



Australian Government  
Department of Employment  
and Workplace Relations

# Skills and Training Incentive Guideline

Effective July 2023

## Skills and Training Incentive Overview

The Skills and Training Incentive (the Incentive) is an initiative under the *More Choices for a Longer Life Package*. It is aimed at assisting mature Australian workers aged 40 and over to invest in their training and adopt a life-long approach to skills development, thereby reducing their risk of entering the income support system.

The Skills and Training Incentive Guideline (this Guideline) forms part of the Contract for the service provision of the Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program and Skills and Training Incentive (Contract) and specifies the Provider's responsibilities and required actions for administering the Incentive.

The Incentive is available to Participants who have completed the Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program including a Career Plan that identified eligible training opportunities as set out in this Guideline.

Eligible Participants may access up to \$2,200 (GST inclusive) from the Australian Government to contribute to funding re-skilling or up-skilling opportunities.

The Incentive is available from 1 October 2022 to 30 June 2024, subject to any notice to extend issued by the Department under the Contract and is capped at 7,500 Incentives per financial year.

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (the Department) will not allocate a specific number of Incentives to Providers or by Contract Regions. Providers may use Incentives until the Incentive Cap for each financial year is reached.

From time to time, the Department may direct Providers under the Contract to use a number of Incentives for specific employers, industries or regions.

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# 1. Eligibility

## Participants

A Participant (other than an Existing Participant) is eligible for the Incentive if they:

- have a completed Career Plan that identifies training linked to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the National Skills Commission's Skills Priority List, published on the National Skills Commission's website ('Skills Priority List'); and
- do not have an active referral to, or are not currently registered with, a Commonwealth funded employment services provider as identified in the Department's IT Systems.

For information on eligibility for Existing Participants, please see Section 9 Managing Existing Participants.

The Provider must check the Participant's eligibility at the time of registering or re-registering them for the Incentive in the Department's IT Systems.

Before the Participant signs a Skills and Training Incentive Agreement, the Provider must confirm the Participant is eligible for the Incentive by conducting a search in the Department's IT Systems, including to confirm that the Participant does not have an active referral to, or is not currently registered with, a Commonwealth funded employment services provider as identified in the Department's IT Systems (such as a Workforce Australia Services provider, or Disability Employment Services provider).

## Training Organisations

The eligibility requirements for a Training Organisation are that it must be:

- a Registered Training Organisation (RTO)
- a Higher Education Provider (HEP)
- an organisation that is otherwise approved as a Training Organisation by the Department, in accordance with this Guideline (see 'Seeking Approval for Training').

## Employers

To access the Incentive, a Participant or the Participant's Employer must provide a contribution to the cost of the relevant training. To be eligible to be a Co-contributor in relation to the Incentive, the Participant's Employer must be the Participant's current employer. Where a Participant is self-employed, the Participant's own business must be the Co-contributor, as the Participant's Employer.

Where a Participant is in receipt of worker's compensation at the time they wish to access the Incentive, the Participant's Employer is responsible for paying the Co-contribution if the Participant's Employer is the Co-contributor.

## Training courses

To be eligible for the Incentive, training courses for Participants (other than Existing Participants) must:

- be directly related to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the National Skills Commission's Skills Priority List; and
- either:
  - at Certificate II level or above; or
  - lower than Certificate II level with a clearly demonstrated pathway to the Participant completing future training at Certificate II level or above that is directly related to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the National Skills Commission's Skills Priority List.

For information on training course eligibility for Existing Participants, please see Section 9 Managing Existing Participants.

Training courses can be accredited or non-accredited.

Learning and development training that the Participant is required to undertake by their employer as part of their employment is not eligible for the Incentive.

## **2. Discussing the Incentive with Participants**

### **Identifying appropriate training**

As part of the Program Services, it is the Provider's role to determine if the Participant would benefit from training opportunities that will equip them with skills to enable them to consider:

- an increase in their capacity in their current role
- a new role within their current occupation or industry, or
- a change in career, to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List.

The Provider must make clear recommendations and provide information on appropriate training in the Participant's Career Plan.

The Contract specifies the information that must be included in a Participant's Career Plan, and as relevant for the Incentive must include the following information:

- whether the Participant needs training
- the duration, availability and location of a range of training options
- if the Incentive will be available at the time the Career Plan is provided to the Participant:
  - information about the Incentive, including whether the proposed training may be eligible for the Incentive; and
  - other than for Existing Participants, in relation to training that is eligible for the Incentive, demonstrated linkage of the proposed

training to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List

Providers must advise all Participants, including Existing Participants, that training identified should be at Certificate II level or above where possible if the Incentive is to be used to co fund it.

If training options lower than Certificate II level are identified in the Career Plan, the Provider must discuss with the Participant how this training is a pathway to completing future training at Certificate II level or above for that occupation, and clearly document this in the Career Plan.

Providers must advise Participants if the training is considered learning and development that the Participant is required to undertake by their Employer as part of their employment, that it is out of scope for the Incentive and is not considered eligible training.

## **Seeking Participants' interest in the Incentive**

The Provider must discuss the Incentive with the Participant where the Participant's Career Plan identifies relevant training opportunities, and other sources of funding are either only able to cover part of the cost or are not available. The Provider must explain to the Participant the requirements associated with using the Incentive and identify if the Participant would like to use it.

