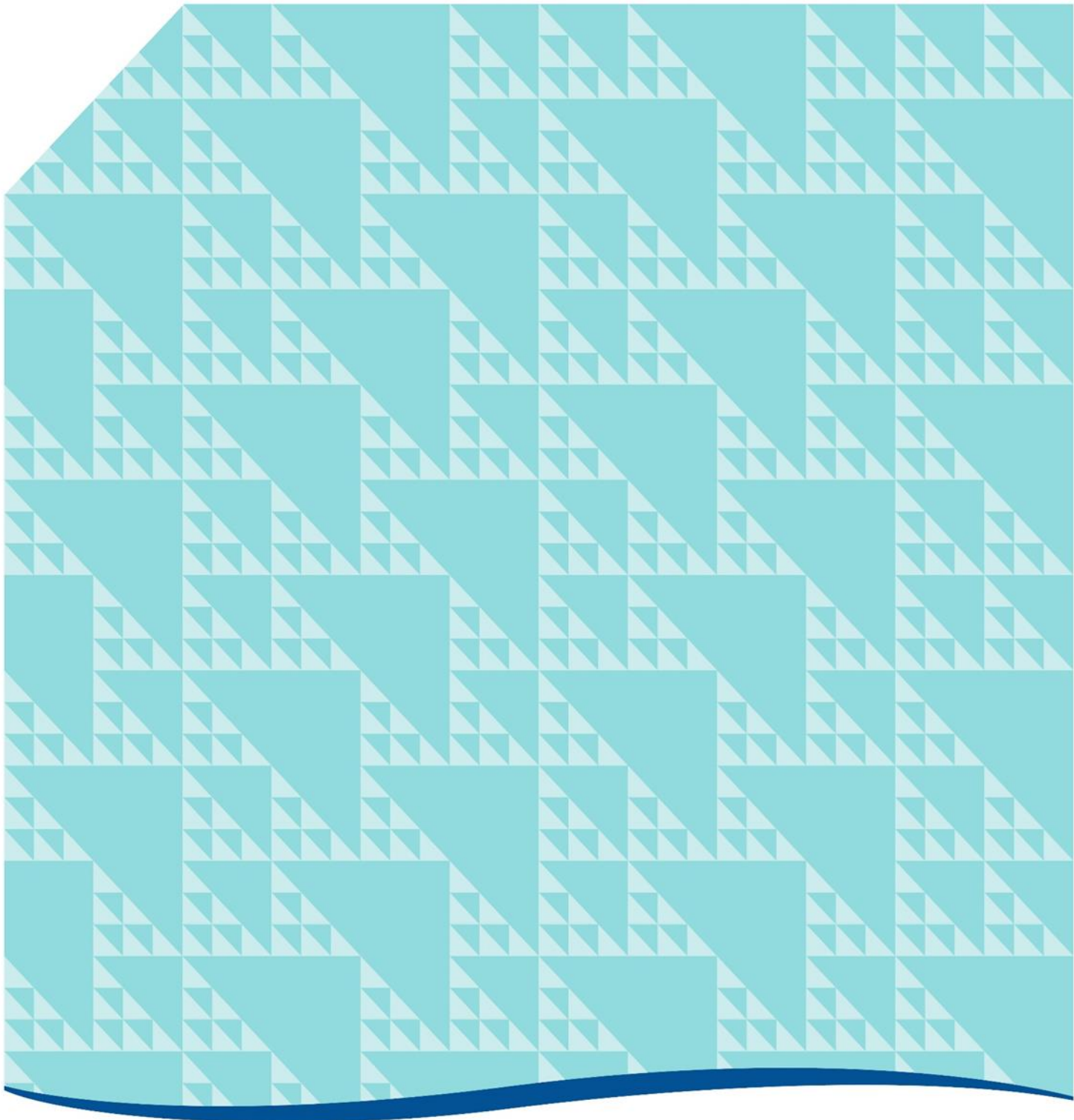


# 2018 Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice)

RTO guide to the application process, eligibility criteria and conditions



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# Before you apply

## Introduction

The Department of State Growth, through Skills Tasmania, will deliver the 2018 Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) (the Fund) subsidies via grants to eligible Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) of an employer's choice to make a significant contribution towards the cost of providing quality training and assessment for nationally recognised training to Tasmanian apprentices and trainees.

