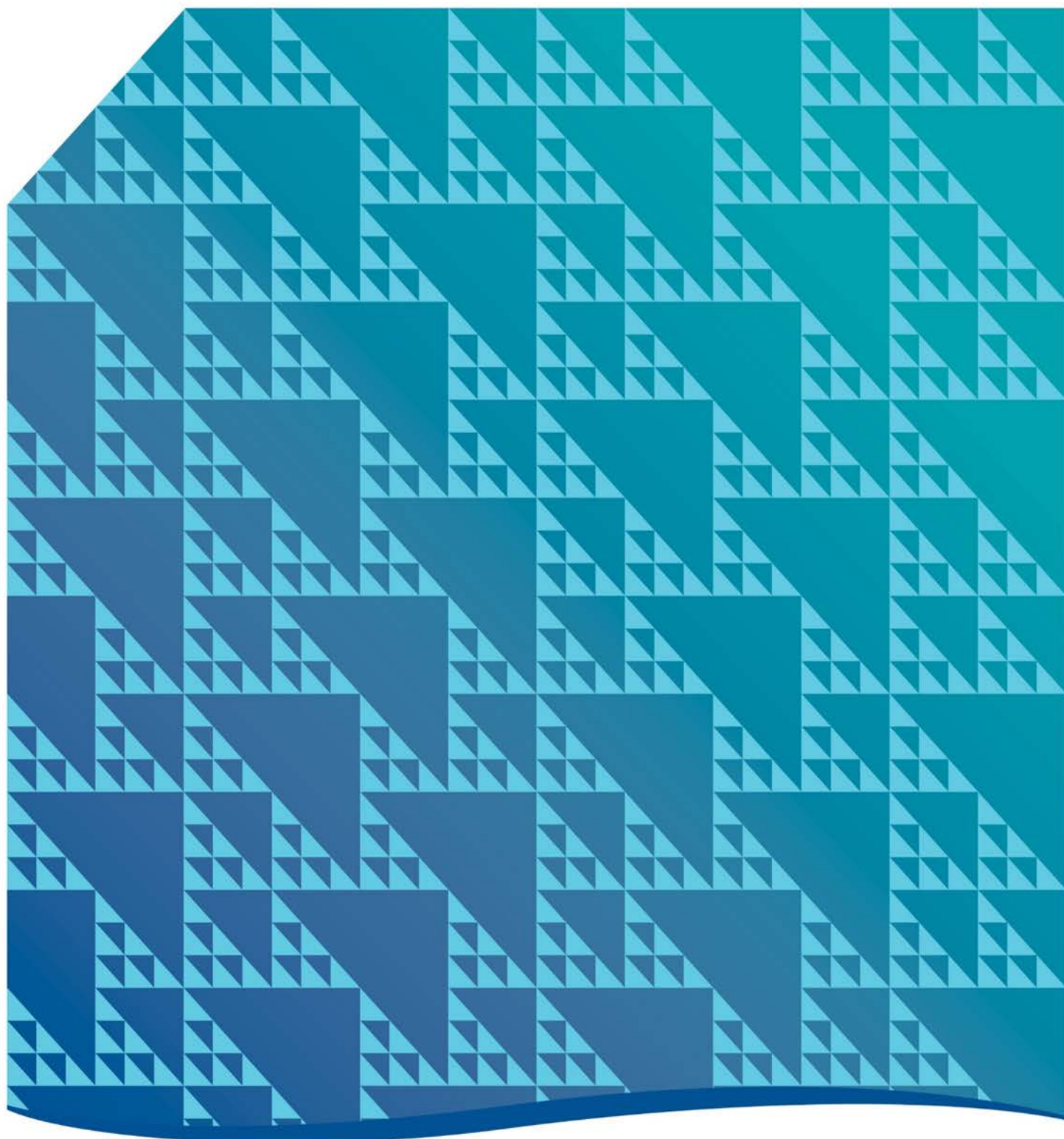


RTO guide to the application process, eligibility criteria and conditions

2021 Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice)



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Introduction

The Department of State Growth, through Skills Tasmania, will provide 2021 Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) (the Fund) grants to eligible Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) to significantly subsidise 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 has a budget allocation of up to \$20 million available to subsidise over 400 nationally-recognised qualifications in a wide range of industries for Tasmanian apprentices and trainees.

