Questions and answers about the VET funding contract

This Q&A can help you understand more about what's expected under the VET funding contract (the contract) and guidelines, by answering your commonly asked questions. We also provide links to useful resources, such as fact sheets, websites, and documents that can befound in the Skills Victoria Training System (SVTS).

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Aboriginal Victorians

QUESTION	ANSWER
Is there any support for Aboriginal Victorians under Skills First?	Yes, Skills First includes the following support for students who self-identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent: • an increase of 50% to the subsidy paid to training providers (the 'Indigenous loading') • an entitlement to receive a fee waiver (the 'Skills First Aboriginal access fee waiver') at any qualification level (including diplomas and advanced diplomas). Additionally, TAFEs receive funding for the Koorie Education Programs initiative. This funding is to develop and deliver an implementation plan to meet the objectives of the Wurreker Strategy – a strategy that aims to improve education and training delivery for Koorie students.

Apprentices/trainees

QUESTION	ANSWER
Are there any additional requirements for enrolling an apprentice or trainee in Skills First?	Yes. Apprentices and trainees must meet additional criteria to get Skills First funding. They must be: • employed in Victoria • undertaking an approved training scheme • signed to a training contract with their employer, which is registered with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority. An apprentice or trainee's training plan must have some extra information including: • details about the employer (or school if it is a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship (SBAT)) • details about workplace-based training • signatures to show the endorsement of both the apprentice/trainee and their employer (and a representative from the school for an SBAT). Read the guidelines about apprenticeship/traineeship delivery for more information about delivery requirements, SBATs, the Head Start program and student support.
What should I do if an apprentice is referred to me for training, but a pre-training review suggests that training is not suitable and appropriate for them?	You must only enrol students in Skills First training that is suitable and appropriate for them. This includes apprentices. In some cases, you might identify adjustments to training or extra supports that would help a student to successfully complete their apprenticeship training. For example, supplementary foundation skills training. If you conclude that the training is not suitable and appropriate for the student, you should initiate communication between the student, the employer and the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) provider to discuss alternative pathways for the student.
What should I do if an employer won't give me written confirmation of an apprentice/trainee's competence even though they have completed all their supervised training and assessment?	You can't issue a qualification for an apprentice/trainee until the employer sends you written confirmation of their competence in the workplace. If all supervised training and assessment is complete, you can report outcome code 79 ('awaiting employer sign off') in SVTS. You will also need to change the activity end date in SVTS to a date in the future when you estimate that you may have the employer's sign off. If you can't resolve this with the employer, you could help the apprentice or trainee to contact the VRQA for advice on next steps.

Asylum seekers

QUESTION	ANSWER
Are asylum seekers eligible for Skills First funding?	Yes, asylum seekers may be eligible for Skills First funding through the Asylum Seeker VET Program. If an asylum seeker has a certain type of visa, they don't have to be an Australian or New Zealand citizen or permanent resident to access Skills First. Asylum seekers or victims of human trafficking can get this exemption if they either: • go to the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre or the Australian Red Cross and get a referral to training (this can be with any type of training provider) • enrol directly with you and show you evidence of their visa type through the Commonwealth visa entitlement verification online (VEVO), or you can check on their behalf if you're registered to use VEVO. Read the guidelines about eligibility for more information, including how to check that a student is eligible for this exemption.

Brokering services

QUESTION	ANSWER
What are brokering services?	Brokering services are a type of subcontracting where you engage a person or another organisation to recruit students into Skills First training, and either you or the student pays for this service. This doesn't include any activities carried out by your payroll employees whose job it is to identify and recruit students.
Can I use brokering services?	Yes, you can use brokering services, but you must: • follow the subcontracting requirements under the contract • report use of brokering services to us • publish a list of all the brokering services you use in an easy-to-find place on your website. We can ask you for details of all your brokering services at any time.
When should we report the use of brokering services?	You have 30 days from the start of your contract to report to us the details of all the brokering services you're using. After this, you must report all new brokering services to us within 30 days of making the agreement. You must use our reporting of brokering services form to tell us about a brokering service. This form is available in the documents section of SVTS.

Communications with CEO or equivalent

QUESTION	ANSWER
What should we do if our CEO is unavailable to respond to you?	It's important that we can communicate effectively with your CEO (or equivalent) as they play a critical role in overseeing your organisation's performance under the contract. In most instances, we can do this quickly and easily. But at times, your CEO will not be available. For example, they might be on leave. If your CEO will be unavailable for a prolonged time, you should arrange for a person with your CEO's delegated authority to carry out their responsibilities while they're absent and be available for any communications with us. This is to ensure you respond to our communications within a reasonable time.
Does the delegated authority need to be an acting CEO?	No. We simply need somebody we can contact who is authorised to carry out your CEO's responsibilities and communicate with us about your organisation's performance under the contract.

Change in control

QUESTION	ANSWER

What does 'control' mean when the contract talks about a change in control?	Control is when an individual or another organisation has sufficient capacity to have overall control of your training provider.
	This includes where they have any of the following:
	• legal, financial or equitable ownership of 50% or more of share capital
	• the ability to cast, or control the casting of, a majority of votes at a membership meeting
	• significant capacity to control either:
	    o who is on the board or other decision-making body
	    o decision-making about financial or operating policies without board or other governing body approval.
	Whether a person or organisation has 'control' of your training provider will depend on the company structure or governance arrangements you have in place. If in doubt, seek legal advice about your circumstances.
	Read the fact sheet: change in control and other significant changes for more information.

