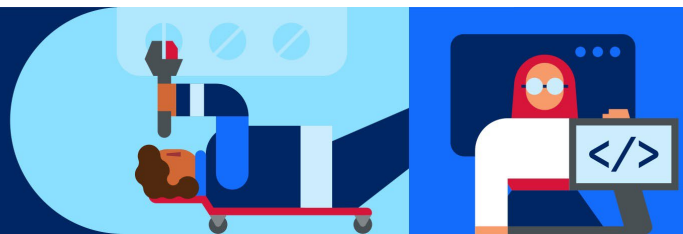


# 2025 EPP Apprenticeship & Traineeship Head Start Program Guidelines

Version 1.1 | Released November 2024



## Background

These guidelines are to be used by GTOs who are participating in the EPP Apprenticeship and Traineeship Head Start Program.

The Educational Pathways Program is an innovative program designed to improve education and career outcomes for young people by introducing NSW public high school students to a range of vocational training and employment pathways.

The Department, through Training Services, is responsible for the administration and management of the EPP Apprenticeship and Traineeship Head Start Program (the **Program**).

The Program funds GTOs to work with designated secondary schools to improve awareness of VET and employment pathways for eligible school students in years 10-12. The Program provides funding to GTOs to recruit students, assist in the commencement and completion of pre-apprenticeship or pre-traineeship training, provide at least three days of work experience or three industry immersion days and, where possible, assist with the student transition into a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship (**SBAT**), or an apprenticeship or traineeship pathway.

## Program Aim

The Program aims to assist school students to:

- Familiarise themselves with vocational choices and the requirements of the workplace.
- Explore opportunities for work readiness.
- Receive support and advice from a GTO and Partner Provider (RTO) to assess whether a particular type of pre-apprenticeship or pre-traineeship training is suitable.
- Undertake pre-apprenticeship or pre-traineeship training
- Participate in work experience or industry immersion days for a minimum of three (3) business days and as relevant to the chosen industry sector; and
- Receive mentoring and assistance to complete their pre-apprenticeship or pre-traineeship training and where possible, transition into an SBAT or an apprenticeship or traineeship.

## The Program provides funding to GTOs to:

- negotiate training with Partner Providers;
- assist in the commencement and completion of pre-apprenticeship or pre-traineeship training;
- organise at least three work experience days or three industry immersion days for participating students; and
- provide advice and support to students wishing to transition into an SBAT, apprenticeship or traineeship.



## Program Outcomes

The objectives of the Program are:

- a. Increased awareness of educational pathways and industry engagement opportunities.
- b. increase the take up of pre-apprenticeship or pre-traineeship training.
- c. remain at school
- d. Increased uptake of SBATs or apprenticeship or traineeship contracts.

## Student Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in the Program, each student must be:

- a. At least 15 years of age;
- b. A student at a participating school in years 10 to 12 at the time of enrolment; and
- c. An Australian citizen, permanent resident, humanitarian visa holder or New Zealand citizen
- d. meet the [Smart and Skilled student eligibility criteria](#).

Note: Students must undergo a selection process in collaboration with the GTO and the participating school.

## Participating Schools and Networks

A list of the Educational Pathways Program participating regions and schools can be found [here](#).

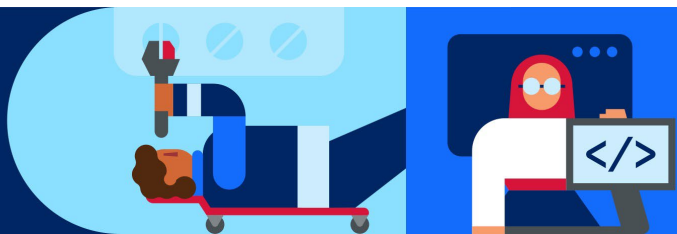
## Funding

The Program provides payments of up to \$2,000 to a GTO for each participant.

This payment may include:

- a. \$800 for each Training Commencement achieved.
- b. \$700 for each Training Completion achieved and a minimum of three (3) days of work experience or a minimum of three (3) industry immersion days undertaken; and
- c. \$500 for each Transition into an SBAT, apprenticeship or traineeship.