To be eligible to apply for a Fund grant, the RTO must also meet a set of eligibility criteria and application conditions (see page 6). The Fund is not designed to fully meet training and assessment costs, and employer or apprentice/trainee contributions may be required.

In order 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.

The Fund manager is available on 03 6165 6027 or at userchoice@skills.tas.gov.au to provide information, support and assistance to Skills Tasmania Endorsed RTOs who wish to apply for a grant through the Fund.

Which legislation and policies relate to the Fund?

Legislation

The 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.

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

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*.

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

Policy

Subsidies provided under the Fund are only paid for eligible apprentices and trainees who have a registered and active training contract.

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

The application stage

When and how are applications submitted?

In recognition of the impact that COVID-19 has had and continues to have on RTOs and to assist in the ongoing service provision to Tasmanian apprentices and trainees, Skills Tasmania will offer to renew existing 2020 agreement arrangements for the 2021 Fund without the need for RTOs to lodge a new application.

If an RTO wishes to change any terms of the existing 2020 agreement/s (such as qualifications or pricing) or add additional qualifications, a new application to the 2021 Fund for those specific qualifications only is required.

The Fund is a rolling grant which means it is open to applications for the duration of the program. The Fund will open on 12 September 2020, with applications accepted until 31 December 2021.

RTOs who apply for a grant in the last quarter of 2021 will be required to confirm that if their grant is approved, they are able to commence training by 31 December 2021.

Skills Tasmania receives a large number of applications for the Fund between September and December each year.

Each application is screened for eligibility, assessed against the criteria and then progressed to the approval stage if it meets the minimum requirements.

While RTOs can apply for a 2021 Fund agreement at any time from 12 September 2020 onwards, RTOs who wish to have a 2021 Fund agreement in place by early 2021 are encouraged to apply by 9 November 2020 to allow sufficient time for Skills Tasmania to take applications through the required processes before decisions on approval can be made.

Please note that 9 November is not a cut-off date but that applications received after 9 November expose the RTO to the risk of not having a Fund agreement in place by 1 January 2021.

The Fund application must be completed and lodged online using [SmartyGrants](#). A link to the application process is available on the [Skills Tasmania website](#).

The application requires RTOs to attach evidence to support claims made in addressing the criteria including evidence from Tasmanian employers of their satisfaction with the services provided to apprentices/trainees.

Each criterion includes an evidence guide that lists acceptable evidence types.

Applicants must register an account on SmartyGrants before submitting an application. Existing users can log-in if already registered. RTOs can complete the application in stages if required. It is recommended that RTOs use a single, generic user account 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 user account.

While Skills Tasmania aims to process applications within 30 working days from the application lodgement date, this timeframe may be affected by the number of other applications pending.

How much does Skills Tasmania pay for each qualification?

The [Skills Tasmania approved apprenticeships and traineeships](#) list contains the details of all the qualifications approved as Tasmanian apprenticeships and traineeships.

If the qualification is funded, the amount of the funding is shown on the list as the 'subsidy for qualification'.

It is important to note that the subsidy is paid in instalments to the RTO as the RTO reports AVETMISS data to Skills Tasmania that shows the commencement and completion of units by each apprentice or trainee (see page 14).

Skills Tasmania reserves the right to accept applications for a subsidy above the published subsidy rate where the circumstances are deemed by Skills Tasmania to warrant consideration. Additional grant conditions may be applied by Skills Tasmania where a higher subsidy is approved.

Skills Tasmania reserves the right to negotiate a subsidy lower than the subsidy applied for and to not approve applications for subsidies above the published subsidy rate.

Is there help available to applicants before or during the application process?

In addition to the [SmartyGrants Help Guide for Applicants](#), the Skills Tasmania Programs team is available to provide assistance to applicants on understanding the Fund criteria and/or clarifying evidence requirements. This assistance should be requested by emailing userchoice@skills.tas.gov.au or phoning the Fund Manager on 03 6165 6027.

