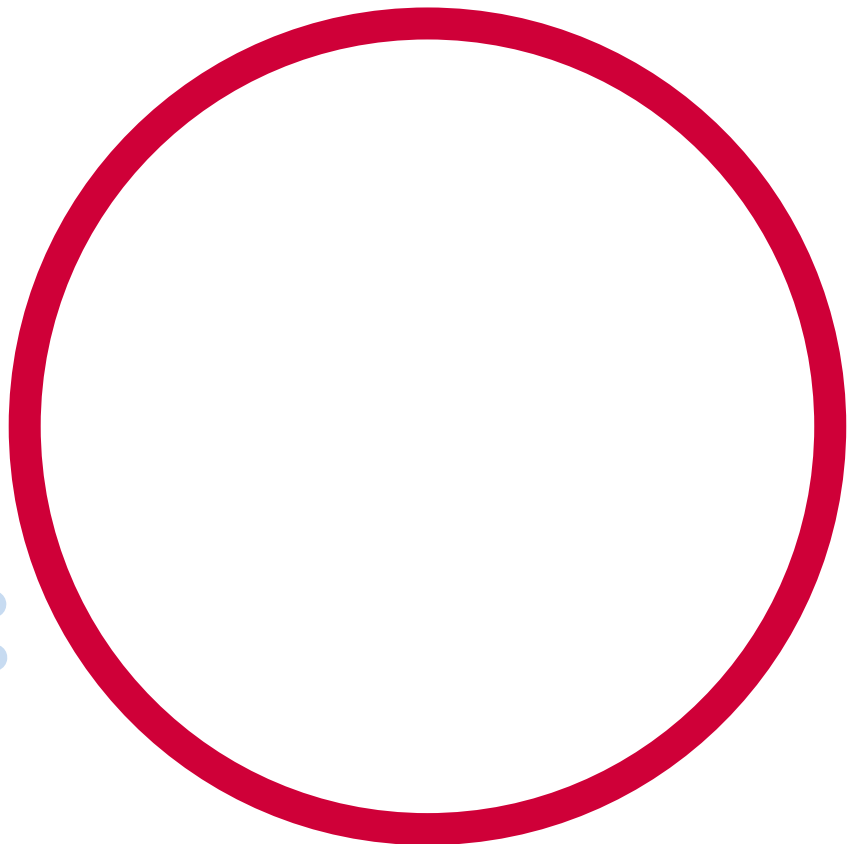
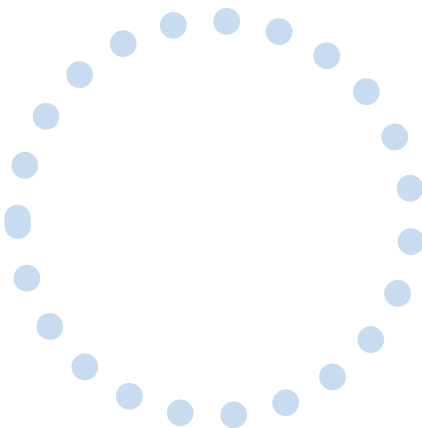
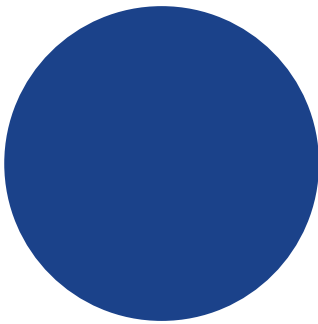


# Smart and Skilled policy on non-apprenticeship pathways for trade-related qualifications

**Version 4.0**

For training from 1 July 2022



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# Section 1: Scope of the Policy

## 1.1 Introduction

The Smart and Skilled Policy on non-apprenticeship pathways for trade-related qualifications (the Trade-Related Policy) supports individuals, who meet certain criteria, to gain formal qualifications through non-traditional pathways.

The Policy applies to government subsidised trade-related qualifications where training is to be delivered under a non-apprenticeship (full qualification) pathway or through formal trade recognition assessment processes.