Payment is linked to the delivery of training and submission of training activity data by the Partner Provider as per the [Smart and Skilled contract and guidelines](#) [Smart and Skilled Contract Terms and Conditions - 2024-2025 Activity Period](#) and [Smart and Skilled Operating Guidelines 2024-2025 Activity Period](#)



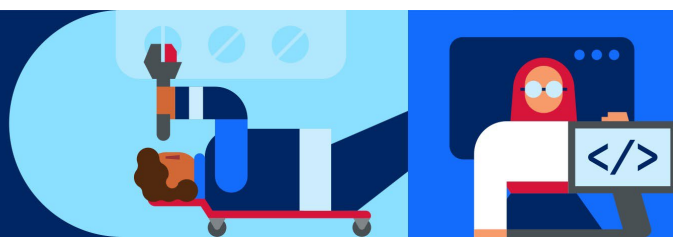
Definitions to note are:

- **Training Commencement** means that, for each unit of competency the student has been enrolled in, the Partner Provider has submitted Training Activity Data for the pre-apprenticeship or pre-traineeship training (one of outcome codes 20, 30, 40, 51, 60, 70 or 85) under the Smart and Skilled Contract and linked to the GTO's Maximum Place Allocation at the date specified in **Attachment 1 – Activity Plan**.
  - To be clear, for payment to be made, all nominated UoCs must have data submitted for each student with relevant outcome codes at the end of each reporting period.
- **Training Completion** means that for each unit of competency the student has been enrolled in, the Partner Provider has submitted Training Activity Data for the pre-apprenticeship or pre-traineeship training (one of outcome codes 20, 30, or 40) under the Smart and Skilled Contract and linked to the GTO's Maximum Place Allocation at the date specified in **Attachment 1 – Activity Plan**. Department data will show a student's status as Complete: and.
  - evidence by the GTO that at least three (3) days duration of work experience or immersion activities have taken place. Evidence may be fully completed SPR forms, employer declaration letters or the confirmation from the schools group representative that work experience or immersion activities have taken place.
  - Completion payments will not be made where:
    - Department data shows the student's outcome where all UoCs assessed under this Program have an outcome code of Withdrawn (40): and
    - The GTO has not submitted evidence, or the schools group representative has not confirmed work experience or immersion activities have taken place.
- **Transition** means Department data will show a student status as having an Approved and/or Registered Training Contract for an apprenticeship or traineeship.
  - If the Department data for the final quarter of the Activity Period does not show the relevant contract status, then the Department will continue to source data for each participating student no later than 6 months after the Funding Deed end date. Payment will be made to the GTO if the data shows a participating student status as having an Approved and/or Registered Training Contract by 30 June 2026 pending budget availability.

Funds cannot duplicate or be used in conjunction with other State or Commonwealth grants being managed by the organisation.

Partner Providers must comply with the Smart and Skilled Targeted Priorities Prevocational and Part Qualifications Policy, specifically:

- Part qualification training under this program is funded by the Smart and Skilled TPPPQ program.
- GTOs will be required to work with their Partner Provider to ensure the training is in line with the [targeted-priorities-policy-1-jul-24-to-30-jun-25.pdf](#)



## Additional incentives

If the GTO is selected by the Department to undertake the Activity in the Broken Hill region and/or Coomealla region, then in addition to the Funding specified above, the Department may (at its absolute discretion) pay additional standalone subsidy payments, upon meeting the following criteria:

- the department will generate data to confirm that the GTOs have used a specific training provider to deliver training in a specific vocation (if requested by the Department)
- complete the facilitation of the program by the earlier date of 30 June 2025 (instead of the deeds' standard Activity Period 31 Dec 2025 end date).

If the Department confirms in writing that these requirements are satisfied, additional standalone subsidy payments may subsequently be paid as follows:

| <b>30 places for these regions:<br/>1 course of 15 students in the Broken Hill region<br/>1 course of 15 students in the Coomealla region</b> |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <b>GTO expenses per course</b>  | <b>Max GTO subsidy per course</b> |
| Transportation ie air fare<br>(\$1200 per course x 2 visits)  | \$2,400                           |
| Meals \$100 per day x 2 days<br>x 2 visits  | \$400                             |
| Accommodation \$200 x 2<br>nights x 2 visits  | \$800                             |
|   | <b>\$3,600</b>                    |

## GTO Program Funding General

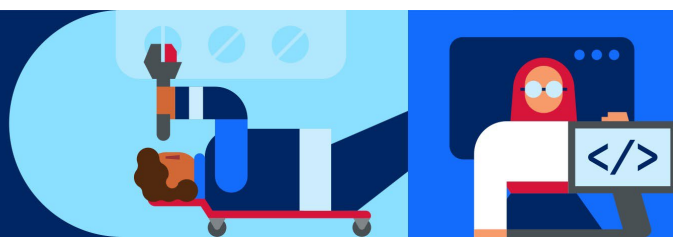
- GTOs must return a signed Funding Deed to the Department
- GTOs must not seek funding for any of the Programs within these guidelines that may be a duplicate of a participating program within the Department.

