

Work Skills Vouchers

Many adult Australians are without Year 12 or other formal qualifications. The Prime Minister has announced that from 1 January 2007, the Government will make a major investment to support adults who want to further their education. People aged 25 years and over who do not have Year 12 or equivalent qualifications will be eligible for vouchers valued at up to \$3,000. This will assist them with the costs of studying Year 12 or equivalent courses or vocational and technical education courses at Certificate II level. Up to 30,000 vouchers will be provided each year. The vouchers will be redeemable at public, private or community training providers.

Support for Mid-Career Apprentices

A challenge in upskilling our current workforce is to reach people who do not currently have opportunities to retrain. More mid-career Australians need to be encouraged and supported to take up an apprenticeship. In 2005, only around 4,400 people aged 30 years and over commenced a traditional trade apprenticeship, around seven per cent of total commencements.

The Prime Minister has announced that from 1 July 2007, there will be financial support for mid-career workers aged 30 or more to upgrade their skills through an apprenticeship in a trade occupation in high demand. The amount payable to either an employer or an apprentice will be set at \$150 per week (\$7,800 per annum) in the first year and \$100 per week (\$5,200 per annum) in the second year. As an apprentice becomes more skilled in their second year, their award wage will increase. Therefore, the wage subsidy and apprentice payment can be reduced.

Business Skills Vouchers for Apprentices

Increasingly, self-employment, small business and independent contracting are attractive options for people when they complete their apprenticeship. Employers also value business skills among their workers.

The Government will provide vouchers of up to \$500 to apprentices to contribute towards the costs of accredited business skills training. This will assist these people to operate effectively in the business economy, to become self-employed or to run their own small businesses. Up to 6,300 vouchers will be available each year from 1 January 2007. These, too, will be redeemable at public, private or community training providers.

Business Skills Vouchers for Apprentices

Information for Apprentices/New Tradespersons

On this page

- [Overview](#)
- [Am I eligible?](#)
- [What training can I use the voucher for?](#)
- [Where can I use my voucher?](#)
- [When can I undertake the training?](#)
- [How do I apply?](#)
- [What if there is no approved Registered Training Organisation offering the business training units I want in my area?](#)
- [What if the business training units cost more or less than \\$500?](#)

Overview

From 1 January 2007, Business Skills Vouchers worth up to \$500 will be available to 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 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.

A higher level of business skills will provide a stronger foundation for future success in self-employment, as well as making them more attractive to employers.

Am I eligible?

You will be eligible if you are:

- undertaking an Australian Apprenticeship in a traditional trade, and have completed the second year of your Australian Apprenticeship (ie currently undertaking the third or fourth year); or
- a newly qualified tradesperson in a traditional trade, having completed your Australian Apprenticeship within the past two years.

What training can I use the voucher for? You can use your voucher for business training units that are part of qualifications in the Business Services Training Package or an accredited business course. The voucher cannot be used for units that are already provided as part of your Australian Apprenticeship training plan.

Where can I use my voucher? The voucher can be used at any organisation approved by the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). This will include TAFE, private or community colleges that are Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and have been approved by DEST to provide voucher eligible business training units.

More information on approved Registered Training Organisations and the different business training units the voucher can be used for will be available on this website from 1 January 2007.

When can I undertake the training? Vouchers will be available from 1 January 2007 and can be used for any eligible business training units commencing from this date.

You can choose a time that suits your own situation and the options offered by Registered Training Organisations. Training can be undertaken during work hours if supported by your employer, or outside work hours. You may wish to wait until you have completed your Australian Apprenticeship, and in this case you will have two years, from the time of completion, to apply for a voucher.

How do I apply?

From 1 January 2007 details of approved Registered Training Organisations and the business training units they are offering will be available on this website.

To obtain a voucher you will need to:

1. identify the Registered Training Organisations who are offering the business training units you want to undertake. You may wish to shop around to see which one offers the best training and best value;
2. once you have chosen a Registered Training Organisation you will need to contact them to enrol in the business training units. They will check your eligibility for the voucher and inform DEST of the units you have chosen;
3. DEST will then mail you a voucher for the cost of the business training units you have enrolled in; and
4. you will need to present the voucher to the Registered Training Organisation when you start your business training units, and this will cover your enrolment costs (to a maximum of \$500).

There are up to 6,300 vouchers available each year. If you contact a Registered Training Organisation to enrol in business training units after all the vouchers have been issued, they will be able to help you enrol in the units when more vouchers become available.

What if there is no approved Registered Training Organisation offering the business training units I want in my area?

DEST will be seeking expressions of interest from Registered Training Organisations across Australia including those that can deliver training on-line and via distance education units. The website will indicate which Registered Training Organisations are able to offer this type of training.

What if the business training units cost more than \$500? Your voucher will cover the first \$500 and you will need to pay any costs over this amount.

What if the business training units cost less than \$500? Once you access your voucher you will have no further entitlement to the Business Skills Voucher for Apprentices program