At a minimum, the Provider must explain the following to the Participant:

- the details and requirements of the training course/s, including course costs and attendance requirements
- the Co-contribution requirements for either the Participant or the Participant's Employer
- that the Provider must assist the Participant to enrol in the training course and arrange the payment of all eligible training costs, and that there will be no retrospective payments for training where the Participant has already enrolled, started, completed or paid for the training (either themselves or through the Participant's Employer)
- the Provider's obligations in managing the Incentive payment, including the circumstances where the Participant or Participant's Employer (as relevant) may receive a refund of the Co-contribution, and
- that the training identified should be at the Certificate II level or above, or provide a pathway to completing future training at Certificate II level or above.

For Participants (other than Existing Participants who access the Incentive before 1 October 2023) the Provider must also explain that the Incentive is only available for training courses related to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List.

## **Engaging with the Participant's Employer**

Where the Participant's Employer will make the Co-contribution, the Provider must obtain the Participant's permission to engage with the Participant's Employer. Once obtained, the

Provider must discuss the requirements of the Incentive with the Participant's Employer and confirm the Participant's Employer's willingness to make the Co-contribution.

### **3. Accessing the Incentive**

The Provider must identify the different sources of funding available to assist the Participant to access relevant training.

This may include:

- existing State/Territory government incentives and programs
- funding available from professional associations, trade unions, scholarships or peak bodies
- other Commonwealth government programs, or
- the Incentive.

Where another source of funding is available, that funding must be utilised before accessing the Incentive.

If the Participant uses a different source of funding to subsidise part of a course cost, the Provider must only use the Incentive and Co-contribution for the unsubsidised component of the course cost.

For Participants other than Existing Participants, the Incentive may be accessed to pay up to 75 per cent of the course cost for eligible training courses, up to a total of \$2,200 (GST inclusive).

For Existing Participants, please see Section 9 Managing Existing Participants regarding the proportion of the Incentive that may be accessed to pay for the course cost for eligible training courses.

Either the Participant or the Participant's Employer must fund the balance of the training course costs through the Co-contribution.

Once the Participant, or the Participant's Employer (as relevant), has confirmed they will pay the Co-contribution to undertake the identified training, the Provider must:

- register the Participant in the Department's IT Systems, and then
- enter into a Skills and Training Incentive Agreement with the relevant parties (Provider, Participant and party responsible for the Co-contribution) for the relevant training.

### **Using the Incentive for multiple courses**

The Participant may use the Incentive to undertake several courses until the maximum value of the Incentive, which is \$2,200 (GST inclusive) has been expended. Once the Incentive has been expended in full the Participant cannot access a further Incentive.

A separate Skills and Training Incentive Agreement must be entered into between the Provider, Participant and party responsible for the Co-contribution for each training course for which the Incentive is used.



#### Example A

If a Participant undertakes two training courses listed in their Career Plan that are related to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List, (and no other source of funding is available):

Course A—total cost \$2,000 (GST inclusive), the Incentive value is \$1,500 and the Participant or the Participant’s Employer’s Co-contribution is \$500

Course B—total cost \$3,300 (GST inclusive), the Incentive is \$700 (i.e. the balance of the Incentive) the Participant or the Participant’s Employer’s Co-contribution is \$2,600.

#### Example B

If prior to 1 October 2023 an Existing Participant undertakes two training courses listed in their Career Plan that are not related to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List, (and no other source of funding is available):

Course A—total cost \$3,500 (GST inclusive), the Incentive value is \$1,750 and the Participant or the Participant’s Employer’s Co-contribution is \$1,750

Course B—total cost \$1,500 (GST inclusive), the Incentive is \$250 (i.e. the balance of the Incentive) the Participant or the Participant’s Employer’s Co-contribution is \$1,250.

#### Example C

If prior to 1 October 2023 an Existing Participant undertakes two training courses listed in their Career Plan where Course A **is not** related to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List, and Course B **is** related to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List, (and no other source of funding is available):

Course A—total cost \$1,200 (GST inclusive), the Incentive value is \$600 and the Participant or the Participant’s Employer’s Co-contribution is \$600

Course B—total cost \$3,000 (GST inclusive), the Incentive is \$1,600 (i.e. the balance of the Incentive) the Participant or the Participant’s Employer’s Co-contribution is \$1,400.

## Registering a new Participant

To register a new Participant for the Incentive in the Department’s IT Systems the Provider should use the information obtained in the Participant’s original registration form completed at the time of registering for the Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program. The Department recommends reviewing the details of the original registration form with the Participant to ensure their details are current and correct.

Before creating a new record, the Provider must conduct a job seeker search in the Department's IT Systems. This determines whether the new Participant has an existing registration containing relevant information, such as a Job Seeker Identification Number (referred to as a JSID).





If the new Participant has an existing active referral to, or is registered with, a Commonwealth funded employment services provider as identified in the Department's IT Systems, they are not eligible for the Incentive and cannot be registered.

The Provider should inform the new Participant they are not eligible for the Incentive and encourage the Participant to discuss their Career Plan and training needs with their employment services provider as listed in the Department's IT Systems.

If the new Participant has an active referral and wishes to access the Incentive, the Provider should advise the Participant to request their employment services provider to inactivate the referral in the Department's IT Systems. Once this has been completed the Participant may be registered for the Incentive in the Department's IT Systems by following the below system steps.

For information on the registration process for Existing Participants, please see Section 9 Managing Existing Participants.

The Department has prepared a comprehensive IT User Guide, including Addendums, with detailed instructions for all system steps, available on the Provider Portal.