Only *Skills Tasmania endorsed RTOs* are eligible to apply.

The Fund is not designed to fully meet training and assessment costs, and employer or apprentice/trainee contributions may be required by the RTO.

In order to be able to offer Fund-subsidised training places to eligible apprentices and/or trainees, RTOs must have a Fund agreement in place for the year of commencement of the apprentice or trainee's training with the RTO.

Each approved place that is allocated to an eligible apprentice/trainee continues to attract Fund subsidies until the apprentice/trainee completes the qualification, their training contract is cancelled, or they transfer to another RTO.

To be eligible to apply for a Fund grant, the RTO must meet a set of eligibility criteria and application conditions (see pages 4 and 5).

If an application is successful, the RTO must meet a further set of grant conditions (see page 9).

The Fund manager is available on 03 6165 6060 or at [userchoice@skills.tas.gov.au](mailto:userchoice@skills.tas.gov.au) to provide information, support and assistance to all Skills Tasmania Endorsed RTOs who wish to apply for a Fund grant.

## What changes have occurred since the 2017 User Choice program?

The name of the User Choice program has been changed to the Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) to better reflect the purpose of the Fund.

RTOs who have applied for User Choice agreements in previous years will note that the Fund has an increased focus on RTOs providing evidence to support claims. In addition to this requirement, there are new conditions and criteria designed to support quality and to provide clarity.

## Who can apply for Fund subsidies and what are the 'rules'?

It is important to note that there are a number of essential conditions and eligibility criteria that must be met by RTOs who apply for Fund subsidies (application conditions, page 5) and those RTOs who become recipients of Fund subsidies (grant conditions, page 9).

RTOs must also meet all eligibility criteria outlined on page 4. Apprentices and trainees are also required to meet the learner eligibility criteria, which are on page 11.

In addition to these conditions and criteria, the Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) agreement for all programs (ST Agreement) (or its replacement) contains a range of other requirements and service obligations for Skills Tasmania Endorsed RTOs who are successful recipients of Skills Tasmania training subsidies. The ST Agreement can be found on the Skills Tasmania website here: [ST Agreement](#)

RTOs who breach the Fund conditions or eligibility criteria may have their 2018 Fund agreement cancelled or their agreement may be amended by Skills Tasmania to remove a qualification if the breach is restricted to one qualification.

## The budget

The Fund has a budget of \$19 million available to subsidise over 400 nationally-recognised qualifications in a wide range of industries for Tasmanian apprentices and trainees.

Every subsidised place which is approved reduces the available budget for other placements. For this reason, RTOs must only apply for a number of places which either match previous User Choice take-up or a number that is supported by an employer/s in writing. Applications for a number of places that cannot be verified by previous take-up or the written commitment of an employer/s will not be approved.

RTOs with a 2018 Fund agreement will be able to add, or apply to add as many additional places as can be evidenced once all of the initial places approved have been allocated to apprentices and/or trainees. See page 14 for details of how to add, or apply to add more places.

## What is the Fund's priority?

While subsidies for existing workers are available for most qualifications up to and including Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level IV, the Fund will prioritise subsidies for new workers.

## Which legislation and policies relate to the Fund?

All Tasmanian Government grants are administered in accordance with the Grants Management Framework outlined in Treasurer's Instruction TI.709. An overview of TI.709 is provided at [www.treasury.tas.gov.au](http://www.treasury.tas.gov.au)

Personal information will be managed in accordance with the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*. Information provided to Skills Tasmania is subject to the provisions of the *Right to Information Act 2009*.

Tasmanian vocational education and training (VET) system is governed by the *Training and Workforce Development Act 2013*. This Act provides powers to Skills Tasmania to administer the Tasmanian training system.

The abovementioned Acts can be viewed in full on the Tasmanian Government legislation website at [Tasmanian legislation](#).