What happens if an application doesn't meet minimum requirements?

Each application must meet the RTO eligibility criteria and application conditions to be accepted and to progress to the assessment phase.

Each application is assessed and scored against the assessment criteria. Applications must meet each criterion to a satisfactory level in order to progress to the approval stage.

If an application does not meet the Fund criteria or conditions, the Fund manager will email the RTO with the details of where the application has not met requirements. The RTO may be able to provide additional information that is sufficient to address the gaps in the application or it may choose to withdraw the application and submit a new application at a later date.

Where an RTO has been advised of gaps in their application and Skills Tasmania is waiting on further information and/or evidence to progress the application, the application will be considered to be pending by Skills Tasmania for a period of 12 weeks. At the expiry of this period, the application will be considered to be inactive and may be declined by Skills Tasmania. The RTO will be able to reapply when able to provide sufficient evidence that the organisation can meet the Fund requirements.

RTO eligibility criteria

RTOs able to meet the following three criteria and the application conditions are eligible to apply for an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grant.

1. RTO Registration status

RTOs must be registered in accordance with the requirements of the ASQA Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015.

2. Skills Tasmania endorsed RTO status

RTOs applying for Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grants must be an approved Skills Tasmania Endorsed RTO at the time of submitting an application for an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grant and the endorsement must include the qualification/s for which the RTO has

applied. For information regarding the Skills Tasmania Endorsed RTO system, visit the [Skills Tasmania website](#).

3. Scope of registration

RTOs applying for Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grants must only submit applications where the qualification/s are included on their scope of registration for delivery in Tasmania at the time of lodging the application.

Application conditions

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

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 SmartyGrants as 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.

Availability of a qualification as a subsidised apprenticeship or traineeship

RTOs applying for Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grants can only apply for an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grant if the qualification/s is approved by Skills Tasmania as a subsidised apprenticeship/traineeship and appears on the [approved apprenticeships/traineeships list](#).

Not all qualifications on this list are funded under the Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice).

Financial viability

RTOs applying for an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grant must be financially viable at the time of applying for and for the duration of any subsequent funding agreement.

A financially viable entity is one that is not under external administration, being wound up, dissolved or trading while insolvent or where a liquidator has been appointed.

For the purposes of the Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice), to demonstrate financial viability the RTO must be able to show, if requested, the ability to generate sufficient income to meet operating payments, debt commitments and, where applicable, to allow for growth while maintaining service levels.

Third party arrangements

RTOs applying for an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grant must attach copies of current third party agreement/s where one or more third parties are or will be providing training and/or assessment services for any of the qualifications for which the RTO has applied.

The third party agreement/s must clearly show the roles and responsibilities of the RTO and the third party and must cover the period of any Fund agreement if the application were to be approved.

The application must clearly show to which qualification/s the third party arrangements apply.

Number of places requested

RTOs applying for an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grant must only apply for a number of places that either match previous Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) take-up or a number that is supported by an employer/s in writing.

Applications for a qualification/s with a number of places that cannot be verified by previous take-up or the written commitment of an employer/s may not be approved.

Skills Tasmania reserves the right to approve a lower number of places than applied for by the RTO.

Grant amount

The RTO accepts that Skills Tasmania reserves the right to pay a subsidy that is higher or lower than the published subsidy rate.

The Skills Tasmania list of [qualifications approved as Tasmanian apprenticeships/traineeships](#) contains the subsidy payable for each qualification approved as an apprenticeship or traineeship.

Skills Tasmania reserves the right to accept applications for higher subsidies where the circumstances are deemed by Skills Tasmania to warrant consideration. A detailed rationale for the higher subsidy request must be submitted in the application. Additional grant conditions may be applied by Skills Tasmania where a higher subsidy is approved.

Skills Tasmania may require evidence of an employer financial contribution towards training and assessment costs for apprentices and trainees.

Requests for additional information to support application assessment

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

ASQA information sharing

An RTO applying for an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grant, by its application, expressly authorises the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) and Skills Tasmania to share information regarding any action or issues effecting the RTOs registration status, audit outcomes, complaints lodged and/or investigated, current or pending sanctions or other pending actions against the RTO.

