



Skilling Queenslanders for Work

Work Skills Traineeships

Guidelines for funding 2025–26

The *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* initiative continues to achieve on social, economic and fiscal fronts, with an ongoing annual investment of \$80 million to support up to 15,000 Queenslanders into work each year.

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

Ever evolving, *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* is flexible in design and delivery and has been revitalised to accommodate the changing labour market conditions as a result of COVID-19.

The initiative comprises the following suite of programs:

- Community Work Skills
- Work Skills Traineeships
- Get Set for Work
- Ready for Work
- Youth Skills
- Community Foundation Skills
- Skill Up
- First Start

Overview and objectives

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of support for those in the community most vulnerable to reduced employment opportunities.

Skilling Queenslanders for Work is the proactive means for increasing Queensland's workforce participation and the overall performance of the Queensland economy by directly and positively engaging those outside of or disadvantaged in the labour market.

Skilling Queenslanders for Work represents the Queensland Government's commitment to support strategies that encourage equitable participation by a

broad range of marginalised groups that generally face barriers or challenges to their participation in skills development and the labour market.

In 2025-26, 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 Skills Traineeships

Work Skills Traineeships is one of eight programs that make up the *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* initiative. The program offers disadvantaged Queenslanders employment for up to six months on public works, community and environmental projects, with participants undertaking a Work Skills Traineeship.

Industry and local employers will be engaged to determine what new and existing labour is required to meet local employment demands.

In 2025-26, up to \$37.35 million will be available to support up to 1,860 job seekers to gain nationally recognised qualifications, and build skills that will maximise local job opportunities.

Work Skills Traineeships is administered by the Department of Trade, Employment and Training (DTET).

Where will the program be delivered?

Work Skills Traineeships will be available throughout Queensland, however, priority will be given to identified areas of high need or where access to services may be limited due to market failure.



Who can apply for funding?

Non-profit community-based organisations and local councils are eligible for funding. Applicant organisations must be registered for GST.

Applicant organisations must be able to demonstrate a commitment to access and equity principles, as well as an ability to provide appropriate support services.

Applicant organisations must have experience in delivering services in the location for which they are applying.

Who will the funds support?

Work Skills Traineeships primarily targets Queensland residents who are ineligible for Australian Government employment services or assistance.

Individuals accessing Australian Government services are eligible if they are disadvantaged and require complementary services, regardless of the length of time they have been unemployed or in receipt of assistance.

To be eligible, disadvantaged Queenslanders must also be:

- aged 15 years or older and no longer at school
- 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.

Existing or prior qualifications are not a barrier, as Work Skills Traineeships provides a second chance for participants to retrain and gain new qualifications.

Identified disadvantaged groups

Disadvantaged groups to be targeted include:

- mature-age job seekers (aged 45 years or older)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- migrants and refugees from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- people with disability
- young people (aged 15–24 years), including those in and transitioned from out-of-home care
- women re-entering the workforce
- recently released prisoners or individuals with criminal records
- veterans, ex-ADF personnel and their families.

Additional funding will ensure that long-term unemployed job seekers aged 25-44 years and mature age job seekers aged 45 years and over are an ongoing priority.

The selection of disadvantaged participants for assistance is at the discretion of the funded

organisation, subject to the above eligibility criteria and in consultation with DTET.

Permission to recruit participants outside of the above criteria needs to be sought from DTET.

Work Skills Traineeships is to be delivered at no cost to participants.

What assistance can be funded?

Work Skills Traineeships has a project-based delivery model and funds not-for-profit organisations and local councils to generate local jobs for disadvantaged job seekers. Through Work Skills Traineeships, job seekers are employed full-time as trainees on community, public works and environmental projects for up to six months.

Funding through Work Skills Traineeships assists local communities to create, repair and upgrade public spaces and facilities, while at the same time giving unemployed community members a pathway into employment and the skills and experience to gain long-term jobs. Projects must be of benefit to the broader community.

Work Skills Traineeships are unique, entry-level traineeships restricted to participants being employed as trainees on a work placement project under the *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* initiative. Project lengths must be a minimum of 18 weeks duration and a maximum of 26 weeks duration.

The traineeship is focused on developing vocational and employability skills for long-term unemployed and disadvantaged job seekers and providing them with a pathway into employment. Skills and confidence are developed on the job in the context of a community-based project.