To be clear, funds cannot be used in conjunction with other Commonwealth or State grants being managed by the organisation.

## GTO Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in the Program, a GTO must:

- Be a registered GTO in NSW under section 30 of the *Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001*



- b. The initial one-year registration has been renewed and is in the process of being extended or has been extended. To be clear, GTOs are not eligible if they are in their first year of registration : and
- c. maintain its registration throughout the activity period or should registration lapse during the activity period, be actively engaged in the re-registration process
- d. Support an industry that employs apprentices or trainees in NSW.
- e. Be registered for the Goods and Services Tax (GST).
- f. Be a current employer of SBATs, apprentices or trainees in NSW.
- g. Not have current performance monitoring issues: and
- h. Meet other eligibility criteria as determined by the Department.

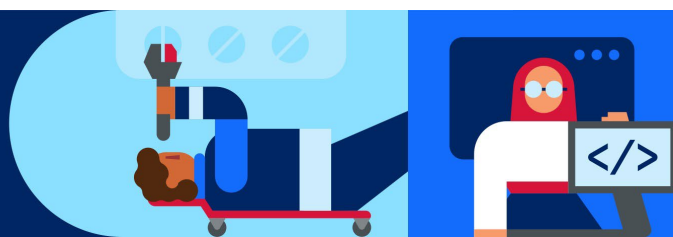
Please Note:

- A GTO must maintain eligibility throughout the 2025 Program. A failure to maintain eligibility is a breach of the 2025 Apprenticeship and Traineeship Head Start Program funding deed.
- Allowances will be made for GTOs whose registration lapses during the funding activity period however are actively undergoing the re-registration process.
- Decisions related to the eligibility of a GTO remain at the Department's absolute discretion.

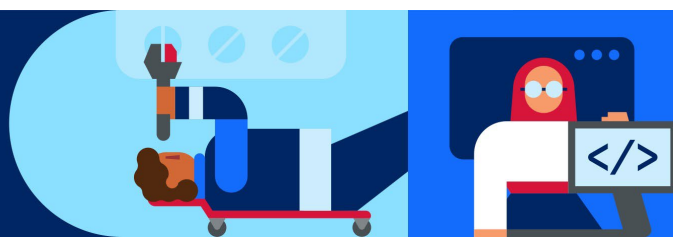
## Role of the GTO

The role of the GTO includes:

- a. Engaging and collaborating with Partner Providers and ensuring Partner Providers understand their role in relation to this Program, in particular, to assist them to meet the role requirements set out in the Program Guidelines;
- b. work with the Partner Provider to ensure the program is in line with the [targeted-priorities-policy-1-jul-24-to-30-jun-25.pdf](#);
- c. ensure that all training is completed by 30 November 2025 and Partner Provides lodge student data submissions by 15 December 2025;
- d. Liaising with industry, host employers, and the relevant School partners to determine immediate employment and training needs for eligible local students;
- e. Creating marketing material and EOIs in order to recruit and select Eligible Students suitable for pre-apprenticeship or pre-traineeship training;
- f. Placing Eligible Students into pre-apprenticeship or pre-traineeship training with Partner Providers, in priority industry areas, taking into consideration the following factors:
  - i. the Eligible Student's selection of an identified apprenticeship or traineeship vocation;
  - ii. distribution of Eligible Students across regions;
  - iii. available funding with regard to your Maximum Place Allocation; and
  - iv. the availability of host employers who are willing to participate in the work experience component of the training.
  - v. the availability of industry sources who are willing to participate in industry immersion activities



