



Australian Government

# WORK SKILLS VOUCHERS

[www.australia.gov.au/skillsforthefuture](http://www.australia.gov.au/skillsforthefuture)



## WORK SKILLS VOUCHERS

Work Skills Vouchers are a great way to improve the basic skills of Australians who have no formal qualifications. These improvements in basic skills will help people who are already in employment to progress their career and assist those who are looking for work to find jobs.

If you are aged 25 years and over, are currently in the workforce or looking for work and do not have Year 12 or equivalent or certificate level II or higher qualifications you may be eligible for a Work Skills Voucher valued at up to \$3,000.

The voucher will assist you with the costs of studying Year 12 or equivalent courses, accredited literacy/numeracy courses and approved vocational certificate level II qualifications.

Once fully implemented there will be 30,000 Work Skills Vouchers available each year for interested Australians. The vouchers will be redeemable at approved public, private or community Registered Training Organisations.

### Am I eligible for a Work Skills Voucher?

If you are 25 years or older, without a Year 12 certificate (or equivalent) or certificate level II (or higher) qualification and you fall into one of the below groups then you may be eligible to receive a Work Skills Voucher.

- ✓ *You are an unskilled worker wishing to acquire qualifications;*
- ✓ *You are an income support recipient, such as a parent or carer wishing to return to the workforce and are facing active job search requirements in the next two years;*
- ✓ *You are an unemployed job seeker in receipt of income support and participating in the Job Network and undertaking an active job search; or*
- ✓ *You are not in the labour force, either voluntarily or because of carer responsibilities, and intend to seek work after achieving your qualification.*

If you have already completed Year 12 or a certificate level II or higher qualification you are not eligible for a Work Skills Voucher.

You can check further information on your eligibility for a Work Skills Voucher by visiting [www.skillsvouchers.dest.gov.au](http://www.skillsvouchers.dest.gov.au) or by telephoning **13 38 73**.

### How do I apply for a voucher?

To apply for a voucher you will need to:

1. *Identify an eligible course offered by an approved Registered Training Organisation. Details of the approved Registered Training Organisations and eligible courses are available on the Department of Education, Science and Training website [www.skillsvouchers.dest.gov.au](http://www.skillsvouchers.dest.gov.au).*
2. *Contact your chosen Registered Training Organisation to enrol in the course. You will need to provide them with evidence which proves you meet the eligibility criteria. They will then check your eligibility for the voucher and inform the Department of Education, Science and Training of the course you have chosen.*
3. *The Department of Education, Science and Training will then mail you a voucher for the cost of the course you have enrolled in.*
4. *You will need to present this voucher to the Registered Training Organisation when you start your course, and this will cover your enrolment costs (to a maximum of \$3000).*

If you contact a Registered Training Organisation to enrol in a course after all the vouchers have been issued, they will be able to help you enrol in a course when more vouchers become available.

You can check further information on applying for a Work Skills Voucher by visiting [www.skillsvouchers.dest.gov.au](http://www.skillsvouchers.dest.gov.au) or by telephoning **13 38 73**.



## What sort of training will I be able to do with the voucher?

Your voucher may be used for:

- ✓ *Year 12 (basic education courses).*
- ✓ *Vocational certificate level II courses.*
- ✓ *Accredited literacy/numeracy courses.*

You are not able to use your Work Skills Voucher for Australian Apprenticeship training (i.e. apprenticeships or traineeships). However, upon completion of Year 12 or certificate level II training under the Work Skills Voucher programme you may wish to undertake an Australian Apprenticeship to further enhance your skills.

## When can I undertake the training?

Work Skills Vouchers are now available. You can choose a course that suits your own situation from the various options offered by Registered Training Organisation.

## Can I use my voucher for more than one course?

Once you have commenced your approved course, you will not be eligible for any further Work Skills Vouchers.

In some circumstances, a Registered Training Organisation may recommend you undertake a literacy or numeracy course prior to starting a Year 12 or vocational certificate level II qualification. In this situation you will be issued with one Work Skills Voucher for both courses.