-  **System step:** Providers must conduct a search in the Department's IT Systems for the Participant to determine if they are currently registered with, or have an active referral to, an employment services provider in the Department's IT Systems and to use their existing record (if any) to register the Participant for the Incentive if they are eligible.
-  **System step:** Where the Participant is already in the Department's IT Systems but is not currently registered with, and does not have an active referral to, an employment services provider in the Department's IT Systems the Provider must select 're-register' under the Job Seeker search tab. The Provider is then prompted to create a new registration and provide the Participant's personal details, including address, contact details and any other information required to complete the registration.
-  **System step:** Where the Participant is not in the Department's IT Systems, the Provider must create a new registration by selecting 'create a new record' under the Job Seeker search tab on the Department's IT Systems. The Provider is required to provide the Participant's personal details, including address and contact details and any other information required to complete the registration.
-  **System step:** The Provider must register the Participant as 'No Referral Required' (NSSR) in the Department's IT Systems before entering into a Skills and Training Incentive Agreement with the relevant parties.

An error message will occur if the Participant has an active referral to, or is currently registered with, an employment services provider in the Department's

IT Systems or if the maximum amount of the Incentive has already been claimed for the Participant.

## Completing the Skills and Training Incentive Agreement

The Provider must enter into a Skills and Training Incentive Agreement with the Participant and the Participant's Employer (where the Participant's Employer is making the Co-contribution) for each training course for which the Incentive is used. The Provider must use the template Skills and Training Incentive Agreement, which is updated from time to time and is available on the Provider Portal.

The Skills and Training Incentive Agreement sets out each party's rights and obligations in relation to the Incentive for the proposed training the Participant has agreed to undertake.

Where the Participant's Employer will be the Co-contributor, prior to entering into the Skills and Training Incentive Agreement with the Participant and Participant's Employer, the Provider must obtain the Participant's permission to contact the Participant's Employer and discuss the Incentive and training and seek their agreement to be the Co-contributor for the Participant.

The Skills and Training Incentive Agreement must include:

- the Participant's name and contact details
- the Provider's legal name, contact officer and contact details
- the Participant's Employer's legal name, Australian Business Number (ABN), Employer contact's name and contact details (where the Participant's Employer is the Co-contributor)
- identified training, eligible training costs and reason for training.

Where a Participant is self-employed, the Provider must ensure that the Participant's own business is selected as 'Employer' in the Co-contributor section in the Department's IT Systems and enter the details of the Participant's business.

The Career Plan forms part of the Skills and Training Incentive Agreement.

The Skills and Training Incentive Agreement may be electronically signed by relevant parties.



**Documentary Evidence:** The Provider must retain and upload a copy of the fully executed Skills and Training Incentive Agreement.



**System step:** The Provider must upload copies of the Skills and Training Incentive Agreement and the Career Plan to the Department's IT Systems to form part of the Reimbursement claim.

## Committing an Incentive

The Department will not allocate a specific number of Incentives to individual Providers or by Contract Regions. Rather, Providers may use Incentives until the Incentive Cap for each financial year is reached.

The Department will keep Providers informed of Incentive availability as it approaches the Incentive Cap, through regular emails, and advise if the Incentive Cap is reached before the end of a financial year.

An Incentive is not committed until the Provider registers the Participant and creates a training record in the Department's IT Systems.

The Provider should create a training record as soon as it has entered into a Skills and Training Incentive Agreement, to ensure an available Incentive is committed for the Participant. A training record should only be created for a course the Participant has agreed to undertake.

When entering a training course in the Department's IT Systems, the Provider must also confirm that the Training Organisation holds a current ABN, and where applicable, current Registered Training Organisation status.

To commit an Incentive, the Provider should complete as much information as is available in the training record. The Provider must include the following minimum information in the training record:

- Participant Details including:
  - Current Occupation
  - Current Industry Type
  - Employment Status
  - Reason (e.g. linked to current job, or relevant applicable Skills Priority List occupation).
- Course Details including:
  - Skills Priority List Occupation (if applicable)
  - Course Name
  - Qualification
  - Course Length
  - Training Course Category
  - Co-contributor
  - Full Course Cost inclusive of GST
  - Expected Start Date of the training.

Where the Participant is self-employed or the Employer is the Co-contributor, the Provider must also include the following information in the training record:

- Own business or Employer Details including:
  - ABN
  - Registered Trading Name
  - Contact Name.

The Provider must complete all required information in the training record and undertake the system step below before claiming a Reimbursement for the Incentive.



**System step:** To create a training record for the Participant, the Provider must select 'add training' on the manage screen under the Payments—Training tab in the Department's IT Systems.

## Monitoring Training Records & Releasing Incentives

The creation of a training record commits an Incentive. Once an Incentive has had a Reimbursement claimed against it, it is considered used and cannot be released back into the Department's IT Systems.

If there has been no Reimbursement claimed against an Incentive, it can be released back into the Department's IT Systems.

The Provider must regularly monitor training records created for each Participant to ensure the records are current.

If a Participant has not used, and no longer intends to use, the Incentive towards any training identified in the Career Plan, the Provider must advise the Participant that the Incentives are capped and there may not be Incentives available if the Participant later changes their mind.

If the Participant confirms they will not use the Incentive, the Provider must then inactivate all training records for that Participant. Once all training records have been inactivated, this will release the Incentive providing there is no existing Reimbursement against the Incentive.

The Provider must supply to the Department a list of JSIDs within 10 Business Days of the end of the month where the Incentive has been released during the month prior, including providing a reason for the inactivation of the Training Record.