Fund subsidies are only paid to eligible apprentices and trainees who have a registered training contract with their employer.

All apprenticeship and traineeship arrangements must meet the obligations of the national training contract ([apprenticeship/traineeship training contract](#)) and each of the Tasmanian Traineeships and Apprenticeships Committee (TTAC) Policies and Guidelines: [TTAC Policies and Guidelines](#). TTAC Policies and Guidelines contain a range of rules for apprenticeships and traineeships including essential employment conditions and specific supervision requirements.

## What is the relationship between Fund compliance and Skills Tasmania endorsement monitoring?

Any breaches of the Fund conditions or eligibility criteria will be reported to the Skills Tasmania RTO endorsement manager to inform the monitoring of the RTO's performance.

# The application stage

## When and how can applications be submitted?

The Fund is a rolling grant which means it is open to applications from 9 September 2017, with applications accepted throughout 2018.

While RTOs can apply for a 2018 Fund agreement at any time from 9 September, RTOs who wish to have a 2018 Fund agreement in place by early 2018 are encouraged to apply prior to 24 November 2017. Please note that 24 November is not a cut-off date but that applications received after 24 November expose the RTO to the risk of not having an agreement in place by 1 January 2018.

The Fund application must be completed and lodged online using [SmartyGrants](#). A link to the application is available on the Skills Tasmania website: [Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund \(User Choice\)](#).

The Help Guide for Applicants on the SmartyGrants website provides information on how to use the system, access saved applications and printing the application prior to submitting. Applicants must register before making an online application. Registration gives secure access to the application forms allowing them to be completed in stages if required. It is recommended that RTOs use one, generic login for all funding applications submitted to Skills Tasmania. This allows the RTO to view all applications they have lodged for any Skills Tasmania funding programs from one log-on.

After the initial grant process, Skills Tasmania aims to process Fund applications within 30 business days.

## RTO eligibility criteria

Only RTOs able to meet all of the following criteria and all application conditions (page 5) are eligible to apply for an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grant:

### 1. Registration

RTOs must be registered in accordance with the requirements of the *NVR Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* to deliver the relevant qualification/s.

### 2. Skills Tasmania endorsed RTO status

RTOs must be an approved *Skills Tasmania Endorsed RTO* at the time of submitting an application. Evidence of endorsement must accompany each application. (For information regarding the *Skills Tasmania Endorsed RTO* system, see [Skills Tasmania endorsed RTO system](#) )

### 3. Scope of registration

RTOs must only submit applications for subsidies where the qualification/s is included on their scope of registration for delivery in Tasmania at the time of lodging the application. Evidence of scope must accompany the application.

### 4. Availability of a qualification as a subsidised apprenticeship or traineeship

RTOs can only apply for Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) subsidies if the qualification has been approved by Skills Tasmania as a subsidised apprenticeship/traineeship and appears on the approved apprenticeships/traineeships list: [Skills Tasmania approved apprenticeships and traineeships](#)

The availability of a qualification as an apprenticeship or traineeship does not automatically grant the provision of an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) subsidy for that qualification.

## Application conditions

In addition to meeting the RTO eligibility criteria (page 4), RTOs must meet all of the following conditions when applying for an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grant:

### 1. Lodging the application

To be considered for an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grant, RTOs must fully complete and appropriately lodge an application using the template, system or method required by Skills Tasmania. The information provided in the application must be accurate and verifiable by Skills Tasmania. Any required evidence must be attached to the application.

### 2. Financial viability

It is a requirement of all endorsed RTOs who apply for an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) to be financially viable at the time of applying and during any subsequent funding agreement.

For an RTO to be considered financial viability they must show ability to generate sufficient income to meet operating payments, debt commitments and, where applicable, to allow for growth while maintaining service levels. A financially viable RTO is an entity that is NOT under external administration, has not been appointed a liquidator, and is not being wound up, dissolved or trading while insolvent.