There are five types of traineeships available, based on certificate I level traineeships and from nationally accredited training packages:

Work Skills Traineeship	Qualification
Business	BSB10120 Certificate I in Workplace Skills
Conservation and Ecosystem Management	AHC10124 Certificate I in Conservation and Ecosystem Management
Construction	CPC10120 Certificate I in Construction
Hospitality	SIT10222 Certificate I in Hospitality
Retail Services	SIR10116 Certificate I in Retail Services

Participants will earn a certificate I level qualification in business or construction or conservation and ecosystem management or hospitality or retail services, while gaining experience in real work situations that align with their Work Skills Traineeship qualification.

Every participant under Work Skills Traineeships must be enrolled in nationally recognised training and employed in accordance with the legislative provisions

of the *Further Education and Training Act 2014*. Vocational education and training provides an essential pathway to further education and work.

As well as providing nationally recognised training through the certificate I traineeship, organisations will offer trainees tailored assistance which may include a mix of career advice, job preparation skills and foundation skills.

What types of projects can be funded?

Work placement projects must be of benefit to the broader community. Partnerships between eligible organisations, particularly those within a local community, are encouraged.

Ideally, work placement projects should address identified skills shortages in local communities and lead to ongoing employment opportunities. Additional funding needs to be sourced for materials and capital equipment or costs.

Work placement projects leave a visible and long-term impact on physical community infrastructure, such as a new community centre, upgraded parks and new walking tracks, repairs to riverbanks and foreshores, or a new community website, or servicing the community through not-for-profit retail and hospitality outlets.

In addition, jobs are going to those within a community who need the opportunity the most, leading to a positive impact on social infrastructure.

Examples of the types of works that can be undertaken through a work placement project include:

- revegetation, regeneration, weed eradication and creek/river restoration works
- refurbishment of community buildings (not private residences) – sporting halls, aged care facilities, social enterprises, community centres and halls
- minor infrastructure works – pergolas, seating, fencing, picnic tables and pre-fabricated structures
- redevelopment of community spaces – repairing playground equipment or upgrading sporting and recreational facilities
- landscaping, horticultural and maintenance on community or public spaces
- track construction – construction of walking tracks, heritage trails or nature paths, or improvements to existing tracks
- media activities – publication of community newsletters and magazines, or the development of a community website
- event management activities – organising careers expos, community workshops or cultural celebrations
- community retail and hospitality outlets – serving food and drinks or providing customer service in council owned and operated or not-for-profit social enterprise cafes, restaurants, tourism centres, opportunity shops, recycling centres and plant nurseries.

Works on privately owned buildings

Properties that are privately owned but leased to community groups or accessed by the general public may be considered suitable. Any improvements must be undertaken with the local community in mind and aim to offer additional services or amenities. To be considered a suitable project site, the property must:

- be accessed regularly by local community organisations for the provision of services e.g. hobby groups, community gardens, training and education activities, family support groups; or
- be available for community engagement activities e.g. sporting events, family days or cultural events; or
- be used to support the local community e.g. respite care, health-related support services, family support groups.

Project restrictions

The construction of buildings or major capital works are not appropriate for work placement projects. Work Skills Trainees cannot undertake trade level work e.g. plumbing, welding or electrical works. Work Skills Trainees may undertake trade assistant work under appropriate supervision but should not work on their own undertaking tasks that require extensive experience and knowledge of a work activity.

Work placement projects must not put trainees in dangerous work environments or situations e.g. removal of asbestos or other workplace hazards from old buildings. All planned work activities must meet work health and safety obligations under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

Work placement projects must not disadvantage local businesses or employers through the provision of services, goods or minor infrastructure produced by the trainees.

Overall, the value or benefit of the project to the local or wider community must be evident and cannot give the perception of individual or personal gain or benefit.

Host placement projects

The host placement model involves trainees being placed with other not-for-profit organisations or local councils while undertaking their traineeship. This type of model is not funded on a large scale.

The host placement model was specifically designed for the business traineeship to assist people with disability and women returning to the workforce.

Host placement organisations must be able to provide appropriate supervision and a range of work activities and confirm in writing any general duties to be undertaken by the trainees and additional activities outside of core business e.g. undertaking a statistical collection, conducting surveys or promotional work.