How does Skills Tasmania decide how many places are approved per qualification for each application?

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 Fund take-up of allocation (if the RTO has had a previous Fund agreement).

It is important to note that the level of take-up of a Fund allocation is considered and not the size of the previous allocation. For example, if an RTO was allocated 35 places in a previous Fund 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 employ a particular number of apprentices/trainees in the qualification/s applied for during the Fund year.

RTOs with no previous Fund 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 may be for very small initial allocations, subject to all other requirements being met.

Application assessment criteria

Applications for the Fund will need to meet the RTO eligibility (page 5), application conditions (page 6), and will be assessed against the Fund assessment criteria (below).

Each applying RTO is required to lodge a completed application and sufficient evidence against the assessment criteria.

The three 2021 Fund assessment criteria are:

Criterion 1 – Training methods, structure, duration and resources

The endorsed RTO must outline and provide evidence of the specific training methods, structure, duration and resources used to provide structured training for each of the qualifications for which the RTO has applied.

Evidence guide:

The following questions should guide your criterion response and help you attach only relevant evidence.

Tell us how you will provide structured training to the apprentice/trainee for each qualification.

How often will the structured training occur?

What are your training methods? Do you deliver your training on-the-job, in a classroom, online, or a blend of all of these?

What resources do you use to deliver the training? How do you provide these to the apprentice/trainee?

Please only attach evidence that clearly supports the information requested.

Suggested evidence to provide (per qualification):

- Training and Assessment Strategy.
- Proposed training schedule.
- Training method information provided to the learner.

Criterion 2 – Assessing and meeting employer needs

The Endorsed RTO must:

- outline and provide evidence of how it assesses the needs of each employer
- provide written evidence from at least one Tasmanian employer for each qualification requested, indicating the employer's support of the RTO's services to be provided to apprentices/trainees.

Evidence guide:

How do you assess the needs of the employer/s you are providing the service for?

Do you have any records of meetings you can attach that evidence how you have assessed the employer's needs?

Do you have evidenced support of at least one employer for each qualification requested in your application?

Evidence from employers must:

- be a letter or email and submitted in PDF format
- be signed by the employer (electronic signature if emailed)
- be dated no more than 6 months from the date of application submission
- mention the qualification/s requested in the application (and number of places required if first application to the Fund or if a specific number of places are required)
- indicate support for the RTO to deliver the requested qualification/s
- include the employers contact details.

Criterion 3 – Supporting apprentices and trainees

The Endorsed RTO must outline and provide evidence of the process used to identify the support needs of each apprentice/trainee prior to the commencement of training and/or assessment. The process must include a method of providing that support to apprentices/trainees and/or for referral to relevant and accessible Tasmanian support services throughout the duration of their training.

Evidence guide:

Your response must include how you assess and address language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) needs but should not be limited to LLN.

Where you cannot address student needs within your own organisation, details of referral service should be provided.

Your response should include how you holistically support each learner to ensure they are given every opportunity to complete their qualification.

Please only attach evidence that clearly supports the information requested, such as LLN assessment tools, internal and external support services and any other relevant student support services.

When an application is approved

What are the responsibilities of successful applicants?

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

If successful for a Fund grant, the RTO's Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) Agreement for all Programs (or its replacement) must be executed (signed by both parties), if it is not already. RTOs should contact the Skills Tasmania RTO Endorsement Manager on 03 6165 6020 or email rtoendorsement@skills.tas.gov.au for advice on the execution process.

A Fund agreement will be sent to the successful RTO for signing by an authorised person and a copy will need to be returned to Skills Tasmania for execution. The signed grant Fund 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 signed and returned to Skills Tasmania.

Grant conditions

Successful applicants must ensure they meet all grant conditions.

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

The grant conditions are:

Executed 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 must be executed as a Deed (if it is not already).

Staff awareness and understanding of Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) conditions and requirements

The RTO must ensure that relevant RTO staff are aware of and ensure compliance with the Fund conditions and requirements where the requirement relates to their role within the RTO.