### 3. Subcontracting arrangements

RTOs must attach copies of current subcontracting agreements where one or more subcontractor is providing training and/or assessment services for any of the qualifications for which the RTO has applied. The subcontracting agreement must clearly show the roles and responsibilities of the RTO and the subcontractor and must cover the period of any grant agreement if the application were to be approved. The application must clearly show to which qualification/s the subcontracting arrangements apply.

### 4. Number of places applied for

RTOs must only apply for a number of places that either match previous User Choice take-up or a number that is supported by an employer or employers in writing. Applications for large numbers that cannot be verified by previous take-up or the written commitment of an employer/employers will not be approved.

### 5. 'Open market' or 'employer specific' places

An 'open market' application is made when the RTO is operating or seeking to operate with a range of employers.

'Employer specific' applications are made when the RTO is applying for 10 or more places for one employer for one qualification. These applications must be accompanied by evidence in writing from the employer/s indicating the commitment of the employer to using the services of the RTO for their apprentices and/or trainees. The evidence must include the proposed/forecasted number of apprentices or trainees employed/to be employed by the employer who will require a subsidised training place during the Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) calendar year.

Applications may include both Open Market and Employer-specific places.

### 6. Requests for additional information to support application assessment

Skills Tasmania reserves the right to request additional information or evidence to support the assessment of any Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) application.

## 7. Grant payable and number of places

The RTO accepts that Skills Tasmania reserves the right to negotiate and/or pay:

- (1) A reduced grant amount where delivery of training is to multiple apprentices or trainees in the same organisation for the same qualification. This includes enterprise RTOs
- (2) The price per place that will be paid to the RTO
- (3) The number of training places.

## 8. Applying for prices above the published price

RTOs applying for prices above the published price must include both a full cost breakdown and detailed evidence of why the higher price is required when requested by Skills Tasmania.

Only applications that are deemed by Skills Tasmania to provide high-quality training and assessment and/or in qualifications in areas of skill-shortage or that are unavailable through any other RTO will be considered. Additional grant conditions may be applied by Skills Tasmania.

## 9. ASQA information sharing

The RTO, by its application, expressly authorises the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) to release information to Skills Tasmania, Department of State Growth, regarding the RTO's registration status, including the results of any audits, complaints and sanctions.

### **What are the evidence requirements for applications?**

The Fund requires RTOs to provide evidence to support claims made against the four assessment criteria. For example, Criterion 4 requires the RTO to have a strategy to ensure that trainers and assessors maintain industry currency. Copies of the RTO's industry currency strategy and samples of recent staff records indicating how individuals have maintained their currency will be required to support the information provided in the application.

Evidence of current scope including delivery sites and evidence of Skills Tasmania endorsement must also be lodged by the RTO with the application.

### **How does Skills Tasmania decide how many places are approved for an RTO?**

In addition to assessing the RTO's application and associated evidence against the assessment criteria, Skills Tasmania checks the number of places applied for against the RTOs' previous User Choice take-up of allocation (if the RTO has had a previous User Choice agreement). Please note that the level of take-up of a User Choice or the Fund allocation is the measure and not the size of the previous allocation. For example, if an RTO was allocated 35 places but only 12 were taken up, without written evidence of the need for more than 12 places in a subsequent year, a maximum of 12 places could be considered as an initial allocation.

Skills Tasmania will not approve a large number of places for a qualification without written evidence from an employer or employers clearly indicating an intention to engage a particular number of apprentices/trainees in the qualification/s applied for during the Fund year. It is important to note that the take-up rates of all Fund allocations will be monitored and low take-up rates are noted against the RTOs endorsement and can effect subsequent allocations.

RTOs with no previous User Choice history must submit written evidence from employers to support the number of places applied for. This evidence must include the number of places required by each employer. In the absence of this written support, there will be no re-negotiation of numbers and any approval will be for only very small initial allocations, subject to all other requirements being met.

RTOs whose applications for the Fund are successful are able to add or apply to add to an initial allocation if the initial allocation has been used and the required evidence can be provided that more places are needed. See page 14 for details on how to apply for additional places.

## Application assessment

Applications for the Fund will be assessed against the RTO eligibility (page 4) and application conditions (page 5), Fund assessment criteria (below), previous User Choice history of take-up and apprentice/trainee withdrawal and completion rates.