Training providers who wish to deliver full qualifications covered by the Trade-Related Policy through the Smart and Skilled Entitlement Full Qualification or Smart and Skilled Targeted Priorities Program are required to seek approval before commencing training (see *section 3*).

### **The Trade Pathways for Experienced Workers Program (TPEW)**

The TPEW Program targets workers with relevant industry experience who have not been attracted to previous opportunities in gaining trade skills.

The TPEW Program operates outside of the Smart and Skilled Program (and therefore this Policy). It has its own set of rules and funding arrangements – including bonus payments. Further information on the TPEW is available at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/skills-nsw/trade-pathways>.

Note: there are some qualifications that are covered by both the TPEW Program and the Trade-Related Policy. Students may be eligible under both the TPEW Program and the Trade-Related Policy. Providers and students who wish to participate in the TPEW Program, or who have any questions, are encouraged to email [tradepathways@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:tradepathways@det.nsw.edu.au).

## 1.2 Target Group

The full qualification pathway governed by the Trade-Related Policy targets individuals who would benefit from a trade qualification, but for whom an apprenticeship may not be appropriate.

It allows these workers to have their industry skills assessed through recognition of prior learning (RPL) and to undertake gap training in order to gain a trade qualification.

*Section 2* outlines student eligibility criteria.

## 1.3 Approved trade-related full qualifications

The qualifications covered by the Trade-Related Policy are listed in the NSW Skills List and are marked with a “T” for Trade Related in the “Strategy” column.

The NSW Skills List can be accessed at: [www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/vocational/funding/nsw-skills-list](http://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/vocational/funding/nsw-skills-list).

## MEM Manufacturing and Engineering Training Package

In January 2021, Skills Ministers agreed to a limited exemption to the 2012 Standards for Training Packages (the Standards), to allow for workplace-based pathways (underpinned by an employment or training contract) to be required for the delivery of specified qualifications in Release 2.0 of the MEM Manufacturing and Engineering Training Package.

Providers must ensure that any student who wishes to undertake a MEM qualification covered by the Skills Ministers exemption does so in accordance with the employment requirements, or otherwise meets the relevant exceptions, outlined in the decision: [www.aisc.net.au/publication/exemption-standards-training-packages-mem-release-20](http://www.aisc.net.au/publication/exemption-standards-training-packages-mem-release-20).

## 1.4 Exclusions

The Trade-Related Policy **does not apply** to qualifications on the Skills List which are **not flagged with a “T”**. For example, qualifications that are available under the:

**1.** *Entitlement Apprenticeship Program* only.

For example, the Certificate III in Baking. These qualifications can only be delivered as an apprenticeship.

**2.** *Entitlement Apprenticeship Program* **and**

- a. *Entitlement Full Qualification Program* (EFQ) **or**
- b. the *Targeted Priorities Full Qualification* (TPFQ) Program.

These qualifications may be delivered as a full qualification without students having industry experience and without prior approval from the Department.

**Note:** Smart and Skilled Providers:

- are still required to operate within their cap allocation and must have the qualification on their activity schedule and
- must comply with any other requirements, including the MEM Manufacturing and Engineering Training Package decision referred to above.

# Section 2: Student Eligibility, RPL and Fees

## 2.1 Student Eligibility

At the time of enrolment in a trade-related full qualification on the NSW Skills List, the student must be a person who:

1. meets the Smart and Skilled Eligibility Criteria (as outlined in [the Smart and Skilled Student Eligibility Policy](#)), and
2. Is at least **21** years of age and over, and
3. has at least **2** years of work experience in the occupation/trade that relates to the qualification they will be undertaking (which should be equivalent to 20 per cent of recognition of prior learning for the units of competency in the qualification – see *section 2.2*), and
4. is currently working in the relevant industry – or have worked within the industry in the past **5** years - that relates to the trade qualification they will be undertaking.

**Note:** Where the learner does not meet these requirements, they should be encouraged to undertake an appropriate apprenticeship.