From time to time, the Department will review all training records with no Reimbursement claims against them and ask the Provider to confirm each Participant's intention to use the Incentive and undertake a data cleanse in the Department's IT Systems to release Incentives where appropriate.

The Department will undertake reviews of training records:

- when the number of Incentives is nearing the Incentive Cap
- towards the end of each financial year
- as otherwise required.



**System step:** Where no claims for Reimbursement have been made against a training record and the Participant has advised they no longer intend to undertake that training the Provider must inactivate the Participant's training record/s.



**System step:** To inactivate a training record the Provider must open the training record by selecting 'view' on the manage screen under the Payments—Training tab on the Department's IT Systems and then select the 'inactivate' button.

## 4. Working with Training Organisations

The Provider must identify and work with Training Organisations to arrange placements in training courses for each Participant.

A Training Organisation must be:

- a Registered Training Organisation (RTO); or
- a Higher Education Provider (HEP); or

- an organisation that is otherwise approved as a Training Organisation by the Department, in accordance with this Guideline (see 'Seeking Approval for Training').

## Organising training

As part of developing the Career Plan, the Provider must investigate all relevant training options available in locations suitable for the Participant and discuss these with the Participant (and the Participant's Employer, where relevant).

The Provider must actively seek training to be delivered by an RTO or HEP where possible.

When the Provider and Participant agree to a training course in a Skills and Training Incentive Agreement and an Incentive has been committed in the Department's IT Systems, the Provider must assist the Participant with the enrolment process and arrange with the Training Organisation to make a single payment for the eligible training costs.

If the Participant organises and pays for the training themselves that training is not eligible for the Incentive.

The Provider must also identify the Training Organisation's course cancellation and refund policies and provide this information to, and discuss this with, the Participant (and the Participant's Employer where relevant) before booking a place on the training course.

## Eligible training costs

The Incentive is available for eligible training costs agreed and identified in a Skills and Training Incentive Agreement, and can only cover:

- enrolment costs associated with the training courses including:
  - course costs, including manuals; and
  - the administration costs associated with enrolment where included and paid as part of the training course in one invoice; and
  - costs associated with recognition of prior learning assessment required to undertake further training.

The Incentive does not include payment for other expenses, such as:

- assets including books and computers
- subsidies for paid leave.

Where a Participant has not been able to complete the training within the specified academic period determined by the Training Organisation, and there is a fee payable for an extension for the Participant to complete the training course, the Incentive may be accessed to co fund this extension fee (where the Incentive has not already been expended in full), up to the remaining available balance of the Incentive.

The Incentive must only be accessed to co-fund this extension fee at the same percentage of the course cost for which the Incentive was originally accessed for this training course (ie 50 per cent or 75 per cent, as applicable). The payment of an extension fee is not considered a retrospective payment.

Either the Participant or the Participant's Employer must fund the balance of the extension fee for the training course through an additional Co-contribution.

## Seeking approval for training

The Participant may undertake accredited or non-accredited training with an RTO or HEP.

The Provider does not need to seek approval from the Department for training delivered by an RTO or HEP unless the Provider is an RTO or HEP and will be delivering the training (see further below regarding the approval process).

In extenuating circumstances where the delivery of identified training by an RTO or HEP is not available or is unsuitable for the Participant, the Provider must seek the Department's approval for a non-RTO training provider to be a Training Organisation.



The requirements and procedure for the Department's consideration of non-RTO training is detailed within the **Non-RTO Application Process for Providers** guide which is available via the Provider Portal. **Documentary Evidence:** Once provided, Departmental approval must be uploaded to the Participant Training Details Payment Record in the Department's IT Systems.

## Using the Participant's Employer to deliver the training

The Participant's Employer may deliver the training as a Training Organisation where the Provider has determined it is suitable to meet the assessed needs of the Participant and the Department has approved the Employer as a Training Organisation.

In all applicable instances, the Provider must seek approval from the Department prior to arranging training to be delivered by a Participant's Employer using the Department's Employer Training application. This approval must be obtained regardless of whether the Participant's Employer is a Registered Training Organisation or Higher Education Provider.

Providers must email the Employer Training application to the Skills and Training Incentive mailbox ([SkillsTrainingIncentive@dewr.gov.au](mailto:SkillsTrainingIncentive@dewr.gov.au)) to seek approval.

The form must be provided to the Department no less than 15 Business Days prior to the scheduled start date of the proposed training. The form will be assessed by the Department and the Provider will be informed of the outcome within 10 Business Days of the application being accepted by the Department.

The form must include:

- if the Employer is not an RTO or HEP, consideration of whether similar training can be delivered by an RTO or HEP for the same price or a lower price
- any regulation or professional recognition of the training organisation and the training
- training cost

Where the Participant's Employer is delivering the training, the Participant's Employer must be the Co-contributor.



**Documentary Evidence:** Once provided, Departmental approval must be uploaded to the Participant Training Details Payment Record in the Department's IT Systems.



## Using own or Related Entity training

The Provider or its Related Entity may deliver the training as a Training Organisation where the Department has approved the Provider or its Related Entity as a Training Organisation. Where this is the case, the Provider must ensure the Participant (and Participant's Employer, where relevant) is aware of the Provider's role as the Training Organisation and has been provided with alternative options where available.