Each applying RTO is required to lodge a completed application and sufficient evidence against the assessment criteria (see page 6 'What are the evidence requirements for applications?' for more detail).

The four Fund assessment criteria are:

### Criterion 1

The endorsed RTO must have a method of identifying the preferred learning styles and needs of each apprentice/trainee as well as the needs of each employer prior to the commencement of training and/or assessment services.

The identified needs must be accommodated by the training and assessment services planned for the apprentice/trainee.

The RTO must provide evidence of the methods and resources used for training for each qualification applied for.

#### **Evidence guide:**

Acceptable evidence types include:

- **Identifying learning needs** - copies of pre-training checklists, pre-training reviews, training needs analyses, induction checklists, LLN assessment tools or similar documents along with evidence of their implementation, training and assessment strategies, learner guides, induction, enrolment or RTO internet site information outlining details of methods used to provide training and assessment services.
- **Training resources** - training and assessment strategies if there is sufficient detail regarding the specific methods of training and assessment, training resource lists including text books, machinery, tools, electronic equipment; copies of lesson plans, training session plans, training method information provided to learners and employers, copies of training site and worksite resource documentation.



## Criterion 2

The Endorsed RTO must provide evidence of the existing\*<sup>1</sup> relationships with Tasmanian employers for the qualifications applied for and must provide written evidence of satisfaction from at least one employer for each qualification applied for.

### Evidence guide:

- Evidence **must** be in writing from employers of their satisfaction with the services provided by the RTO for the apprenticeship and traineeship qualifications applied for.

\*<sup>1</sup>In the case of a first Tasmanian User Choice or Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) application, the employer evidence must indicate an intention to use the services of the RTO for the qualification/s applied for and must nominate the number of apprentices/trainees the employer intends to engage during the annual program.

## Criterion 3

The Endorsed RTO must have a strategy to identify the support needs of each apprentice/trainee prior to commencement of training and/or assessment and must have a method of providing that support for apprentices/trainees or for referring apprentices/trainees to relevant and accessible Tasmanian support services.

Support needs include language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) but should not be limited to LLN. The RTO should consider the full range of support needs that may be required by apprentices/trainees, which can include: mental health, homelessness, financial management, relationship issues, transport and study skills.

### Evidence guide:

Acceptable evidence types include:

- Copies of training needs analyses, enrolment checklists that include methods of assessing needs, pre-training reviews, pre-training checklists, pre-training interview notes.
- Copies of information provided to apprentices/trainees outlining support services available and evidence of support services being provided to individual apprentices/trainees.

## Criterion 4

The Endorsed RTO must have a strategy for maintaining industry currency for trainers and assessors delivering the qualifications applied for which must include a method of regularly reviewing the industry currency of each trainer and assessor.

### Evidence guide:

Acceptable evidence types include:

- Copies of trainer and assessor industry currency maintenance policies, procedures, reviews that outline the strategy implemented by the RTO to ensure that trainers and assessors maintain industry currency.
- Copies of records of industry currency activity by trainers/assessors in the previous 12 months for at least one trainer/assessor for each qualification applied for.

# If your application is approved

## What are the responsibilities of successful applicants?

If successful for a Fund grant, the RTO's Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) Agreement for all Programs (or its replacement) will need to be activated, if it is not already. To activate a Skills Tasmania agreement, contact the RTO Endorsement manager on 03 6165 6020 or email [rtoendorsement@skills.tas.gov.au](mailto:rtoendorsement@skills.tas.gov.au).

A new Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) Agreement for all Programs will be established in 2018 and any RTO who has a 2015 – 2017 Agreement will need to sign the new version in order to continue to be eligible for funding.

Successful RTOs will be notified of the outcome of their application via email in the first instance.

A Fund grant agreement will be sent to successful RTOs for signing by an authorised person and a copy will need to be returned to Skills Tasmania for execution. The signed agreement forms a Schedule to the RTO's Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) Agreement for all Programs.