## 2.2 Recognition of prior learning

Noting that the recognition of prior learning (RPL) process must be undertaken in accordance with ASQA, licencing and training package requirements, in practice students who meet the eligibility criteria outlined above should have enough industry experience/s and existing knowledge/skill to translate into RPL.

The level of RPL will depend on the circumstances of the individual as well as the training package or licencing requirements. However, **a student should only be entered into a full qualification pathway if they will be granted RPL for a minimum of 20 per cent of the units of competency in the qualification.**

**Note:** In some instances, students may have achieved a UoC through another qualification or part qualification. Where this has occurred, the student must be granted Credit Transfer of all relevant UoCs.

## 2.3 Student Fees

The relevant Smart and Skilled full qualification fee applies to training that is covered by the Trade-Related Policy. For example, the first qualification fee for the Certificate III in Plumbing (CPC32413) is \$2,990.

Student fees (and subsidies) are reduced in accordance with the Smart and Skilled Fee Administration Policy where units of competency are reported as credit transfer or RPL.

For a list of full qualification student fees, please refer to the Smart and Skilled prices and fees schedule available at [www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/resources/qualification-prices-fees](http://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/resources/qualification-prices-fees).

**Note:** Students may be eligible for fee free training where they meet eligibility for other Smart and Skilled Fee free initiatives or fee exemption or concession categories.

# Section 3: Approval process for delivering trade-related qualifications

## 3.1 Providers must request approval to deliver these qualifications

Providers can seek approval to deliver trade-related qualifications covered by the Trade-Related Policy under EFQ or TPFQ where they can demonstrate industry links and the ability to tailor their delivery towards an individual's previous workplace experience.

Providers are required to complete a request form and provide clear evidence of their ability to meet the following criteria:

1. A robust process for assessing student eligibility, especially relevant skills and experience at enrolment in a consistent manner with the NSW Recognition Framework, available at [www.training.nsw.gov.au/forms\\_documents/skills\\_recognition/recognition\\_framework.pdf](http://www.training.nsw.gov.au/forms_documents/skills_recognition/recognition_framework.pdf).
2. Evidence of strong industry links related to the qualification
3. Demonstrated ability to facilitate relevant work experience to support the achievement of competence
4. Demonstrated ability to utilise workplace evidence to contribute to the assessment of competence, leading to successful completion of the qualification.

Requests to add a trade-related qualification to an Approved Qualifications Activity Schedule (AQAS) should only be made where the Provider has sufficient Financial Cap to fund the standard subsidies for training activity in the additional Approved Qualification(s).

## 3.2 Process for requesting approval to deliver these qualifications

Providers will need to complete a Smart and Skilled - Approved Qualifications Activity Schedule (AQAS) Adjustment Request form to request to deliver trade-related qualifications under a full qualification pathway.

Providers can download the form from STS Online under the Support Documents page.

1. All parts of the form must be completed
2. All supporting evidence must be provided.

3. The Department will assess requests and providers will be notified of the outcome of their request(s) by their Strategic Relationship Manager.

Providers will need to demonstrate:

1. assessment of relevant previous employment at enrolment, including provision for RPL and credit transfer in relevant units of competency
2. evidence of relevant workplace experience during training
3. collation of workplace evidence in assessing competence for individuals with identified work experience gaps.

The decision whether to approve a Provider to deliver subsidised training under this policy and to offer their organisation a Smart and Skilled Contract variation remains at the Department's absolute discretion and is subject to budget availability.



## Section 4: Provider responsibilities

Providers who deliver full qualifications covered by the Trade-Related Policy must do so in accordance with the responsibilities outlined below.

### 4.1 Workplace experience and evidence

Providers must confirm that the individual has evidence of previous experience that is relevant to the full qualification and whether they have completed relevant nationally accredited qualifications or units of competency. This ensures that providers consider the extent of RPL and the gap training required for the individual to complete the qualification.

Providers may need to arrange simulated work activities for students with identified gaps in required work experience to ensure work evidence requirements are met.

**Note:** When assessing previous employment, providers must ensure that relevant NSW and Commonwealth legislation is adhered to for the industry or trade vocation associated with the qualification. For example, *the Motor Dealers and Repairers Act 2013* requires persons working in designated trade occupations to be either licensed or apprenticed.