In determining its role as a Training Organisation, the Provider should consider whether:

- there is another Training Organisation in the area that delivers the course
- the training is the best fit for the Participant
- the course offers other assistance that the Participant will benefit from, that other courses in the area do not offer
- the course offers the most competitive price
- it has addressed any potential or actual conflicts of interest.

The Provider or a Related Entity of the Provider must not deliver training as a Training Organisation to Participants without obtaining prior approval to be a Training Organisation from the Department.

The Provider must seek approval from the Department prior to arranging training to be delivered by the Provider or a Related Entity.

Approval must be sought using the Department's Own or Related Entity Referral application. This form must be provided to the Department by email to the Skills and Training Incentive mailbox ([SkillsTrainingIncentive@dewr.gov.au](mailto:SkillsTrainingIncentive@dewr.gov.au)) no less than 15 Business Days prior to the scheduled start date of the proposed training. The form will be assessed by the Department and the Provider will be informed of the outcome within 10 Business Days of the application being accepted by the Department.

The Department may withdraw its approval and take such other action as it considers appropriate where the Department determines at its absolute discretion that a Provider or its Related Entity should no longer be approved as a Training Organisation, including where the training being provided is not value for money or is unrelated to the Career Plan.

In the event the Department withdraws its approval, it may take such other action as it considers appropriate, include recovering payments or not approving the future use of Incentives by the Provider's own or Related Entity.



**Documentary Evidence:** The Provider must upload evidence of the Department's approval for the Provider or its Related Entity to be the Training Organisation, to the Department's IT Systems at the time of claiming a Reimbursement.

## 5. Handling Payments

The Provider must make a single payment to a Training Organisation for each training invoice. To facilitate this the Provider must receive a Co-contribution from the Participant (or the Participant's Employer, where relevant) for each training invoice and pay the Incentive from its



own funds. The Provider can then claim a Reimbursement through the Department's IT Systems.

## Receiving the Co-contribution

Before receiving a Co-contribution from the Participant or their Employer, the Provider must ensure it meets the requirements of the Contract to:

- enter into a Skills and Training Incentive Agreement with the Participant, and the Participant's Employer where the Participant's Employer will pay the Co-contribution
- assist the Participant with the enrolment process for an identified training course
- explain the refund policy of the Training Organisation and the circumstances in which the Co-contribution can be refunded if necessary
- ensure the Incentive and Co-contribution can be paid to the Training Organisation within 5 Business Days.

To receive the Co-contribution the Provider must issue an invoice (or other form of written notice) to the Participant or the Participant's Employer (where relevant).

The Provider should not issue an invoice to the Participant or the Participant's Employer (where relevant) for the Co-contribution until they have received the invoice from the Training Organisation.

Where the Participant is using the Incentive for multiple courses, the Provider is required to enter into a new Skills and Training Incentive Agreement and meet all other requirements set out above, including in relation to assisting the Participant with the enrolment process and paying the Incentive and Co-contribution, for each training course.



**Documentary Evidence:** The Provider must retain a copy of the invoice(s) (or other form(s) of written notice(s)) and evidence of receipt(s) of the Co-contribution. These documents must be uploaded to the Department's IT Systems.

## Paying the Training Organisation

The Provider must make a single payment for the training course to a Training Organisation within 5 Business Days of receiving the Participant or Employer's Co-contribution.

Where the Participant is using the Incentive for multiple courses, the amount of the Incentive for all courses in total must not exceed \$2,200 (GST Inclusive).



**Documentary Evidence:** The Provider must retain receipt of payment to the Training Organisation and upload to the Department's IT Systems to claim a Reimbursement.

## Returning the Incentive and Co-contribution

The Provider must take reasonable steps to contact the Participant and confirm the Participant's commencement and attendance at the organised training course/s.

As detailed in the Contract, where relevant training is cancelled and/or does not proceed, the Provider must take all reasonable steps to obtain a refund of the payment made to the Training Organisation.

Where the Provider or its Related Entity is the Training Organisation and:

- the training course is cancelled and/or does not proceed as a result of a decision made by the Provider or its Related Entity as the Training Organisation; or
- the Participant does not start or attend the training course for any reason within their control,  
the Provider must return the entire amount of the:
- Co-contribution to the Participant or the Participant's Employer (as relevant); and
- Incentive to the Department, but only if the Provider has been Reimbursed by the Department in relation to the relevant Incentive.

Where the Participant's Employer is the Training Organisation and:

- the training course is cancelled and/or does not proceed as a result of a decision made by the Participant's Employer as the Training Organisation; or
- the Participant does not start or attend the training course for any reason within their control,  
the Provider must ensure that the Participant's Employer returns the entire amount of the Incentive to the Provider.

Any monies refunded by the Training Organisation should be refunded to the Co-contributor up to the value of their Co-contribution. Any remaining monies must then be returned to the Department.

## 6. Making a Reimbursement Claim

Following payment of the Incentive and Co-contribution to the Training Organisation in accordance with the Contract and this Guideline, the Provider may claim a Reimbursement for the Incentive through the Department's IT Systems.

The Provider has 56 calendar days to claim a Reimbursement of the Incentive, starting from the date the Provider paid the Incentive and Co-contribution to the Training Organisation.

Providers who do not meet this timeframe are not entitled to receive a Reimbursement of the Incentive and must email the Department's Incentive mailbox ([SkillsTrainingIncentive@dewr.gov.au](mailto:SkillsTrainingIncentive@dewr.gov.au)). The Provider may also not be entitled to, and may not receive, the Administration Payment, if the first Reimbursement claimed against the Incentive is not made within 56 days as specified above.