The RTO will not be eligible to receive any funding until a current Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) Agreement for all Programs has been executed and the signed Fund agreement has been returned to Skills Tasmania.

Successful applicants must ensure they meet all the below grant conditions.

## Grant conditions

Skills Tasmania may require an employer financial contribution towards training and assessment costs for apprentices and trainees who are employees of the Tasmanian or Australian Government.

Breaches of a grant condition/s may lead to cancellation of the RTO's Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) agreement/s.

The Conditions are:

### 1. Executing the Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) agreement for all programs

If successful for an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grant, the RTO's Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) Agreement for all Programs will need to be executed as a Deed (if it is not already). For details on this process, contact the Skills Tasmania RTO Endorsement manager on 03 6165 6020 or email [rtoendorsement@skills.tas.gov.au](mailto:rtoendorsement@skills.tas.gov.au)

### 2. Access to Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) agreement for relevant staff and compliance with fund requirements

The RTO must ensure that relevant RTO staff have access to active Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) agreements and the Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) Agreement for all Programs and must be aware of and ensure compliance with the Fund conditions and requirements where the requirement relates to their role within the RTO.

### 3. Apprentice/trainee eligibility

RTOs must ensure that all apprentices and trainees who receive a subsidised training place are eligible for that subsidy.

### 4. Provision of structured training services by RTO staff

The RTO must provide the apprentice/trainee with training and assessment services for all core and elective units and must meet all other requirements of the relevant training package, as well as all obligations deemed necessary by Skills Tasmania to deliver quality training.

Providing learning resources to an apprentice/trainee with no provision of structured training by the RTO is not considered to be providing a training service for the purposes of Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grants.

RTOs must be able to provide clear and sufficient evidence of the provision of structured training by an RTO staff member to the subsidised apprentice/trainee.

Where apprentices/trainees have been deemed competent for a unit/s through an RPL process, the RTO must be able to provide sufficient evidence of the appropriateness of that process for that apprentice/trainee and that the process meets the full assessment requirements of the training package.

### 5. Training commencement timeframe

Training and assessment activity for Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) subsidised apprentices and/or trainees must commence between 1 January and 31 December in the Fund year.

### 6. Applying for additional places

The RTO may only apply for additional places when the initial allocation for a qualification has been exhausted.

### 7. Allocation take-up rate effect

The RTO accepts that a low allocation take-up rate may result in reduced future grant allocations from Skills Tasmania and will be recorded against the RTO's Skills Tasmania RTO endorsement status.

### 8. Communicating costs to employer and apprentice/trainee

The amount of the Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grant subsidy, as well as any costs that may be payable by the employer or the apprentice/trainee, must be communicated to the employer and the apprentice/trainee by the RTO at or before enrolment.

### 9. Commencing training prior to approval of an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) agreement

Payments will not be made for units reported through AVETMISS data that indicate that training and/or assessment services were commenced prior to the commencement date of an RTO's Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) agreement.

## 10. Grant payments eligibility requirements

Grant payments will only be made where an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) agreement is in place between the RTO and Skills Tasmania and the apprentice or trainee meets all Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) eligibility criteria, has a registered training contract and compliant AVETMISS data has reported activity for the apprentice/trainee.

## 11. Commencing training prior to the commencement date of training contracts

Payments will not be made for training that is conducted prior to the commencement date of the apprentice/trainee training contract.

## 12. Training occurring after training contract cancellation date

Payments will not be made if the date of training or assessment is after the date of cancellation of the associated apprentice or trainee training contract.

## 13. Applying for replacement qualifications

The RTO is required to submit an application to Skills Tasmania to add a replacement qualification to a current Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) agreement, regardless of the equivalence or non-equivalence of the qualification.

## 14. Management of allocation

The RTO must have a system or method which allows the RTO to identify which Fund-subsidised places have been allocated to apprentices/trainees and how many places remain for allocation.

# Learner eligibility criteria

There are rules that determine which learners are eligible for Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) subsidies.

Eligible learners must be an apprentice or a trainee, can be new workers, existing workers, year 10, 11 or 12 students or previously-qualified apprentices and trainees. RTOs must determine that each learner in receipt of Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) subsidies meets all learner eligibility criteria.