Providers must also ensure that the current workplace can provide the relevant work experience for the qualification, or provide work experience and, where appropriate, simulated work activities during the training. Evidence of satisfactory completion of the qualification must include collation of workplace evidence in assessing relevant units of competency in areas where the individual has no relevant work experience.

### 4.2 Assessment

Assessment must occur in a functioning workplace or in a sufficiently rigorous simulated environment that reflects the circumstances that would be experienced in a functioning workplace. Assessment must cover all aspects of workplace performance, including task skills, task management skills, contingency management skills and job role environment skills. All outcomes must reflect the standard of performance inherent in the job.

## 4.3 Data reporting requirements

Providers must accurately complete the Notification of Enrolment through the Provider Calculator and report training activity data through eReporting. This must be done in compliance with the Smart and Skilled Contract and Operating Guidelines, including reporting units of competency with credit transfer or RPL outcomes.

**Note:** The level of subsidy and student fee will be impacted for credit transfer and RPL in accordance with the [Smart and Skilled Fee Administration Policy](#).

## Monitoring and documentation

To ensure that the integrity of the qualification and the focus of the training are upheld, the Department will monitor the delivery of these full qualifications.

The Department will also monitor:

1. compliance with student eligibility criteria (particularly that all enrolments are for students aged over 21 years)
2. the balance of RPL and credit transfer in relevant units of competency that students have been granted (noting the requirements outlined in *section 2.2*)
3. the balance in delivery of a qualification between apprenticeship and full qualification pathways (i.e. look for trends in the chance of delivery approaches).

Monitoring and data analysis from the Department that indicates a Provider is not adhering to the student eligibility and other requirements in this Policy may result in the rejection of requests from Providers to deliver qualifications under the Trade-Related Policy, and potentially compliance action.

## 4.4 Trade Recognition

### Certificate of Proficiency

A Certificate of Proficiency may be issued under *the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001* and indicates that a person “is adequately trained to pursue that vocation”. This certificate is issued to apprentices and trainees on the successful completion of an apprenticeship or traineeship, and may also be issued to appropriately qualified and experienced people after completing a trade recognition process.

Generally, a Certificate of Proficiency is not required in order to work in a trade vocation (the exception being Electrical), however, it may assist with gaining employment. This is particularly true as the certificate recognises both the achievement of a relevant qualification, and completion of appropriate industry experience.

## **Support for Trade Recognition process**

After completing the relevant trade qualification, students can apply for Trade Recognition and where successful the Department issues a Certificate of Proficiency to the student.

Providers can support students wishing to pursue trade recognition by assisting them to:

1. gather documented evidence of previous industry experience; and
2. undertake work experience in support of the qualification which is documented (e.g. detailed log books, E-profiling etc.) and available to the student.

Applications will be assessed by the Commissioner for Vocational Training (or their delegate). Some applicants may be referred for a trade test as part of the assessment process. Successful applicants will be issued with a Certificate of Proficiency.

For further information about the trade recognition process go to:

[www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/vocational](http://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/vocational).

## **4.5 Licencing**

A number of trades in NSW require a licence issued by a relevant licensing authority. The Commissioner for Vocational Training does not issue licences.

Trade or industry sectors that may require a licence include:

1. aircraft trades
2. automotive trades
3. building and construction trades
4. electrical trades
5. refrigeration/air conditioning trades
6. plumbing trades

For further information in relation to licencing go to:

[education.nsw.gov.au/skills-nsw/students-and-job-seekers/accreditation/recognition-of-trade-skills](http://education.nsw.gov.au/skills-nsw/students-and-job-seekers/accreditation/recognition-of-trade-skills).

# Further Information

For further information and to seek approval for delivering government subsidised full qualification pathways to students in trade-related qualifications, contact your Training Services NSW Strategic Relationship Manager.

If you have any questions, contact the Department on 1300 772 104, or email [SmartandSkilled.Enquiries@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:SmartandSkilled.Enquiries@det.nsw.edu.au).