To claim a Reimbursement for the Incentive, the Provider must have created a training record in the Department's IT Systems and completed all available fields with the following information:

- Participant Details including:

- Current Occupation
- Current Industry Type
- Employment Status
- Reason (e.g. linked to current job, Skills Priority List occupation in national shortage).
- Course Details including:
  - Skills Priority List Occupation (if applicable)
  - Course Name
  - Qualification
  - Course Length
  - Training Course Category
  - Co-contributor
  - Full Course Cost inclusive of GST
  - Expected Start Date of the training.
- Training Organisation details including:
  - ABN
  - Name
  - Type (e.g. Registered Training Organisation).

Where the Participant is self-employed or the Employer is the Co-contributor, the record must also include:

- Own business or Employer Details including:
  - ABN
  - Registered Trading Name
  - Contact Name.

The Provider must update all fields required to create the training record where changes or additional information becomes available.



**System step:** To make a Reimbursement claim, the Provider must open the training record by selecting 'view' on the manage screen under the Payments—Training tab on the Department's IT Systems and then select the 'Reimburse' button.

When processing the claim for Reimbursement, the Provider must enter the:

- Training course payment date
- Invoice amount ensuring that it is GST inclusive
- Provider reference or invoice number.



**Documentary Evidence:** At the time of lodging the claim for Reimbursement of the Incentive, the Provider must upload a paid invoice from the Training Organisation and a copy of the relevant Skills and Training Incentive Agreement.

## Withdrawing a Reimbursement claim

Where the Provider has claimed a Reimbursement of the Incentive in error, the Provider may withdraw the claim in the Department's IT Systems up until such time that the payment status is changed to approved (as identified in the Department's IT Systems).

After this time, the Provider cannot withdraw a claim for Reimbursement of the Incentive and must contact the Department's Incentive mailbox ([SkillsTrainingIncentive@dewr.gov.au](mailto:SkillsTrainingIncentive@dewr.gov.au)) to arrange a recovery of the relevant claim.



**System step:** To withdraw a claim for Reimbursement of the Incentive the Provider must go to the Claimed Payment history screen, search for the claim and 'withdraw' the claim for Reimbursement of the Incentive that has been submitted in error.

## 7. Claiming the Administration Payment

The Department pays the Provider one Administration Payment of \$330 (GST inclusive) for delivering Incentive Services to the Participant. The Administration Payment is paid automatically when the Provider claims the first Reimbursement of the Incentive through the Department's IT Systems for each Participant.

Where the Participant is using the Incentive for multiple courses, the Provider will only be entitled to one Administration Payment in relation to that Participant (ie where the Provider makes multiple claims for Reimbursement of the Incentive in relation to a Participant, the Provider will only be entitled to an Administration Payment in relation to the first Reimbursement claim only).

For more information on claiming an Administration Payment for an Existing Participant, please see section 9, Managing Existing Participants.



**System step:** The Department automatically pays the Administration Payment to the Provider within 14 calendar days from the date the first Reimbursement of the Incentive has been claimed for a Participant in the Department's IT Systems.

## Withdrawing an Administration Payment

Where the Provider has claimed a Reimbursement of the Incentive in error and withdraws that claim in the Department's IT Systems, and this is the only Reimbursement of the Incentive claimed for the relevant Participant, the Provider must also withdraw the Administration Payment (as described in the System step below) unless they are re-submitting the Reimbursement of the Incentive to fix errors in the original claim.

The Provider can only withdraw the Administration Payment claim prior the payment status becoming approved (as identified in the Department's IT Systems). After this time, the Provider must contact the Department's Incentive mailbox ([SkillsTrainingIncentive@dewr.gov.au](mailto:SkillsTrainingIncentive@dewr.gov.au)).



**System step:** To withdraw an Administration Payment, the Provider must go to the Claimed Payment history screen, search for the payment and 'withdraw' the payment that has been reimbursed in error.

## 8. Making Recoveries

The Provider must return to the Department a Reimbursement of an Incentive if the Provider has:

- claimed the Reimbursement incorrectly
- not met all requirements for the Reimbursement (for instance, as identified through Departmental compliance activities), or
- incurred a refund or cash-back from the Training Organisation.

The Provider must request recovery of refunds by Training Organisations of Incentives and Co-contributions paid where applicable on a monthly basis using the Skills and Training Incentive Refund Recovery spreadsheet provided by the Department. The completed spreadsheet must be forwarded to the Department's Incentive mailbox ([SkillsTrainingIncentive@dewr.gov.au](mailto:SkillsTrainingIncentive@dewr.gov.au)) within 10 Business Days of the end of each month.

## 9. Managing Existing Participants

### Transition-in

At the commencement of the Contract, the Department will supply Providers with a list of Existing Participants in their new Contract Regions who have an Incentive committed in the Department's IT Systems with an available balance remaining.

Providers must contact each Existing Participant identified in the list provided by the Department within 12 months from the Commencement Date of the Contract to:

- identify if the Existing Participant plans to access the Incentive committed in the Department's IT Systems; and
- advise the Existing Participant about the eligibility requirements that apply in respect of accessing the Incentive (up to and after 30 September 2023).

If an Existing Participant plans to undertake training using the Incentive, the Provider must request a copy of the Participant's existing Career Plan.

The Career Plan will enable the Provider to review, discuss with the Participant and manage training requirements, including meeting required Documentary Evidence requirements in the Department's IT Systems when submitting claims for Reimbursements.

