

CAREER BOOST PROGRAM POLICY 2025-2028

Introduction

Career Boost is one of the Queensland Government's core funded vocational education and training (VET) programs, managed by the [Department of Trade, Employment and Training](#) (DTET).

The core VET programs provide subsidised training opportunities for Queenslanders aligned to the priorities set out in the DTET Training Priorities Plan.

This document informs Skills Assure Suppliers (SAS) and other stakeholders of program requirements.

The SAS framework is designed to support training and assessment aimed at building new skills and capabilities for Queenslanders. Therefore, RTOs that focus on providing recognition of prior learning (RPL) or assessment only are not eligible to participate in these arrangements.

What is Career Boost?

Career Boost supports eligible Queenslanders to take their career to the next level, enabling them to grow and apply their skills to existing or new job roles, while supporting productivity growth and workplace innovation.

The program delivers training to help individuals develop the higher-level skills needed to secure employment, advance their careers, or progress to further education and training to undertake university or tertiary qualifications.

Career Boost offers **either** a general training pathway **or** employment-based apprenticeship or traineeship pathway.

A prospective student chooses their preferred provider from a list of registered training organisations (RTOs) approved as Skills Assure Suppliers (SAS). Only SAS approved to deliver the individual's chosen qualification or skill set and training pathway (general pathway, apprenticeship or traineeship) can provide training and assessment services under Career Boost.

What are the training pathways?

General Training Pathway

Qualifications and skill sets delivered through a general training pathway are available for direct enrolment and do not require the student to enter into a training (apprenticeship/traineeship) contract with an employer.

The skill sets are designed to build targeted capabilities for specific roles or occupational functions. Completing a priority skill set may provide the focused training required to advance in a career pathway, without the need for a full qualification.

Apprenticeship/traineeship pathway

For apprenticeships and traineeships, an individual must be employed as an apprentice or trainee.

This pathway is part of the Australian Apprenticeships system and requires all parties to sign an Apprenticeship and Traineeship Training Contract (the Contract) as defined by the *Further Education and Training Act 2014* (the Act).

The employer of an apprentice/trainee must provide or arrange to provide adequate facilities, range of work, supervision and on-the-job training required by the Act and training plan.

The Supervising Registered Training Organisation (SRTTO) is required to review these employment arrangements, complete an Employer Resource Assessment and develop the training plan in consultation with the employer and apprentice or trainee to ensure compliance with the Act.

More information about apprenticeships and traineeships is available on the DTET website.

Eligibility

Under Career Boost, an eligible individual **may** access either:

- **one subsidised training place** in either a certificate IV, diploma, or advanced diploma qualification under a general training pathway;
OR
- a higher level apprenticeship/traineeship at certificate IV or above.

In addition, under Career Boost, eligible individuals may access **2 subsidised skill sets** in priority industries or sectors.

Exceptions

- If the individual has already accessed two apprenticeships/traineeships through a School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship (SAT) and/or Career Start within the last 10 years, they are **not** eligible to undertake an apprenticeship/traineeship under Career Boost.

Please note an individual (where eligible) can complete up to two government-funded apprenticeships/traineeships within a 10-year period. This cap of two may be undertaken either:

- a) across different core programs i.e. SAT, Career Start, and Career Boost (for example, one under a SAT and one under Career Boost);

OR

- b) under Career Start which is the only program that allows two apprenticeships/traineeships.

In all cases, no more than two government-funded apprenticeships/traineeships can be completed within a 10-year period (this includes those funded under previous iterations of the program e.g. User Choice program).

- An individual cannot complete two qualifications under Career Boost.

These rules aim to support equitable access to training opportunities for all eligible Queenslanders.

General Training Pathway

To access a subsidised training place under Career Boost, a student must meet the following criteria:

- aged 15 years or older;
- not be a school student;
- permanently reside in Queensland;
- be an Australian citizen, or Australian permanent resident (includes humanitarian entrant), or a temporary resident who holds a valid visa and working rights on the pathway to permanent residency, or a New Zealand citizen;
- not already have a certificate IV or higher qualification (including tertiary qualification) completed within the last 10 years immediately preceding the individual's enrolment (qualifications completed as a school student and foundation skills qualifications do not impact eligibility). Note: This eligibility requirement does not apply to individuals seeking to enrol in a skill set;
- not be enrolled in another DTET-funded qualification, even if it is on hold or deferred, (foundation skills qualifications and self-funded/fee-for-service qualifications do not impact eligibility).

Note: When determining eligibility for a general training pathway, qualifications completed within the last 10 years include qualifications funded under previous iterations of the program (e.g. Higher Level Skills program).

Along with the eligibility criteria above, specific entry restrictions or exemptions may apply to certain subsidised qualifications and skill sets. These are set by industry or sector requirements, as well as national training package guidelines. For more information, please refer to the "What training is available?" section.

Apprenticeship/traineeship pathway

To be eligible to receive government subsidised training, the apprentice or trainee must:

- not be a school student;
- be currently employed as a Queensland apprentice or trainee (under a registered training

contract) in an eligible apprenticeship or traineeship qualification funded through this program (this eligibility requirement does not apply to individuals seeking to enrol in a skill set);

- not be enrolled in another DTET-funded qualification, even if it is on hold or deferred, (foundation skills qualifications and self-funded/fee-for-service qualifications do not impact eligibility);
- not have already completed two government-funded apprenticeship/traineeship qualifications (including SATs) within the last 10 years immediately preceding the individual's enrolment.

Note: Where a school student completes a DTET-funded certificate I, II or III through a general training pathway while at school, this does not impact their eligibility to access subsidised training under Career Start or Career Boost. Whereas completion of a subsidised SAT exhausts one apprenticeship/traineeship pathway entitlement under Career Start and Career Boost.