Fund subsidies will not be paid for learners who are unable to meet all of the learner eligibility criteria.

Breaches of learner eligibility may lead to cancellation of Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) agreements.

The Learner eligibility criteria are as follows:

### 1. Training contract

- 1.1 The learner must be an apprentice or trainee and therefore a signatory to an active and registered training contract approved by the Tasmanian Traineeships and Apprenticeships Committee (TTAC) and be able to meet the obligations of the training contract and all TTAC Policies and Guidelines.

## 2. New workers

- 2.1 New workers are those that have been employed as an apprentice or trainee who have been employed by the employer for less than three months full-time or twelve months part-time or casual. Priority for the Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) will be given to new workers.
- 2.2 If an employee (including an apprentice or trainee) has had a break in employment of six (6) months or more from their employer, they are deemed to be a new employee.

## 3. Existing employee eligibility

- 3.1 Existing employees may also be eligible to receive Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) subsidies.
- 3.2 An existing employee is an individual who has been employed for more than three (3) months on a full-time basis or more than 12 months on a part-time or casual basis by the employer with whom he/she is entering into a training contract.
- 3.3 A school student as defined under the *Education Act 1994 (Tasmania)* is not considered to be an existing employee even if they meet the definition outlined in 3.2.
- 3.4 An learner progressing from a lower AQF level to a higher AQF level under a training contract will not be deemed an existing employee if a new training contract is entered into within 12 months of the completion of the previous training contract. This applies whether the higher level qualification is in the same field or a different field; provided that at the time the first training contract was signed the apprentice or trainee was a new employee as defined in this section. Under these circumstances, the apprentice or trainee will also be entitled to apply for Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) subsidies for the subsequent qualification.

## 4. School-based apprenticeships and traineeships eligibility

- 4.1 The availability of an apprenticeship or traineeship as a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship is indicated at [Skills Tasmania approved apprenticeships and traineeships](#) as a 'School Based Pathway'.
- 4.2 As far as possible, the criteria relating to apprenticeships and traineeships will also apply to apprenticeships and traineeships in schools.
- 4.3 Subsidies for school-based apprentices and trainees will not be paid where the school at which the apprentice or trainee is enrolled is also the RTO providing training and assessment. This is because it is expected that the training and assessment services will be subsidised through the school's normal resourcing mechanisms for school students.

## 5. Previously funded apprentices and trainees

- 5.1 Apprentices and trainees who hold a nationally-recognised qualification that was subsidised within the past five years are not eligible for further subsidies for a qualification at the same level or a higher level from the same training package unless the training package indicates in the Qualification Description that the qualification provides additional skills and a different occupational outcome.
- 5.2 Apprentices and trainees who have completed a subsidised nationally-recognised qualification within the past five years may be eligible for further subsidies if:
  - a) Skills Tasmania believes a subsequent version of the same qualification contains significant changes and/or additions and that it has become the new industry benchmark of essential skills and knowledge for that industry.

- b) Significant changes to the industry have occurred such as major changes to technology and the industry or the government, as opposed to individual employers, specifies that staff are required to update/refresh their qualifications.
- 5.3 Apprentices and trainees with a qualification funded within the past 5 years will be eligible for Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) subsidies if the grant sought is for a qualification unrelated to any previous subsidised qualification and they are able to meet all other eligibility requirements.

## 6. RTO staff

- 6.1 RTO staff are not eligible for Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) subsidies where the RTO providing the training and assessment services is also the employer of the apprentice or trainee, as per the Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) Agreement for all Programs or its replacement.

## 7. Special consideration

- 7.1 Where the RTO has determined that an apprentice or trainee does not meet the Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) eligibility criteria but it is believed that a strong case exists to fund that particular apprentice or trainee, the RTO may make special consideration application to Skills Tasmania. Such applications will be assessed on merit using the available evidence and funding approval is not guaranteed.

## Reporting and being paid for training activity

RTO payment and reporting requirements are outlined in the Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) Agreement for all Programs: [Skills Tasmania Agreement](#).