The Provider must arrange and pay for training for an Existing Participant on or before 30 September 2023 where:

- the Existing Participant advises the Provider that they wish to access the Incentive for eligible training identified in their Career Plan; and
- that training is not linked to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List.

## Existing Participant Eligibility

An Existing Participant is eligible for the Incentive up until and including 30 September 2023 if they:

- have a completed Career Plan, that:
  - identifies training linked to their current job (for example, upgrading skills), a future job opportunity or an industry in demand; or
  - identifies training linked to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List;
- have an active training record created in the Department's IT Systems prior to 30 September 2022; and
- do not have an active referral to, or are not currently registered with, a Commonwealth funded employment services provider as identified in the Department's IT Systems.

An Existing Participant is only eligible for the Incentive from 1 October 2023 if they:

- have a completed Career Plan that identifies training linked to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List;
- have an active training record created in the Department's IT Systems prior to 30 September 2022; and
- do not have an active referral to, or are not currently registered with, a Commonwealth funded employment services provider as identified in the Department's IT Systems.

## Accessing the Incentive

Existing Participants may access the Incentive for a training course listed in their Career Plan that is related to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List, for the life of the program.

Until 30 September 2023 (inclusive), Existing Participants may also access the Incentive for a training course listed in their Career Plan linked to their current job (for example, upgrading skills), a future job opportunity or an industry in demand. The training course does not need to be related to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List.

Where an Existing Participant is accessing the Incentive for a training course that is not related to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List, the Incentive may be accessed to pay up to 50 per cent of the course cost for eligible training courses, up to a total of \$2,200 (GST Inclusive). Either the Participant or the Participant's Employer must fund the balance of the training course costs through the Co-contribution.

On and from 1 October 2023, Existing Participants may only access the Incentive for a training course that is related to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List

Where an Existing Participant is accessing the Incentive for a training course related to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List, the Incentive may be accessed to pay up to 75 per cent of the course cost, up to a total of \$2,200 (GST Inclusive).

Either the Participant or the Participant's Employer must fund the balance of the training course costs through the Co-contribution.

## Existing Participant Re-registration

Once an Existing Participant has confirmed they plan to undertake training using the Incentive, the Provider must 're-register' the Participant in the Department's IT Systems.

The Provider must then commence providing Services to the Participant in accordance with the Contract and this Guidelines.



**System step:** Where the Participant is already in the Department's IT Systems, the Provider must select 're-register' under the Job Seeker search tab. The Provider is then prompted to create a new registration and provide the Participant's personal details, including address and contact details and any additional information required to complete the registration.

The Provider must ensure that they review the Participant's record in the Department's IT Systems to confirm the available Incentive balance prior to arranging any training.

## Administration Payments for Existing Participants who have accessed their Incentive

Providers cannot claim an Administration Payment through the Department's IT Systems in relation to Existing Participants who have previously accessed their Incentive and for whom additional training is arranged by the Provider.

Providers will be required to complete the Department's Grandfathered Participant Administration Payment spreadsheet on a monthly basis, with each Existing Participant's details recorded for whom they have arranged and paid for training in that month, and forward to the Skills and Training Incentive inbox ([SkillsTrainingIncentive@dewr.gov.au](mailto:SkillsTrainingIncentive@dewr.gov.au)) within 10 Business Days of the end of the month prior.

Each month the Existing Participant Administration Payment spreadsheet will be reviewed and once approved by the Department, Providers will be requested to raise an invoice for payment of related Administration Payments.

Claims for Reimbursement of the Incentive in relation to Existing Participants should be processed through the Department's IT Systems as outlined in Section 6 of these Guidelines.



## **Administration Payments for Existing Participants who have not accessed their Incentive**

For Existing Participants who have **not** accessed their Incentive previously (i.e. a claim for Reimbursement of the Incentive has not already been claimed by the Provider or a previous provider in relation to that Participant) but have an Incentive committed in the Department's IT Systems, Providers should process any claims for Reimbursements of the Incentive as outlined in Section 6 of these Guidelines.

The Administration Payment of \$330 (GST inclusive) will be paid automatically when the Provider claims the first Reimbursement of the Incentive through the Department's IT Systems.

## **10. Monitoring Performance**

The Department monitors compliance with the Contract and relevant Guidelines or reference material and will raise any issues with the Provider in a timely manner. These monitoring activities are supported by specific program assurance activities.

The Department assesses Provider performance against the contractual Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). KPI 1, KPI 2(A) and KPI 3 relate to the Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program (refer to separate Guideline) and KPIs 2(B), 3, 4 and 5 relate to the Skills and Training Incentive.

### **KPI 2(B)—Satisfaction and Quality**

Performance against this measure is determined by calculating whether, of those Participants who complete the Incentive Survey, at least 75 per cent were satisfied with the way in which the Provider delivered the Program Services.

### **KPI 3— Efficiency - Provision of data to the Department**

Performance against this measure is determined by whether data provided to the Department in accordance with the Contract is to the Department's satisfaction, including being on time, complete and accurate.

### **KPI 4—Incentive Effectiveness – Incentive Take Up**

Performance against this measure is determined by whether, of those Participants who complete the Program Services and whose Career Plan includes training that is related to an occupation in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or



moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List, at least 75 per cent accessed the Incentive.

## **KPI 5—Incentive Effectiveness – Training Completions in relation to the Incentive**

Performance against this measure is determined by whether, of those Participants who complete the Incentive Survey, at least 85 per cent completed the training that is co-funded by the Incentive.

