Future Skills WA

Future Skills WA is a new way of funding training. Starting in 2014, Western Australians will be guaranteed a government subsidised training place at a training provider of choice, where the enrolment is in a qualification that meets the priorities of the State.

What are the benefits for Western Australians?
This will ensure:
- increased access to priority training opportunities;
- greater student choice of training provider;
- investment in skills to meet current and future industry needs; and
- a sustainable government subsidised training system.

What are State priority qualifications?
State priority qualifications are qualifications that will equip people to take up jobs that are, or will be, in high demand in WA. These occupations are linked to the Department of Training and Workforce Development’s State Priority Occupation List.

By making qualified people available for employment in occupations where there will be demand, future job shortages can be minimised and productivity in Western Australia increased. Future Skills WA ensures that people will have access to the training they need to obtain employment so that all Western Australians will have the opportunity to develop the skills required for state priority occupations. Further details on the State Priority Occupation List can be accessed here.

Future Skills WA will guarantee vocational education students a government subsidised training place in:
- all apprenticeships and eligible traineeships in Western Australia;
- priority industry qualifications; and
- specific foundation skills courses.

Together, this includes a guarantee for students to undertake government subsidised training in over 600 qualifications, subject to course availability and students meeting course entry requirements. More information on priority industry qualifications can be found on the Future Skills WA area of the Department of Training and Workforce Development website.

Are student fees changing?
Yes. Currently, students contribute approximately 8 per cent overall towards the cost of government subsidised training through their course fees, and this has been declining in real terms for many years. In order to support a sustainable training system into the future there will be changes to student fee contributions to reflect state priorities.

While student course fees will increase from 1 January 2014, the vast majority of training costs will continue to be subsidised by the State Government. In general,
fees will be changing to reflect the relative priority of qualification, with high priority qualifications attracting the lower fees to encourage students into areas of training that meet State and industry need. Information on the new fee levels can be found on the Future Skills WA area of the Department of Training and Workforce Development website.

**What assistance is available?**

In order to ensure that all Western Australians benefit from this training guarantee:

- for Diploma and Advanced Diploma qualifications, students will be able to access the Commonwealth income contingent loan scheme known as VET FEE-HELP from an approved training provider, allowing tuition fees to be deferred until their income reaches a set level (currently around $50,000 per annum);
- For students studying courses at Certificate I to Certificate IV level the Government of Western Australia will continue to provide a 50% fee concession to students that meet the concession eligibility criteria;
- the government will also be providing free career services through the Career Centre; and
- targeted training and employment assistance will be available for aboriginal people through the Aboriginal Workforce Development Centres.

**Who is eligible for a guaranteed training place?**

Australian citizens, permanent visa holders, and holders of visa subclasses 309, 310, 820, 826 and 851 are eligible to access government subsidised training in Western Australia. Spouses and dependents of the primary holder of a visa subclass 457 are also eligible.

There will be no restrictions based on a student’s previous level of awarded qualification or age, however, students will need to meet relevant course entry requirements.