

Smart and Skilled

SMART AND SKILLED UPDATE – NO. 284

31 July 2026

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1. NSW FEE FREE CONSTRUCTION (NFF-C) PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PART QUALIFICATIONS ARRANGEMENTS – JULY TO DECEMBER 2026

The NSW Fee Free Construction (NFF-C) Pre-Apprenticeship Part Qualifications program is **open until 31 December 2026**. NFF-C Pre Apprenticeship Part Qualifications Training Needs Identification (TNI) applications can now be submitted to the relevant Training Services Regional Office.

a. Intent of the NFF-C Pre-Apprenticeship Part Qualifications Program

The NFF-C Pre-Apprenticeship Part Qualifications Program is a joint Commonwealth and NSW government-funded initiative under the Fee Free TAFE Skills Agreement, providing students access to pre-apprenticeship/traineeship initiatives designed to give students an experience of working in construction-related trades. It aims to inform students' decisions around which building or construction apprenticeship/traineeship to pursue, improve their employability outcomes, and support their transition into the construction industry through an apprenticeship or traineeship pathway.

Places are still available for this program, and providers are encouraged to submit TNI applications while opportunities remain. Please note that TNIs for this program will not be accepted **after 31 December 2026**. **Providers can enrol students once a Provider Activity Schedule (PAS) has been accepted.**

2. AMENDMENTS TO THE NSW FEE FREE CONSTRUCTION PRE APPRENTICESHIP PART QUALIFICATIONS PROGRAM OPERATING GUIDELINES

The department advises that the *NSW Fee Free Construction Pre-Apprenticeship Part Qualifications Program Operating Guidelines* have been updated to Version 7 and are available on STS Online > Smart and Skilled Contract Management > Support Documents. A copy is also attached for providers' reference.

The major changes to these operating guidelines are reflected in the following Clauses:

i. **Clause 4.1 Date of Training**

This clause has been updated to reflect the enrolment period and activity period dates for this program. As this program will close on 31 December 2026, all students must be enrolled by 31 December 2026. Training can continue after this date.

ii. **Clause 4.2 Selecting UoCs**

The requirement that at least 50% of the Units of Competency (UoCs) listed on the TNI to be core units from the nominated construction apprenticeship/traineeship full qualification has been removed from the updated operating guidelines.

The updated (V7) operating guidelines provides additional flexibility for providers to select UoCs that match student and industry needs applicable to the apprenticeship/traineeship pathway outcome.

a. **Course Design/ UoCs for the NFF-C Pre-Apprenticeship Part Qualifications Program**

Courses and the selection of UoCs should be co-designed with industry and tailored to reflect regional construction needs. To ensure the intent of the program is achieved, Training Needs Identification (TNI) submissions must meet the following:

- UoCs must come from a construction apprenticeship/traineeship qualification relevant to construction sector (i.e. including housing and infrastructure);
- contain a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of six (6) units of competency;
- construction partnering/involvement in this pre-apprenticeship training program delivery (including, but not limited to, work placement, work experience, working with students during theory program delivery);
- when selecting a UoC with a pre-requisite, the pre-requisite must also be incorporated into the TNI.

b. **Submitting an NFF-C Pre Apprenticeship Part Qualifications Program TNI**

When submitting a TNI application, please select the relevant Target Group:

- for general students - '**NFF-C Pre App**', or
- for GTO supported NFF-C Pre-Apprenticeship Part Qualifications – '**NFF-C GTO Pre App**' Target Group, select the GTO Employer and select 'GTO Recruitment Program' for the GTO Program field on the TNI application.

Also, please select the relevant Program:

- Targeted Priorities Prevocational & Part Qualifications

Please ensure the TNI reflects the *2026-27 NSW Fee Free Construction Pre-Apprenticeship Part Qualifications Operating Guidelines v7* requirements.

c. Further information

For further information, contact your Training Services Regional Office or Regional Provider Support Manager (RPSM). Please refer to the *2026-27 NSW Fee Free Construction Pre-Apprenticeship Part Qualifications Operating Guidelines v7* attached.

3. UPDATE FOR NSW FEE FREE PROGRAMS (JULY – DECEMBER 2026)

Please note that NSW Fee Free Tranche 2 and NSW Fee Free Construction full qualification waivers for Semester 2 have not been exhausted and remain open.