### **Progress Reports to the Department**

The Provider must provide quarterly progress reports to the Department's Skills Checkpoint team. These reports are shared with the Department's Skills and Training Incentive team and are used to monitor performance of the Skills and Training Incentive. The Department may request additional reports from the Provider from time to time.

### **Incentive Survey**

The Provider must provide Participants with access to the Incentive Survey as developed and amended from time to time by the Department. The Provider should encourage Participants to complete the Incentive Survey.

## **11. Privacy**

### **The Australian Privacy Principles**

The Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) set out in Schedule 1 of the *Privacy Act 1988* (**Privacy Act**) are principle-based laws that govern the way 'personal information' (including 'sensitive information') (as defined in the Privacy Act) must be handled.

The Provider has obligations under the Contract to not do an act, or engage in a practice, which if done or engaged in by the Department, would breach an APP or be contrary to the Privacy Act. If the Provider is an APP entity for the purposes of the Privacy Act, it will separately have a statutory obligation to comply with the APPs.

The Provider is required to familiarise itself with its privacy obligations under the Privacy Act and under the Contract.

A flexible approach to implementing the APPs is encouraged, however compliance is mandatory.

The APPs should be embedded in daily operations. Without limiting the Provider's obligation to comply with the APPs, some examples of how the APP may be embedded in daily operations are:

- the Provider must have in place practices, policies, procedures and system that will enable and ensure compliance the APPs; and
- the Provider should regularly and openly discuss with individuals how their personal (including sensitive) information is being handled.

The Provider is encouraged to tailor their privacy practices to suit the needs of individuals and their own businesses whilst also meeting their privacy obligations.

Failure to comply with the APPs is considered to be an interference with the privacy of an individual. An individual who considers that their privacy has been interfered with can contact the Department to make a complaint.

Alternatively, an individual can contact the Australian Information Commissioner who has powers to investigate possible interferences with privacy, either following a complaint by an individual, or on the Commissioner's own initiative. In some circumstances, compensation may be paid to an individual whose privacy has been breached.

Failure to comply with the APPs may also constitute a breach of the Provider's obligations under the Contract, resulting in compliance action being taken by the Department under the Contract.

For more information on the APPs refer to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner's [quick reference tool and the Australian Privacy Principles Guidelines](#).

## **Managing Participant privacy requirements**

The Provider may need to collect and disclose personal information about Participants from and to other parties to service Participants.

This may include:

- third parties such as Training Organisations
- the Department
- other Government agencies and departments.

The Department may also disclose Participants' personal information to other parties for the evaluation of the Incentive.

Please refer to the Skills and Training Incentive Privacy Guideline available on the Provider Portal for further information.

## **12. Summary of required Documentary Evidence**

All forms of Documentary Evidence must be uploaded by the Provider in the Department's IT Systems.

Documentary Evidence includes:

- a copy of the Career Plan
- any required approvals for non-RTO training, Employer Training or own entity or Related Entity training justifications
- a correctly executed copy of the Skills and Training Incentive Agreement
- evidence of receipt of the Co-contribution payment from the Participant or Participant's Employer (as applicable)
- a copy of the invoice from the Training Organisation clearly noting the training course name and Participant name
- evidence of payment to the Training Organisation.

Copies of Documentary Evidence must also be provided to the Department on request.

### 13. Promoting the Incentive

The Provider must promote the Incentive to:

- Commonwealth and State/Territory program providers as requested by the Department
- industry representative bodies such as skills organisations, peak bodies and trade unions
- Training Organisations
- employers of occupations in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List
- employers and eligible individuals seeking to up-skill or re-skill for future employment opportunities in occupations in national shortage or an occupation not in national shortage but with strong or moderate future demand, as identified on the Skills Priority List.

Engagement strategies must be detailed in a Marketing Plan. The Provider must update its Marketing Plan no less than once per year and, when requested, provide this to the Department.

The Provider must ensure any promotion of the Skills Checkpoint Program and Incentive is consistent with the requirements of the Contract and any advice provided by the Department.

The Provider must ensure that any Training Organisation the Provider engages with is supplied with, and only uses, the standard advertising text that is prepared and approved by the Department in relation to the promotion of the Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program or the Incentive.

The standard advertising text for Training Organisations is available via the Provider Portal.

The Provider must notify the Department immediately on becoming aware of any promotion of the Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program and/or Incentive that is inconsistent with the requirements of relevant legislation, the Contract, any Guidelines and/or advice provided by the Department, including by any Training Organisation or other third party.

#### Branding / logo

Branding used by the Provider on materials related to the Program and Incentive must comply with the current version of the **Skills Checkpoint & Training Incentive – Style Guidelines for service providers (Style Guidelines)** available from the Department.

Broadly, the Provider must use the official logo and funding statement on Program and Incentive related promotional material and publications (subject to exceptions, as detailed in the Style Guidelines, where use of the logo alone is permitted). The Style Guidelines are available via the Provider Portal.

## **Using employment facilitators**

Employment facilitators are an on-the-ground presence who work with retrenched workers in specific regions. Providers are encouraged to work with employment facilitators in relevant locations to promote the Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program and Skills and Training Incentive to individuals either facing retrenchment or those recently retrenched.

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This Guideline is not a stand-alone document and does not contain all of the Provider's obligations. It must be read in conjunction with the Contract, including any Deeds of Variation and any relevant Guidelines or reference material issued by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations under or in connection with the Contract.