Apprentice/trainee eligibility

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

Provision of structured training services by RTO staff

Structured training consists of activities scheduled and managed by RTO staff that build the skills and knowledge of apprentices/trainees.

The RTO must have a method of ensuring that the learner is fully engaging in the training as required; is progressing at an acceptable rate; is fully supported through the training and it can be demonstrated that it is the RTO trainer who is providing the skills and knowledge to the learner.

Structured training may include online training and some self-paced learning for the development of underpinning knowledge, provided these activities are scheduled and managed by the RTO according to the training and assessment strategy and the apprentice/trainee's individual training plan.

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 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, if requested by Skills Tasmania.

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.

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.

Applying for additional places

The RTO can add as many additional places as can be evidenced through an agreement variation process, within the available Fund budget, once all of the initial places approved have been allocated to apprentices and/or trainees.

Communicating costs to employer and apprentice/trainee

The amount of the Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) grant subsidy paid by Skills Tasmania, 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.

Training must not commence prior to the 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.

Grant payments eligibility requirements

Grant payments will only be made where:

- a Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) Agreement for all Programs has been executed
- an Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) agreement has been approved and executed
- the apprentice or trainee meets all Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) eligibility criteria and has a registered training contract
- compliant AVETMISS data has reported training activity for the apprentice/trainee.

Training must not commence prior to the commencement date of a training contract

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

Applying for replacement qualifications

The RTO must apply to Skills Tasmania to add a replacement qualification to a current Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) agreement using this [application](#), regardless of the equivalence or non-equivalence of the qualification.

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 individual apprentices/trainees and how many places remain for allocation.

Learner eligibility criteria

Eligible learners must be an apprentice or a trainee, can be new or 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 is able to meet the learner eligibility criteria. Fund subsidies cannot be paid for learners who are unable to meet the learner eligibility criteria.

Failure to ensure learner eligibility may lead to amendment or 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 A new worker is an individual who has been employed immediately prior to the commencement date of the training contract for less than three months full-time or twelve months part-time or casual by the employer with whom she/he is entering into a training contract.

3. Existing employee

- 3.1 An existing employee is an individual who has been employed immediately prior to the commencement date of the training contract 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 she/he is entering into a training contract.
- 3.2 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 3.1.
- 3.3 A 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.

4. School-based apprenticeships and traineeships

- 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 School-based apprentices and trainees must be currently enrolled in either year 10, 11 and 12 at a Tasmanian school.
- 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. 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 with a qualification that was subsidised within the past 5 years will be eligible for further Apprentice and Trainee Training Fund (User Choice) subsidies for a subsequent qualification if:
 - 5.1.1 the grant sought is for a qualification unrelated to any previous subsidised qualification
 - 5.1.2 the apprentice or trainee progresses to a higher level qualification in the same training package within 12 months of completing the previous subsidised qualification

- 5.1.3 the training package Qualification Description indicates that the qualification provides a different occupational outcome and/or additional skills and knowledge to the previously-funded qualification completed by the apprentice or trainee
 - 5.1.4 Skills Tasmania determines that 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
 - 5.1.5 Government, through changes to or the introduction of standards, licensing or legislation requires staff to update their qualification.
6. RTO staff ineligibility for funding
 - 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.

Does funding 'follow' an apprentice/trainee from year to year?

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

RTOs are not required to reapply each year for grants for apprentices/trainees who are already receiving Fund-subsidised training unless the apprentice/trainee's training contract is cancelled and the apprentice/trainee recommences or changes their qualification but remains with the same RTO.

The exception is when an apprentice/trainee's training contract is cancelled and they recommence with a new employer in the same qualification in the same calendar year as their original allocation to a Fund-subsidised place. In this case the apprentice/trainee will continue to attract Fund subsidies under the new employer.

If in doubt as to whether a new place should be allocated to an apprentice/trainee who has recommenced, contact the Fund manager on 03 6165 6027 or userchoice@skills.tas.gov.au

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.

Approved Fund agreements detail a number of places at a particular subsidy rate. Each qualification that is approved for an RTO is allocated a unique identifier which is referred to as the purchasing contract ID (the PCID).