Host placement models can be used in settings where it is difficult to place a large number of trainees at one work site, however this will be monitored by DTET.

Work Skills Trainees cannot be hosted or undertake work experience with private sector employers or displace existing workers.

Work conditions

The funded organisation is the employer and receives funding primarily to meet trainee wage costs. Work Skills Trainees are generally employed on a full-time basis (DTET approval needs to be obtained for part-time work) and are paid wages according to the National Training Wage Schedule (NTWS). This is not a stand-alone award, but a schedule to all modern awards. For further information visit www.fairwork.gov.au

Work Skills Traineeships integrate vocational skills with on-the-job nationally recognised training and contextually embeds employability skills.

Participants sign a training contract with their employer and are registered as trainees. Sign-up with the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) occurs on the first day of work on the project.

Work Skills Trainees can only be placed with not-for-profit organisations and government entities.

Assessment of Work Skills Trainees

A Supervising Registered Training Organisation (SRTTO) must be engaged to provide training and assessment services to Work Skills Trainees.

The SRTTO develops a training plan, in partnership with the funded organisation, and trainees complete accredited competencies, primarily on-the-job, as part of a certificate I traineeship. The SRTTO must assess the trainees in line with the training plan.

Scope of registration

The delivery of training and assessment services under Work Skills Traineeships is funded under the [User Choice](#) program. Partnering SRTTOs must be Skills Assure suppliers ([SAS](#)) approved by DTET to deliver training under the User Choice program.

Qualifications to be delivered must be included in the SRTTO's scope of registration at the time of submitting the application for funding.

The SAS must apply full exemption from the student contribution fee under the Work Skills Traineeships program, as outlined in the [User Choice 2021-24 Policy](#).

What is the price for training delivery and assessment?

There is a fixed or set price for the delivery of the Work Skills Traineeships under User Choice, as detailed in the below table. Subsequently, SRTTOs are not required to quote under Work Skills Traineeships.

Work Skills Traineeship	Price (subject to current User Choice price list)
Business	\$1,350
Conservation and Ecosystem Management	\$1,350
Construction	\$2,500
Hospitality	\$1,350
Retail Services	\$1,350

Are there any special requirements?

Work placement projects allow participants to get back into the cycle of work, practice new skills and regain confidence in a supported work environment.

By delivering work placement projects, funded organisations must ensure that:

- Work Skills Trainees do not displace existing employees, including volunteers
- a diverse range of work experiences and opportunities for skills acquisition are offered as part of their employment
- training is primarily on-the-job, with any off-the-job training reserved for times when the trainees are unable to undertake normal work activities (i.e. bad or inclement weather, waiting on materials or trade work to be completed)
- off-the-job training should not occur in block periods, either on commencement of the project or throughout the project
- an AASN provider is engaged to assist with the signing of the training contract and to provide assistance throughout the duration of the traineeship
- an appropriately qualified supervisor is engaged to train the trainees in identified tasks and oversee their work, in partnership with the SRTTO
- job search activities are integrated towards the end of a project to prepare the trainees for transition into ongoing employment.

Organisations can submit an application to deliver a range of work placement projects over a defined period and must be able to demonstrate the capacity to undertake this commitment.

These projects may be discrete, separate projects within an identified locality or the projects may be linked in some way. The need for a range of work placement projects may be in response to an ongoing identified regional priority. Each separate project or intake must range in length or duration between 18–26 weeks.

Supervision requirements

The funded organisation, as the employer, is required to employ a designated qualified person to supervise the Work Skills Trainees. The supervisor must be a dedicated resource and where existing staff are employed as supervisors, they must be formally released from their normal duties.

The supervisor must be employed at the same workplace as the trainees and be predominantly employed during the same working hours as the trainees.

For the purposes of training under the *Further Education and Training Act 2014*, a qualified person is defined as:

1. a person who has satisfactorily completed a traineeship in the trainee's calling, and is the holder of a completion certificate issued under an Act, or
2. a person who holds a certificate of recognition issued under an Act, certifying the person has the necessary skills and knowledge in the calling, or
3. a tradesperson in the apprentice's or trainee's calling, as defined under a specific industrial instrument, or
4. a person who holds a tradesperson's certificate of recognition or certificate of recognition as a recognised tradesperson issued under the *Tradesperson's Rights Regulation Act 1946* in the traineeship calling, or
5. a person who holds a relevant qualification in the traineeship calling, or
6. a person individually or persons collectively who has/have documented competence (achieved through a recognition of prior learning (RPL) or training pathway) or demonstrated competence in all the competencies the employer is required to provide training for under the trainee's training plan (note: cannot be a person or persons currently undertaking the same traineeships), and
7. a person undertaking a traineeship, at a higher level than the trainee's, whose traineeship incorporates supervisory or coordinating skills and who has documented competence (achieved through an RPL or training pathway) in at least one of the competencies the employer is required to provide to the trainee under the training plan and who is supervised by a person who qualifies under (1), and/or (5) and/or (6).

