school and foundation skills training.

Current apprentices and trainees are not eligible to undertake training under the Certificate 3 Guarantee without prior written approval by the Department.

In addition to the standard eligibility requirements, specific restrictions and/or exemptions may apply to participation in certain subsidised qualifications. Any additional eligibility requirements will be based on industry advice or requirements under the relevant national training package and will be detailed in the Priority Skills List.

It is compulsory for all SAS to use the department's [Apprenticeships / All Students Info – Self Service \(AISS\)](#) tool/search facility within 30 days prior to enrolment, to help confirm



whether prospective students have previously attained, or are currently completing, other qualifications. AISS may not capture all student records or awards, therefore SAS must also request and retain evidence from prospective students whether they hold, or are currently enrolled in, other qualifications and not rely solely on AISS.

## Other priority students

The Queensland Government may operate cohort-specific programs or initiatives where participants access their training through the Certificate 3 Guarantee, which include:

1. Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW)
2. young people aged under 25 years
3. other Industry Initiatives.

SAS must ensure these students are accessing Certificate 3 Guarantee funding in accordance with the rules and any exemptions prescribed in the relevant initiative's guidelines.

## What training is available?

Under the Certificate 3 Guarantee, the Queensland Government provides a subsidy for a range of certificate III level qualifications. Foundation skills training and lower-level vocational qualifications may also be subsidised in certain limited circumstances.

Additional opportunities may be available in exceptional circumstances where an individual does not meet the eligibility criteria for a program but circumstances indicate the objectives of the program will be met through a confirmed employment benefit. Additional opportunities will be considered on a case-by-case basis upon request by a prospective student. To learn more, prospective students can contact the department on 1300 369 935.

For all subsidised Certificate 3 Guarantee qualifications, see the Priority Skills List.

## Foundation skills training

A student may need to develop LLN skills as either:

- integrated (contextualised) to the vocational qualification training they are undertaking;
- an enabling program prior to enrolling in and

commencing training in the vocational qualification (stepping-stone approach).

This means a student does not have to be enrolled in a vocational qualification when undertaking foundation skills training, but must be:

- on a pathway to the targeted vocational qualification identified in the student's training and support plan; or
- in a concurrent program while training in the vocational qualification (parallel learning approach).

The student can undertake a single foundation skills unit of competency or module, multiple units or modules, or a full course, based on the individual's skill gaps identified by the SAS prior to, or at the time of, enrolment. See performance standard 4, item B of the SAS Policy under foundation skills pre-assessment requirements.

To attract a government subsidy under the Certificate 3 Guarantee, units of competency or qualifications can only be drawn from the approved foundation skills courses on the Priority Skills List.

Where an individual requires significant LLN support, there are alternative programs funded by the Australian Government that exist to address this need for eligible individuals, as detailed below.

Australian Government publicly-funded programs should complement each other and not duplicate services. Where necessary, individuals eligible for LLN assistance under an Australian Government program should be redirected by the SAS to the program before enrolling in the Certificate 3 Guarantee. For further information on the Australian Government funded programs refer to:

- [Language and Literacy Classes](#)
- [Adult Migrant English Program \(AMEP\)](#)
- [Skills for Education and Employment \(SEE\)](#).

LLN support can also be provided to eligible individuals through the Queensland government's Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. For further information refer

to - [Community Foundation Skills](#)

Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (<https://desbt.qld.gov.au/>)

## VET in Schools (VETiS)

Some students undertake VET qualifications while they are still at school, through the following options:

- as part of their school studies — delivered and resourced by a school RTO;
- by enrolling in a qualification with an external RTO — funded either by the department's VET Investment budget or through fee-for-service arrangements (i.e. where the student or parent pays for the qualification); or
- as a school-based apprentice or trainee.

The VET investment budget will provide funding for students to complete one VETiS qualification listed on the Priority Skills List while at school. Qualifications are primarily at certificate I and II level and are those that have been identified by industry as leading to employment.

Note: foundation skills courses on the Priority Skills List are not approved for VETiS delivery and will not be subsidised as the school is responsible for foundation skills training.

SAS must check whether a student has previously completed a VET Investment funded qualification prior to enrolment in VETiS.

SAS and schools who enter into arrangements for the delivery of VETiS are encouraged to articulate each party's roles, responsibilities and expectations in a formal agreement.

For more information on the funding rules for VETiS delivered through the Certificate 3 Guarantee — see the VETiS fact sheet. The qualifications approved for VETiS delivery are identified on the Priority Skills List.

## Lower-level vocational qualifications

Outside of delivery to VETiS students, certificate I and/or II level vocational qualifications on the Priority Skills List may only attract a government subsidy under the Certificate 3 Guarantee where the training falls within one of the following:

- individual — where the student is assessed as a disadvantaged learner that faces barriers to training participation and requires additional support prior to enrolment in a certificate III vocational qualification (in accordance with Performance Standard 4, item C of the SAS Policy, including the requirement for the SAS to develop a training and support plan for each student);
- pre-apprenticeship — where the qualification provides basic trade skills to facilitate entry into a traditional apprenticeship relevant to the basic trade skills delivered. These are lower-level qualifications on the Priority Skills List that do not have a certificate III pathway subsidised under the Certificate 3 Guarantee; or
- cohort-specific programs — where the qualification is approved for delivery as part of a project funded under SQW or where an exemption for a specific qualification is specified on the Priority Skills List.