RTOs are paid in instalments when they report training commencement and/or completion of units of competence to Skills Tasmania against the PCID through AVETMISS-compliant data.

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 is reported.

Evidence of training commencement may be requested by Skills Tasmania before payment can be made.

Any evidence provided must meet [AVETMISS non-financial audit guidelines](#) evidence requirements and be considered suitable and sufficient 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, see the [Skills Tasmania website](#).

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 must clearly show:

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

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

Details of successful grant applicants will be published

The names of successful RTO applicants and the qualifications approved for each RTO will be made publicly available on the [Skills Tasmania website](#).

Under what circumstances does Skills Tasmania audit an 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 can be triggered by complaints, issues that arise from analysis of AVETMISS data reported, employer or apprentice/trainee feedback or they may be part of a strategic, industry, qualification or training package series of audits.

Audits may be either full audits conducted at RTO sites, or a review of RTO evidence submitted to Skills Tasmania, or a combination of both. Audits may include interviews with employers and apprentices/trainees.

What happens if an RTO does not comply with Fund conditions?

The Fund agreement entered into by RTOs and Skills Tasmania contains the grant conditions, learner eligibility criteria and a declaration by the RTO that it is able to meet the conditions and will ensure that any apprentice or trainee who receives a Fund subsidised training place is eligible. This agreement forms a schedule to the Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) Agreement for all Programs.

Failure to comply with the Fund agreement or any element of the Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) Agreement for all Programs that are identified through any means (including analysis of the RTO's reporting through AVETMISS or a complaint investigation) may affect the RTOs endorsement and/or funding.

Increasing an allocation

RTOs with an approved 2021 Fund agreement are able to add places to that agreement when the initial allocation for a qualification has been exhausted.

This process is simple: the RTO emails the Training Program Outline (TPO) (which is provided to the RTO when an employer and apprentice/trainee has chosen the RTO as their training provider) to Skills Tasmania at TPO@skills.tas.gov.au. A copy of the completed TPO should be emailed to Skills Tasmania at the same time a copy is emailed back to the Apprenticeship Network Provider (ANP).

RTOs must only request additional places after their initial allocation has been fully allocated to apprentices/trainees and further TPOs are received for apprentices/trainees who require a funded training place.

The RTO is required to check that the apprentice or trainee is eligible for Fund subsidies by referring to the learner eligibility section of this guide (page 12). 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.

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

The Skills Tasmania Payments team will provide a report outlining the increased allocation early in the month following lodgement of the notification. The report will be accompanied by a letter that must be signed by the RTO's nominated officer and a copy returned to Skills Tasmania before the change can be activated in the Skills Tasmania payments system.

Please note that Skills Tasmania reserves the right to withhold increasing an allocation where the RTO is unable to demonstrate that it has fully exhausted the allocation or if there is an active complaint, ASQA action or pending action, or issues arising through the endorsement monitoring process, or if the RTO has outstanding reporting or compliance matters.

What happens if an application is not approved?

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

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

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

The Fund manager is available on 03 6165 6027 or at userchoice@skills.tas.gov.au to provide support, information and assistance to all Skills Tasmania-endorsed RTOs.

Renewing an existing Agreement

To assist in the ongoing service provision to Tasmanian apprentices and trainees, RTOs with an approved 2021 Fund agreement may be offered the opportunity to renew their existing agreement arrangements into the 2022 and/or 2023 programs, without the need to lodge a new application.

This renewal process will be subject to the following criteria as assessed by Skills Tasmania:

- Skills Tasmania having adequate budget.
- The new agreement continuing to deliver value for money.
- The new agreement continuing to be supported by business needs and supply demands.
- The RTO's performance has been assessed as satisfactory by Skills Tasmania.
- Any other consideration as determined by Skills Tasmania.

RTOs who meet the above criteria may be contacted by Skills Tasmania from August 2021 with the opportunity to renew their existing funding agreement.

If an RTO wishes to change any terms of the agreement (such as qualifications or pricing), a new application for the 2021 and/or 2022 Fund will be required.

RTOs must inform Skills Tasmania as soon as possible if they do not wish to continue delivering under the Fund.



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