Where a licence to practice the calling is required, the qualified person must hold a current licence.

Supervision ratio

Normally the ratio of qualified person to trainees is 1:1, however as the Work Skills Traineeships are a unique arrangement specific to work placement projects, delivered under *Skilling Queenslanders for Work*. DTET has approved to vary the ratio of qualified

persons to trainees from 1:1 to 1:15 for Work Skills Traineeships.

The excess ratio of 1:15 only applies to organisations funded by DTET under the Queensland Government's *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* initiative for the Work Skills Traineeships in Business, Construction, Conservation and Ecosystem Management, Hospitality and Retail Services.

Employer Resource Assessments

SRTOs are not required to conduct or complete an employer resource assessment (ERA) for Work Skills Traineeships. The approved project plan will outline the range of work activities, resources and facilities to support the trainees.

What outcomes are expected?

Funded organisations will be required to identify what employment, further education and/or training targets will be achieved throughout the project.

Work Skills Traineeships has standard key performance indicators (KPIs) that organisations are expected to meet or exceed.

KPIs:

- Completion outcome – 65 per cent of participants successfully gain the required outcome of a qualification or statement of attainment
- Employment outcome – 55 per cent of participants successfully gain employment.

What is the application process?

Generally, there are two funding rounds each year under a transparent contestable application process.

Applicant organisations are encouraged to contact their local DTET regional office to discuss their project proposals.

One lead organisation is to apply for and manage the funding for each project. Applications are capped at ten per organisation, per funding round, across all programs.

Projects that address emergent needs or government priorities may be funded by DTET outside of the published funding rounds.

The application and selection process, and assessment criteria, may be varied or discontinued by DTET as required at any time and for any reason, in its sole discretion.

Without limitation, DTET may, in its sole discretion:

- apply such criteria and weightings as DTET sees fit
- for applications considered ambiguous, erroneous or incomplete, refuse to consider the application or request further information from the applicant, as DTET sees fit
- not accept any application.

DTET may also decide to accept, suspend or not proceed with, or carry out itself, all or any part of the project proposals included in an application. Funding rounds will be announced on the [Work Skills Traineeships webpage](#). Interested organisations are advised to check this page regularly.

Organisations should apply online via the [Work Skills Traineeships webpage](#) by the closing deadline. Incomplete applications and applications received after published closing dates will be ineligible for consideration.

How will applications be assessed?

Applications will be assessed by DTET in two stages.

Stage one

The stage one assessment will involve the assessment of applications by DTET against the 'capacity to manage' criteria. An applicant must demonstrate a 'capacity to manage' for the application to be determined by DTET as eligible to proceed to stage two assessment.

Stage two

The stage two assessment involves assessing eligible applications against the assessment criteria below by DTET and locally-based SQW Advisory Committees comprising of representatives from the community, industry, government and unions.

The role of these committees will be to discuss, prioritise and recommend applications for funding to DTET. Applicants should note that:

- the order of the list of assessment criteria is not to be taken as an order of precedence or an indication of weighting which will be given to any particular criteria; and
- the list of assessment criteria is not necessarily exhaustive and DTET may also consider other criteria in its sole discretion.

Following the completion of both stages of assessment for a funding round, DTET will notify each applicant of its decision in relation to the application.