If you want to enrol in a preparatory literacy or numeracy course but are not yet sure which Year 12 or vocational certificate level II course you want to enrol in, you will be issued with a Work Skills Voucher that will include the literacy or numeracy course and the balance of funds available to you to undertake Year 12 or a vocational certificate level II within 12 months of enrolling in a literacy/numeracy course.

For each individual, the total value of their Work Skills Voucher cannot exceed \$3000.

## What if there is no approved Registered Training Organisation offering the course I want in my area?

The Australian Government's Department of Education, Science and Training has contracted Registered Training Organisations across Australia including those who can deliver training on-line and via distance education units. The website [www.skillsvouchers.dest.gov.au](http://www.skillsvouchers.dest.gov.au) will indicate which Registered Training Organisations are able to offer this type of training.

## What if my course costs more than \$3000?

Your voucher will cover the first \$3000 and you will need to pay any costs over this amount.

For more information on Work Skills Vouchers please visit [www.skillsvouchers.dest.gov.au](http://www.skillsvouchers.dest.gov.au) or telephone **13 38 73**.



## SUPPORT FOR MID-CAREER APPRENTICES

From 1 July 2007, Australians who wish to upgrade their skills mid-career will attract new financial incentives to support their move into an Australian Apprenticeship at the certificate level III or level IV in a trade occupation in high demand (as listed on the website). The new incentives will be available for up to 10,000 people per year aged 30 and over who are starting an eligible Australian Apprenticeship. People already in an eligible Australian Apprenticeship in July 2007 may also receive the incentive.

For more information on Support for Mid-Career Apprentices please visit [www.skillsforthefuture.gov.au](http://www.skillsforthefuture.gov.au) or phone **13 38 73**.

## BUSINESS SKILLS VOUCHERS FOR APPRENTICES

Business Skills Vouchers worth up to \$500 are now available to Australian Apprentices or newly qualified tradespersons in traditional trades as a contribution towards the costs of undertaking accredited business skills training.

Business Skills Vouchers will assist Australian Apprentices to appreciate the long term benefits of running a business and the rate of return they may achieve from their training in the future if they own a small or medium size business.

For more information on Business Skills Vouchers please visit [www.skillsvouchers.dest.gov.au](http://www.skillsvouchers.dest.gov.au) or phone **13 38 73**.

## INCENTIVES FOR HIGHER LEVEL TECHNICAL SKILLS

With industry calling for higher level qualifications, Australian businesses will need higher level skills and the ability to continuously upgrade workforce skills in order to remain competitive. Almost 25,000 Australian workers will be supported to undertake Diploma and Advanced Diploma level qualifications.

Working Australians who want to upgrade their qualifications, particularly in engineering fields, will benefit. Current, as well as new, employees and those who have prior qualifications will also benefit.

To support staff in upgrading their qualifications, employers are able to apply for incentive payments through Australian Apprenticeships Centres. Employers will receive incentive payments of \$1,500 for each employee commencing an approved Diploma or Advanced Diploma programme (as listed on the website) and \$2,500 when they complete.

For more information on Incentives for Higher Level Technical Skills, please visit [www.skillsforthefuture.gov.au](http://www.skillsforthefuture.gov.au) or phone **13 38 73**.

## MORE ENGINEERING PLACES AT UNIVERSITY

There is a growing need for engineering skills across the Australian economy. Engineering skills are critical to building Australia's international competitiveness.

The Australian Government will fund an extra 500 Commonwealth-supported university engineering places from 2008. These places are in addition to the 510 new engineering places commencing from 2007 which were announced by the Minister for Education, Science and Training on 24 July 2006.

This initiative means that there will be more places available for applicants for university engineering places and industry will benefit from a greater supply of engineering graduates.

For more information on the Investment in More Engineering Places at University please visit [www.skillsforthefuture.gov.au](http://www.skillsforthefuture.gov.au) or phone **13 38 73**.