The waiver details and progress against targets are shown below:

NSW Fee Free Programs	Waivers	% of places enrolled against target for Semester 2, 2026
NSW Fee Free Tranche 2 (NFF) - Jul to Dec 2026	W787: NFF Jul-Dec 2026 - General W788: NFF Jul-Dec 2026 - NSW Veterans W789: NFF Jul-Dec 2026 - NSW Veterans - Recognised Partners	56%
NSW Fee Free Construction (NFF-C) ONLY – Jul to Dec 2026 Full Qualification Places (excludes pre-apprenticeship places)	W790: NFF CONSTRUCTION Jul-Dec 2026 - General W791: NFF CONSTRUCTION Jul-Dec 2026 - NSW Veterans W792: NFF CONSTRUCTION Jul-Dec 2026 - NSW Veterans - Recognised Partners	93%

4. NSW SKILLS LIST UPDATED – VERSION 17.1

The NSW Skills List has been updated. This update covers changes because of:

- Updates to Training Packages
- Updates to Accredited courses
- Updates to Vocational Training Orders (VTOs)
- Correction of one concession fee.

Version 17.1 of the NSW Skills List is now available at:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/resources/nsw-skills-list>

Version 17.1 of the NSW Prices and Fees Schedule is now available at:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/resources/qualification-prices-fees>

a. Training Package updates affecting the NSW Skills List

The NSW Skills List has been updated due to changes affecting the following Training Packages:

- Australian Meat Processing
- Automotive Manufacturing
- Automotive Repair, Service and Retail
- Construction, Plumbing and Services
- Electrotechnology
- Furnishing
- Property Services

The following qualifications have been superseded due to training package updates and are outlined in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Qualifications superseded due to training package updates			
Qualification code	Qualification title	Replaced by code	Replaced by Qualification title
AUR21920	Certificate II in Automotive Tyre Servicing Technology	AUR21926	Certificate II in Automotive Tyre Servicing Technology
AUR32120	Certificate III in Automotive Body Repair Technology	AUR32126	Certificate III in Automotive Body Repair Technology

b. Accredited Course updates affecting the NSW Skills List

The following accredited courses have been replaced with new accredited courses and are outlined in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: Accredited courses replaced with new accredited courses			
Qualification code	Qualification title	Replaced by code	Replaced by Qualification title
11039NAT	Certificate II in Career Preparation	11377NAT	Certificate II in Career Preparation
10966NAT	Certificate IV in End of Life Doula Services	11440NAT	Certificate IV in End of Life Doula Services

c. VTO changes affecting the NSW Skills List

Following updates to NSW VTOs, a number of superseding qualifications can now be delivered under apprenticeship and traineeship pathways under Smart and Skilled. These qualifications are shown in **Table 3** below.

Table 3: VTO changes affecting superseding qualifications

Qualification code	Qualification name	Available pathway
AMP20126	Certificate II in Meat Processing	Traineeship and School Based Traineeship
AUM30226	Certificate III in Automotive Manufacturing Technical Operations – Bus, Truck and Trailer	Apprenticeship and School Based Apprenticeship
AUR21126	Certificate II in Automotive Sales	Traineeship
AUR31326	Certificate III in Automotive Engine Reconditioning	Apprenticeship
AUR31026	Certificate III in Automotive Sales	Apprenticeship and Traineeship
AUR32526	Certificate III in Automotive Underbody Technology	Apprenticeship
AUR30126	Certificate III in Automotive Administration	Apprenticeship
CPC30426	Certificate III in Demolition	Traineeship
CPP30226	Certificate III in Surveying and Spatial Information Services	Traineeship
CPP41126	Certificate IV in Home Energy Efficiency and Sustainability	Traineeship
MSF30926	Certificate III in Shading and Security Screens	Traineeship
UEE31025	Certificate III in Fire Protection Control	Apprenticeship

Following updates to NSW VTOs, there is one qualification pathway that has been deleted and is outlined in **Table 4** below.

Table 4: VTO changes affecting superseded qualifications

Qualification code	Qualification name	Pathway deleted
AMP20117	Certificate II in Meat Processing (Food Services)	Traineeship

d. Concession fee - correction

The following qualification outlined in **Table 5** below has a change to the concession fee.

Table 5: Qualification with concession fee updated

Qualification code	Qualification title	Previous fee	Updated Fee
UET20422	Certificate II in Transmission Line Construction	\$240	\$160

5. BUY THEM A CUPPA THIS NATIONAL SKILLS WEEK

Celebrate National Skills Week (24–30 August 2026) by buying a cuppa for an apprentice, trainee or school-based apprentice or trainee in your workplace and recognising the skills they bring to your team.

Share a photo or video of your cuppa catch-up using #SkillsNSW and #NationalSkillsWeek.

Unless otherwise directed in the information above, please refer enquiries regarding specific operational matters such as Financial Caps and programs/initiatives to your Regional Provider Support Manager.

Please contact Training Services Customer Service & Operations at TSCust.Service@det.nsw.edu.au for:

- technical support with issues such as system/information access and functionality and reporting
- further information for students or employers (unless otherwise directed).

Please note that this update is for the information of approved Smart and Skilled Providers only.