Assessment criteria	How will this be assessed – including but not limited to:
Capacity to manage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> financial viability of the lead organisation lead organisation's structure, governance, risk management and reporting framework suitability of project proposal and planned work activities of participants meet work health and safety obligations under the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> relevant experience, and current and past performance, in managing government funds and delivering similar services staff with appropriate experience and qualifications for supporting disadvantaged job seekers and learners recruitment strategies commitment to an inclusive learning framework training delivery outside an institutional setting and in a community-based environment
Servicing community and industry needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clear articulation of how the project will address gaps in or complement existing local services level of community benefit no duplication with other programs or services evidence to support the organisation's strong community presence within the local area links to local employers, industry or other stakeholders to identify local skills shortages and future employment opportunities demonstrated industry demand and benefit clear rationale for linking particular learner groups to specific job types and industries where there is evidence of skills shortages or labour needs
Strategies to assist participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> support mechanisms that specifically address the individual's learning needs and goals support mechanisms to encourage completion of qualifications and skills sets specialist assistance or links with other agencies to help disadvantaged job seekers overcome barriers to learning and employment training and assessment strategies that support the needs of disadvantaged learners ability to provide effective training and realistic learning pathways in terms of method, location and timing of delivery volume of learning sufficient to ensure disadvantaged learners gain all relevant skills and knowledge strategies to motivate participants to complete their training and take up local job opportunities level of job search activities and post-placement support methods
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> level of qualification completions, further education or training and employment outcomes forecasted, and demonstrated evidence of ability to achieve quality outcomes past employment outcomes capacity to meet skills shortages and local labour market needs – extent of support and links with local employers and industry that will facilitate placement into employment
Cost/value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cost effectiveness – accredited training (training cost per hour) and overall cost per participant and outcome ability to deliver proposed outcomes over the period being applied for, and any identified innovative ways to reduce the costs of service delivery level of complementary funding and assistance accessed from other sources and in-kind resources.

What level of funding is available?

The funding available under Work Skills Traineeships is for a maximum 12 month term. A 12 month term only applies where multiple projects will be delivered. Funding per work placement project is for a maximum six months.

The level of funding is dependent on the type of project and nature of the training and assistance to be provided, as well as the number of participants targeted by the project.

What can project funds be used for?

Project funds can only be expended on costs directly associated with the delivery of the project including:

- wages and on-costs for project coordinator and other delivery staff
- trainee wages and on-costs
- administration costs such as rent, accommodation, venue hire, office supplies, advertising, travel costs, vehicle hire/lease
- support costs such as learner driver training, subsidised travel, personal grooming or counselling services
- materials and equipment excluding capital equipment or assets
- overheads or operating costs (with the management fee not to exceed five per cent of total funds up to a maximum \$15,000).

Ineligible costs

Project funds cannot be used:

- to purchase assets/capital equipment e.g. IT equipment, buildings or vehicles
- for interstate travel, training or conferences for project staff
- for any recurrent or normal business costs such as established positions within the organisation or core functions of the organisation.

Funding under Work Skills Traineeships is primarily for the trainee wages, which should make up around 70 per cent of the total cost of the project.

Funding from other sources must also be disclosed to DTET.

To avoid duplication of services, funding is not available for the same services being delivered through other initiatives or programs.

Any third party contributions must be specified in the project application to enable clear consideration of all funding, resources and in-kind support provided. Any addition of resources or subcontracting of learner support measures post project approval must be approved in writing by DTET.

What are the funding conditions?

Successful applicants must enter into a formal Services Agreement with DTET, which will include standard key performance indicators.

A first payment will be made once the Services Agreement has been executed, and no sooner than 30 days prior to the start of the project. Subsequent payments are made upon satisfactory compliance with all reporting requirements and the acquittal of expenditure of the previous payment. Monthly reports will be required throughout the life of the project.

All projects must be fully acquitted after completion and any unexpended or surplus funds returned to DTET.

A copy of the Services Agreement, which is performance based and outlines the standard terms and conditions of funding, is available on the [Work Skills Traineeships webpage](#).

Appeals process

Organisations may request a review of a decision made by DTET in relation to the provision of funding under Work Skills Traineeships.

The appeals process has been established to help identify any problems in the application process, ensuring these processes continue to improve, and to assist with future applications.

Appeals must be lodged in writing to:

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

Organisations 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 Skills Traineeships:

Phone: 1300 369 935
Email: training@desbt.qld.gov.au
Visit: desbt.qld.gov.au/training/community-orgs/funded/sqw/workskills

Policy Owner:	Director Investment Division
Approval Date:	30 January 2025
Effective Date:	1 July 2025
Related Documents:	1. User Choice 2021-24 policy 2. User Choice Price List
Version Control:	15.0