The SAS must retain evidence of the circumstances that support a student's enrolment in a lower-level qualification, either at the individual or pre-apprenticeship level, or as part of an approved cohort-specific project.

## Which RTOs can apply to deliver subsidised training?

RTOs must be pre-approved by the department as a SAS for the Certificate 3 Guarantee to deliver training and assessment services in Queensland under the program.

For information on the SAS application and approval process, visit the Department's website at [Skills Assure Supplier contracting](#).

For information on the terms and conditions of funding, see the [SAS Policy](#) and SAS Agreement.

## What level of subsidy is available?

The Certificate 3 Guarantee will provide a government subsidy towards the training cost for eligible students undertaking a qualification on the Priority Skills List, subject to the conditions set out in the SAS Agreement.

The size of the government subsidy will vary for each qualification based on the relative priority of the occupation aligned to the qualification, and the indicative value of the qualification based on relative length and complexity of training delivery.

This means high priority qualifications will be subsidised at a higher percentage, and generally a higher dollar value than low priority qualifications.

High priority qualifications align to the skills needs of industry and Queensland's economy, and support employment opportunities.

The government will also pay a higher subsidy to encourage and support participation by the following cohorts:

- any student requiring foundation skills (LLN) training;
- concessional students undertaking vocational qualifications;
- students enrolled in Fee-Free TAFE; and
- students residing in country and remote areas in Queensland, and in Cape York and the Torres Strait (when actual local delivery occurs in these areas).

Concessional student status applies when:

- (a) the student holds a Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card issued under Commonwealth law, or is the partner or a dependant of a person who holds a Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card and is named on the card;
- (b) the student provides the SAS with an official form under Commonwealth law confirming that the student, their partner or the person of whom the student is a dependant is entitled to concessions under a Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card;
- (c) the student identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander;
- (d) the student is a school student and is enrolled in a VETiS program (may include young people in detention);
- (e) the student has a disability; or
- (f) the student is an adult prisoner.

For concessional status, it is the responsibility of

the SAS to verify at enrolment and hold evidence of a student's eligibility.

Loadings will be paid to SAS to encourage delivery in identified country and remote areas in Queensland, and in Cape York and the Torres Strait. Locations attracting a loading, along with the corresponding loading amounts, can be found in the Localities and Location Loadings List.

## What is a co-contribution fee?

A contribution to the cost of training and assessment services — called a co-contribution fee — must be made by students undertaking a certificate III level vocational qualification and non-concessional students undertaking certificate I and/or II level vocational qualifications (see the SAS Policy, Appendix 1 and definition in Appendix 7).

The fee may be paid on behalf of the student by a third party unrelated to the SAS, but cannot be paid or waived by the SAS (whether directly or indirectly), unless approved in writing by the department. The fee amount is a decision for the SAS.

The only exceptions to the fee condition are:

- SQW participants — this training is provided fee-free to students with any additional costs met through SQW funding
- specific fee-free training programs as announced by the Queensland Government
- VETiS students — this training is provided fee-free to students with any additional costs met by the school
- foundation skills — this training can be provided fee-free to students, as determined by the SAS
- lower-level vocational qualifications for concessional students — this training can be provided fee-free to students, as determined by the SAS.

## What can students expect from a SAS?

Individuals need access to a range of information to ensure they make an informed choice about a subsidised training place under the Certificate 3 Guarantee.



To support this objective, each SAS must:

- inform prospective students they will no longer be eligible for a government subsidised training place under the Certificate 3 Guarantee once they complete a certificate III level vocational qualification;
- disclose upfront to prospective students, and clearly publish on its website, the co-contribution fee for concessional and non-concessional students for each qualification it is approved to deliver under the program. The fee must represent the total cost to the student to enrol, undertake training and be awarded the qualification. It is not permissible to offer or publish fee-free training, except for the student categories listed above;
- provide prospective students, prior to enrolling, with its refund policy outlining what the student is entitled to (full or part refunds);
- direct each student to the department's Certificate 3 Guarantee student fact sheet; and
- supply each student with a training fact sheet or written summary of information for the qualification which includes:
  - a breakdown of all costs, including how and when fees will be charged and collected at the unit of competency level
  - training timelines, delivery mode, delivery location and vocational or work placement when this is a mandatory component of the qualification under the training package
  - support services available to assist students to complete training
  - the name and contact details of any third party delivering training or assessment services on behalf of the SAS.

## What outcomes are expected?

As a result of participating in the Certificate 3 Guarantee, the department expects students will:

- complete a vocational qualification at the certificate III level; and
- transition to the workforce or advance in their chosen career.

In accordance with these objectives, the

department will measure SAS performance against the following key performance indicators and benchmarks:

- Qualification completions — at a minimum achieve a qualification completion rate of 65 per cent of all students who commenced training; and
- Employment benefit — at a minimum achieve 55 per cent of all students who commenced training gaining an employment benefit as a result of the training. This means those unemployed before training gain a job and those employed before training receive some type of job-related benefit.

Employment benefit will primarily be measured for certificate III level students, and students in lower-level qualifications that provide basic trade skills with the preferred employment outcome being recruitment into a related apprenticeship. VETiS students may also be measured.

More information

For more information on the Certificate 3 Guarantee, phone 1300 369 935 or visit [www.desbt.qld.gov.au/training](http://www.desbt.qld.gov.au/training).