DTET may amend student eligibility requirements at any time based on factors such as budget, emerging priorities, and the need to ensure a pipeline of workers for critical occupations and improved access to job opportunities for identified priority cohorts.

Co-contribution Fees

General Training Pathway

Co-contribution fee amount

Given the increased benefits of advanced-level training, such as improved job opportunities and higher earning potential, students enrolled in certificate IV or higher qualifications, as well as skill sets, are required to contribute to the cost of training through a co-contribution (student) fee.

This fee can be paid by an employer, a family member, a friend, or another organisation, but it cannot be paid or waived by the SAS or any person or entity associated with the SAS.

The fee amount is set by the SAS. The fee must be published on the SAS' website and must represent total costs to the student for the qualification, including materials costs.

The SAS cannot charge a student for creating a Training and Assessment Plan or Training Record. The SAS also cannot charge students for any additional materials once enrolment has occurred.

Apprenticeship/traineeship pathway

Co-contribution fee amount

For apprenticeships and traineeships, the fee is different as both the employer and SAS share responsibility for training. The fee is set at \$1.60 per nominal training hour for each unit of competency and is the same across all SAS. Only DTET can adjust the fee amount, which is reviewed each year. This fee must be published on the SAS' website.

However, a SAS must charge only 40% of the standard fee if an apprentice/trainee meets any of the following criteria: under 17 years of age at the end of February in the year training is provided, is not at school and has not completed Year 12; or holds concessional status as defined in this program policy.

If an apprentice/trainee is experiencing serious financial difficulties and can demonstrate this, they may qualify for a full fee exemption.

What training is available?

Eligible Career Boost qualifications and skill sets are listed on the Queensland Subsidised Training List (QSTL). This list also includes any entry restrictions or exemptions, based on requirements determined by the industry or sector and national training packages.

For example, where completion of a **pre-requisite qualification** is listed as an entry requirement on the QSTL, a student may only access funding for one of these qualifications under Career Boost unless otherwise specified on the QSTL. Completion of the pre-requisite qualification through a fee-for-service

arrangement will not impact eligibility to access the higher level qualification through a funded pathway.

Please note some qualifications are only available through a specific training pathway (general pathway, apprenticeship or traineeship), based on the preferred delivery methods of the industry or sector.

Foundation skills

Language, Literacy, Numeracy and Digital (LLND) skills may also be subsidised in certain circumstances, based on an individual's learning or skilling needs.

Funding is directed to formally recognised, **assessable training outcomes**, ensuring clear, measurable pathways to vocational qualification completion and employment outcomes or further study.

Only SAS approved by DTET to provide foundation skills can deliver this training. See the Department's **Foundation Skills Funding Policy 2026–2028** for more information.

If foundation skills are needed first, a student may wish to consider other DTET programs such as Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) or Career Start. These programs help build essential entry-level capabilities before moving to advanced training.

What funding is available?

The Queensland Government will pay a subsidy for the qualification or skill set directly to the SAS. The amount of funding depends on the qualification or course complexity, duration, and how well it aligns with workforce skill needs.

Queensland's annual Training Priorities Plan outlines how government supports skills development across the state. Each year, the plan highlights important skill areas and guides funding decisions including training subsidies, to benefit individuals, local communities, and employers.

Student support

The Queensland Government provides higher subsidies to SAS to help identified students, apprentices and trainees participate in training.

These include:

- individuals who need foundation skills training;
- individuals with concessional status undertaking vocational qualifications. This means students, apprentices and trainees who:
 - hold a Health Care, Veteran, or Pensioner Concession Card, or are the partner or dependent of someone with such a card and are named on the card;
 - have a Commonwealth form confirming eligibility for concessions under a Health Care, Veteran, or Pensioner Concession Card;
 - identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (First Nations people);
 - have a disability;
 - are from a non-English speaking background;
 - are adult prisoners;
- students, apprentices and trainees enrolled in fee-free training initiatives e.g. Free Apprenticeships for under 25s, which focus on specific priority qualifications.

In addition to training subsidies, location loadings are paid to SAS to support face-to-face training for students in certain regional and remote areas of Queensland, including Cape York and the Torres Strait.

These loadings help fund training delivered in local areas, addressing community skill needs and supporting residents to secure local jobs.

Expected outcomes

By participating in Career Boost, students gain the skills and confidence needed to complete a qualification and/or skill set and boost their career.

After completing a qualification under a general training pathway, the SAS should support a student's transition into the workforce, advancement into higher-level job roles, or progression to further study such as at university. This support may include career advice and facilitating connections with potential employers.

As part of receiving a subsidised training place, students may be asked to complete a DTET survey.

This helps ensure students have an effective and supportive training experience and will also improve outcomes for other Queensland students.

Information for employers

While industry is primarily responsible for training its workforce, the government supports this effort by investing in training that addresses emerging needs and strengthens Queensland's economy.

Career Boost can help by providing subsidised training for employees through apprenticeships, traineeships, or general training pathways, building skills that support individual career growth and the success of the business.

As each individual is eligible for only one subsidised higher-level qualification under Career Boost, employers must ensure employees understand program conditions, including eligibility requirements, and have given consent to enrol.

A SAS may discuss additional training costs with an employer or industry representative beyond the co-contribution fee requirement, however, employers are not required to accept these charges. All fees and charges must be clearly explained, documented, and agreed upon by all parties and the SAS before an employee enrolls.

For more information

DTET will contact approved SAS directly. RTOs (non-SAS) can find further information on the DTET website.

Prospective students can call 1300 369 935.

Prospective apprentices, trainees and employers can call 1800 210 210.

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