- g. Co-designing the pre-apprenticeship or pre-traineeship training structure to ensure that it addresses skills shortages in the identified region and the needs of Eligible Students;
- h. Agreeing on vocational units to be undertaken, which must include a minimum of three units and a maximum of four units;
- i. Organising a minimum of three days of work experience for participating students with host employers or a minimum of three days of immersion activities within relevant industry areas;
- j. Returning fully completed or confirmed Department issued forms and reports;
- k. Participating in Department activities as required such as surveys, case study requests, and performance communications;
- l. Ensuring that pre-apprenticeship or pre-traineeship training is flexible and includes:
  - vocational units:
  - face-to-face classroom delivery; and
  - provision for a reasonable adjustment to support individual learning needs.
- m. Providing career guidance and mentoring to Eligible Students, including follow-up assistance such as employment opportunities;
- n. Providing support to the student throughout the duration of the training that may assist the student to successfully complete the training;
- o. Notifying the Department when a formal graduation ceremony is organised and inviting a department representative to attend. You and the Partner Provider are responsible for organising and covering any expenses associated with graduation ceremonies unless otherwise agreed by the Department;
- p. Executing a Funding Deed and providing executed version to the Department.
- q. Attending a school's location (if possible) to pre-screen and select suitable students as agreed by the GTO and the participating school;
- r. Establishing clear communication channels with participating schools with a view to understanding the cultural diversity and socioeconomics of the region;
- s. Communicating student selection options with all participating schools within the GTOs preferred region;
- t. Negotiating with Partner Providers and School partners and agreeing on expectations for support and student requirements;
- u. Negotiating training duration and delivery mode with Partner Providers and School partners. The expectation is that the delivery mode is face-to-face only and training facilities and materials are suitable for the nominated units of competency;
- v. Advising the Partner Provider that students may be enrolled in three to four units of competency only. The units of competency need to relate to the training vocation, training is engaging and provides students with a feel for the type of work undertaken by the vocation;
- w. Collaborating with schools Head Teacher Careers to ensure the best possible outcomes for the student;
- x. Ensuring that work experience or immersion activities are accessible and within a reasonable distance from the participating schools;
- y. Approaching all participating schools in the GTOs preferred region for recruitment of students;





- z. remain fully responsible for the performance of the program and no aspect of the program can be subcontracted including that by Partner Providers;
- aa. Employing or assisting with the placement of a student in an SBAT, apprenticeship or traineeship where possible; and
- bb. Acknowledging and agreeing that the Department will maintain regular contact with you to monitor the implementation of this program including site visits as the Department requires, regular contact may include meetings between the representatives of the Department and you, at the Department's discretion.

## Partner Provider (RTO) Eligibility

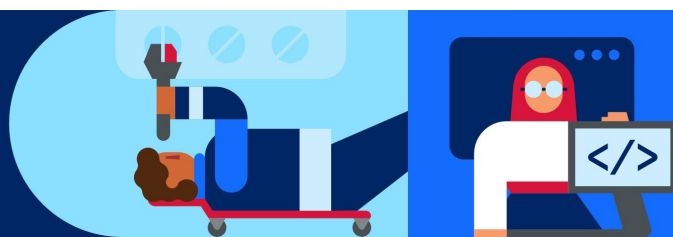
To be eligible to participate in the Program, a Partner Provider must:

- a. Have a current Smart and Skilled contract.
- b. Have a nationally recognised qualification or Units of Competence (UoCs) explicitly stated on its scope of registration in NSW (<http://training.gov.au/Search>) that is relevant to the training being offered and delivered.
- c. Have current NSW WWCC approvals to deliver training; and
- d. Not have any sanction(s) in place under the Smart and Skilled Contract and/or with the Australian Skills Quality Authority.

## Role of the Partner Provider

The role of the Partner Provider includes but is not limited to:

- a. Comply with its Smart and Skilled contract:
- b. ensure the training is in line with the [targeted-priorities-policy-1-jul-24-to-30-jun-25.pdf](#) and Operating guidelines
- c. ensure all training is completed by 30 November 2025 and student data submissions are lodged by 15 December 2025.
- d. Develop suitable training programs for students resulting in credentials to support the student progressing into an SBAT, apprenticeship or traineeship:
- e. Enrol students in three or four units of competency only. The units of competency must relate to an agreed apprenticeship or traineeship vocation and provide students with a feel for the type of work undertaken by the vocation:
- f. Work collaboratively with the GTOs to ensure agreed training needs are met:
- g. Deliver and assess agreed vocational units in accordance with training package rules;
- h. Training facilities and materials used to be relevant to the proposed units of competency;
- i. Negotiate training duration and delivery mode (face-to-face only) with GTOs:
- j. Provide a reasonable adjustment to support individual learning needs;
- k. Notify the GTO that it has been offered and accepted a Provider Activity Schedule (PAS) for the training and notify the GTO of the PAS number as soon as possible:
- l. Follow the conditions contained in any issued PAS, including meeting the enrolment period requirements and the start and completion dates for training:





- m. Obtain a student declaration that provides consent to share information:
- n. Provide, or assist with, other support services such as attending information sessions, participant selection, mentoring support, post-course placement into a Training Contract, and advice to students:
- o. Remain fully responsible for student training and no aspect of the program can be subcontracted:
- p. Share a student risk-based assessment with the GTO and School partner:
- q. Complete a Training Agreement, staff WWCC and probity register (excluding TAFE NSW staff):
- r. Participate in Department surveys as required; and
- s. Ensure that training for students will not incur a student fee as per the Targeted Priorities Prevocational and Part Qualifications Program Provider Guidelines.

