National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform and VET FEE-HELP

Under the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform, reached at the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) meeting in April 2012, all states and territories agreed to the expansion of the income contingent loan scheme in the VET sector. VET FEE-HELP will be extended to state and territory government subsidised students across all states and territories over the next few years.

When does the extension commence?

States and territories that have implemented a national entitlement to a certificate III can extend VET FEE-HELP to eligible subsidised students in higher level qualifications. Approved VET FEE-HELP providers that are also approved to offer subsidised training in their state or territory can take advantage of this initiative. Check with your state or territory government.

What is an eligible subsidised student?

A student must be enrolled in a unit of study that contributes to a diploma or advanced diploma course for which the student’s enrolment is subsidised by a state or territory government.

The residency requirements to access VET FEE-HELP are the same for subsidised students as for fee for service students.

Subsidised students do not pay the 20% loan fee.

How do I prepare for the extension?

Tuition fees

VET FEE-HELP providers with state or territory government subsidised students will need to publish both the subsidised tuition fees and fee for service fee for all units of study it provides or proposes to provide prior to the earliest enrolment date for a unit of study. This information should be published on your website.

Payments

If you are an existing VET FEE-HELP provider and will be offering VET FEE-HELP to subsidised students in 2014 and have not included them in your payment estimate, you should submit a variation. This variation will need to include an estimate item for the eligible subsidised students. Please refer to the HITS User Guide at: www.education.gov.au/help-resources-providers

How do I report subsidised students?

VET FEE-HELP providers will be required to report subsidised student data in the same way as fee for service students. Element 490 (student status) has been updated to include the subsidised student codes for subsidising states.


Do all the same requirements apply?

Yes. All student protection measures and administrative requirements for students in subsidised places are the same as for other VET FEE-HELP students. For example, determining tuition fees and census dates, refunds, re-crediting a FEE-HELP balance in special circumstances tuition assurance, and grievance, fairness and equity provisions all apply.

Need more information?

VET providers with enquires about the extension of VET FEE-HELP to subsidised students can email TSEnquiries@education.gov.au.

To enquire about the allocation of training subsidies, VET FEE-HELP providers should contact individual state and territory governments.