Approved Fund agreements detail a number of places at a particular price but no payment is made until/unless the RTO reports commencement of training for the units of competency through the submission of compliant AVETMISS data to Skills Tasmania.

It is important to note that induction and enrolment do not constitute the commencement of training and payments will not be made until structured training activity has commenced and can be evidenced by the RTO upon request of suitable and sufficient evidence by Skills Tasmania.

The amount payable per unit will be determined by the outcome code reported in the AVETMISS data submitted by the RTO. For more information on payments and reporting, go to: [Skills Tasmania reporting and payments](#)

## Evidence requirements for reporting

In addition to evidence requirements of the [AVETMISS Non-financial audit guidelines](#), if Skills Tasmania requests evidence of the provision of structured training services delivered by RTO staff to apprentices/trainees under the Fund, the evidence will need to clearly show:

- how, where, when, by whom and with which apprentice/s or trainee/s the training was conducted
- the specific methods and resources used to train
- the duration of the training session
- the unit/s to which the training relates.

Skills Tasmania may contact both employers and apprentices/trainees to verify the evidence provided.

## Publishing details of successful grant applicants

The names of successful RTO applicants and the qualifications approved for each RTO will be made publicly available on the Skills Tasmania website: [RTOs with a funding agreement to deliver subsidised training to apprentices and trainees](#).

## Will Skills Tasmania audit my RTO?

Skills Tasmania may audit an RTO at any time in relation to compliance with Fund criteria, eligibility criteria, conditions, and/or any obligations or requirements of the Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) Agreement for all Programs. Audits may be either full audits conducted at RTO sites or may be conducted by review of RTO evidence submitted to Skills Tasmania or a combination of both.

# What happens when all of an RTO's initial allocation has been used and more places are needed?

## Applying for additional places

RTOs with an approved 2018 User Choice agreement are able to request additional places to that agreement via the Training Program Outline (TPO) provided to the RTO by the Apprenticeship Network Provider (ANP) when an employer and apprentice/trainee have chosen the RTO as their training provider. **RTOs must only request additional places after their initial allocation has been exhausted.**

The RTO is required to check that the apprentice or trainee is eligible for User Choice subsidies by referring to the learner eligibility section of the User Choice 2018 Guidelines and Conditions. Once eligibility is confirmed, the RTO can complete the funding source section of the TPO. The RTO must indicate that the apprentice or trainee is eligible and that an additional funding place is required by ticking the appropriate boxes on the TPO.

**A copy of the completed TPO must be emailed to Skills Tasmania at [TPO@skills.tas.gov.au](mailto:TPO@skills.tas.gov.au) at the same time a copy is emailed to the Apprenticeship Network Provider (ANP).**

TPOs received with incomplete information are unable to be processed and will be returned to the RTO for completion and resubmission.

It is important to note that this is not an application process; it is a notification process that does not require the RTO to wait for approval from Skills Tasmania.

Formal notification will be provided by the Skills Tasmania Payments team early in the month following the approval. The formal notification will include a report outlining the increased allocation. The notification must be signed by the RTO's nominated officer and a copy returned to Skills Tasmania before the change can be fully activated in the Skills Tasmania payments system.

Please note that Skills Tasmania reserves the right to not approve additional places for RTOs where there is an active complaint, ASQA action or pending action, issues arising through the endorsement monitoring process or the RTO has outstanding reporting or compliance matters.

# If your application is not approved

Applicants will be deemed unsuccessful if they are not able to meet all of the eligibility criteria and/or conditions outlined in this Guide and/or do not adequately address the assessment criteria or are unable to provide sufficient evidence of employer support.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive detailed written feedback on their application and the reasons why it does not meet requirements.

Eligible RTOs can lodge a further application for the Fund if/when all requirements can be met.

The Fund manager is available on 03 6165 6060 or at [userchoice@skills.tas.gov.au](mailto:userchoice@skills.tas.gov.au) to provide support, information and assistance to all Skills Tasmania-endorsed RTOs.



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[www.skills.tas.gov.au](http://www.skills.tas.gov.au)