## GTO Application Assessment Criteria and Maximum Place Allocations

**Expressions of interest will be sought and considered against criteria including, but not limited to:**

- a. Number of allocations requested.
- b. GTO capacity to service the application and past program performance data.
- c. Expected student outcomes.
- d. Identified regional skill shortages.
- e. Industry-relevant work experience options for students.
- f. Host employer capacity to provide work experience.
- g. GTO capacity to provide Industry relevant immersion day options for students.
- h. GTO registration duration
- i. Current employment of SBATs, Apprentices or Trainees
- j. Partner provider capacity to deliver negotiated training in suitable locations.
- k. Programs can be executed and reported within the 2025 activity period; and
- l. Risks identified by the Department associated with the GTO such as quality issues and registration status.

**A GTO's Maximum Place Allocation may be determined by:**

- a. A GTO's capacity to achieve its proposed Maximum Place Allocations by 30 November 2025.
- b. The Maximum Place Allocation is the capped maximum number of student places that training can be applied for via the Training Needs Identification (TNI) application.
- c. Consideration of viable numbers to support GTO participation.
- d. A GTO's willingness to meet obligations.
- e. Previous performance under the 2024 Program (if relevant) such as Program and pre-apprenticeship or pre-traineeship commencements, completions and transitions into an SBAT, apprenticeship or traineeship.



- f. Support from host employers, industry organisations, employer associations or the local community to enable work experience, industry immersion days or future employment.
- g. Demonstrated demand in the proposed apprenticeship and traineeship vocations.
- h. Support from Partner Providers, demonstrating their capacity to train students in a pre-apprenticeship or pre-traineeship vocation.
- i. Distribution of allocations across School Cluster Regions;
- j. Department budget constraints.

The Department intends on reviewing GTO performance on a monthly basis in order to determine the possibility of reallocating GTO places where performance is considered to be low, and a reprioritisation of places will be better utilised. This is to be used as an incentive to GTOs to pursue recruitment practices in a timely manner and for committed budget to be realised. The Department remains committed to these goals and will engage with GTOs to obtain feedback during the performance review process.

Low performing GTOs are those classified as follows:

| <b><u>Reporting Period Ending</u></b> | <b><u>Allocations utilised (based on student commencements) are less than % of total allocations</u></b> |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <u>31 March 2025</u>                  | <u>15%</u>   |
| <u>30 June 2025</u>                   | <u>30%</u>   |
| <u>30 September 2025</u>              | <u>60%</u>   |
| <u>31 May 2025</u>                    | <u>75%</u>   |

## Role of the Department

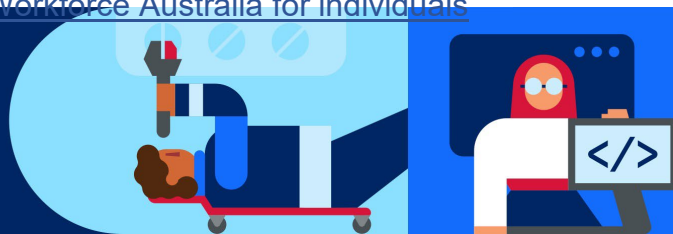
The Department will administer and manage the Program, including:

- a. Preparing and administering these Guidelines.
- b. Setting Maximum Place Allocations.
- c. Making payments to GTOs against confirmed and validated activity reports
- d. Reviewing TNIs and issuing Provider Activity Schedules.
- e. Monitoring the progress of students.
- f. Considering reallocation strategies for any unused places to high performing GTOs.
- g. Consider repurposing of available funding.
- h. Undertake performance discussions with GTOs; and
- i. Provide support and advice to GTOs where appropriate.

## Other Support Networks

GTOs may draw on other agencies for support or as a source of referrals to achieve an apprenticeship or traineeship outcome. Such agencies may include:

- a. Workforce Australia employment providers [Workforce Australia for individuals](#)



- b. AEN of NSW & ACT, for contracted support service: [Apprentice Employment Network NSW & ACT – Apprentices, Trainees, Employers, Careers \(aennswact.com.au\)](#) and
- c. Apprenticeship Providers. [Apprentice Connect Australia Provider | Australian Apprenticeship](#)

## Course Graduation

GTOs may notify the Department when a formal graduation ceremony is organised and invite a department representative to attend. The GTO and Partner Provider are responsible for organising and covering any expenses associated with graduation ceremonies.

## Communications

Throughout the Program delivery period, there may be instances where GTOs may need to contact the Department. In these cases, please email [group.training@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:group.training@det.nsw.edu.au).