What is a change in control?	A change in control is when any individual or organisation will start to have, or will finish having, control over your training provider. So we can manage the risks that may arise, you must notify us of a change in control via SVTS immediately when you become aware of it, and at least 20 business days before it takes effect. You must: • tell us when the change will take effect • explain any changes it makes to the information you gave us when you first applied for your contract. We'll review what you tell us and consider the circumstances. We may take no further action or write back and ask you for more information. We may inform you that we object to a change in control. We can also object to a change in control if you haven't notified us, but we've learned about it another way, such as viewing the Australian securities and investment commission register. If you go ahead with a change in control that we object to, we can take enforcement action including terminating your contract. Read the fact sheet: change in control and other significant changes for more information.

Commencement allocation

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is a commencement?	A 'commencement' happens when we pay you any amount of funds for an enrolled student. Funds means the payment we make for training. If we later reverse funds or require you to refund or repay us, this will still be counted as a commencement for determining whether you have reached the limit of any commencement or program allocations. Commencement is also used to describe when a student has started training activity. You need to find out whether a student has commenced other training to assess their eligibility for the Skills First training they're enrolling in with you. Their previous commencements determine whether they've already used their Skills First entitlement.
What is a commencement allocation?	This is the total number of commencements we allow a training provider to deliver within a fixed period, usually a calendar year. This helps us to manage the overall budget for Skills First training. The commencement allocation is split into separate numbers of commencements for AQF qualifications and skill sets. You can't use your AQF commencements for skill sets, or vice versa. We may also make program allocations. These are limits on the amount of delivery in individual programs.
How do you decide my commencement allocation?	We ask all training providers to fill out a program delivery plan (PDP) for each program they want to deliver. The PDP includes details of the training and an estimate of student numbers. You must submit PDPs when you first apply for a Skills First contract and again before each new calendar year if the contract is a multi-year agreement. We combine data from all PDPs with other information, including information about Victoria's jobs and training needs, government priorities and individual training provider capability and capacity. We use this to decide how much training each individual training provider can deliver within the overall Skills First budget.
Can I ask for more commencements?	Yes, from time-to-time we may offer you the opportunity to apply for an increase to your commencement allocation. We will decide whether to approve each application by considering information about labour market need, your capacity and capability, and the overall budget for Skills First training. To request changes, submit an enquiry via SVTS.

Concession

QUESTION	ANSWER
Who can get a concession on tuition fees?	You must give a Skills First student a concession on their tuition fees if they hold a current and valid: • health care card issued by the Commonwealth • pensioner concession card • veteran's gold card. This applies to training at a certificate IV level or below and in skill sets. A student who is a dependant spouse or dependant child of a card holder is also entitled to a concession. Skills First students enrolled under the Asylum Seeker VET Program are also entitled to a concession for training at certificate IV level or below, or in a skill set, even if they don't have a concession card. Read the fact sheet: concessions for more information.
Is a student who holds a Commonwealth seniors health care card eligible for concession under Skills First?	No. We don't accept a Commonwealth seniors health care card as evidence of concession. The only forms of concession we accept are those listed in the guidelines about fees.
When do I have to check a student's concession card?	You must check a student's concession card before their training starts. Do this as part of the enrolment process. Once you've checked the student is entitled to a concession, as part of the enrolment, it applies to all tuition fees for the program. If you allow a grace period, you need to confirm that the concession was current on or before the date training started. Keep a record of this for audit or review. You must have a documented business process for how you apply a grace period. Read the fact sheet: concessions for more information
Can I still charge a concession rate if a student's entitlement will expire before they start their training or finish the program?	Yes. If you checked the student's concession as part of enrolment and it was current and valid at the time, it applies to all tuition fees for the program. This applies whether: • you don't charge all fees for the program in one instance (for example, you charge per year, semester or subject) • the card will expire before training starts • the card will expire before the program ends. For audit purposes, you should document the date you checked a student's concession entitlement to show it was current and valid at that point in time.

QUESTION	ANSWER
Should I keep a record of a student's customer reference number (CRN) on Commonwealth-issued concession cards?	No. **Don't** keep a copy of the CRN for the purpose of evidencing Skills First concession entitlement. Only keep a copy of the CRN if you must do so for other purposes, for example when using Centrelink confirmation e-services. This is because a CRN can't be changed if it is subject to a privacy breach, unlike other forms of identity evidence where a new card or document number can be issued.
How much can I charge a concession student?	You must not charge a concession student any more than 20% of your published standard tuition fee. The standard fee is the amount you'd charge a non-concession student in the same program at the same time.
Will you pay for the revenue we'll lose by having to charge a concession rate rather than our standard tuition fee?	We'll pay a contribution towards the revenue you lose when you must charge concession rates. This is called the fee concession contribution. We calculate the fee concession contribution by multiplying the scheduled hours you're entitled to be paid by whichever of these is lesser: • 4 times the hourly tuition fee paid by the student • the 'maximum fee concession contribution per hour' for the program in the funded programs report. Read the fact sheet: concessions and the fact sheet: payments under Skills First for more information.
Can I charge a reduced fee or no fees to a student who can't afford to pay tuition fees and doesn't have a concession card? And if so, will you pay a contribution for the lost revenue?	You can charge any student lower or zero tuition fees if you choose, for example, if they're in financial hardship. But we only pay a fee concession contribution if the student has a concession entitlement. This is because the government has decided the most appropriate way to identify students that need financial support is by those who hold a concession entitlement.
What should I do if a student becomes eligible for a concession after their program has started? Can I charge them a concession rate?	**If you don't charge all fees in once instance** If a student gets a new concession entitlement after their training starts, they can bring it to you, and you must give them the concession rate for any fees you haven't charged them yet. You must tell students about this opportunity to get a fee concession later. **If you charge all fees in one instance** If a student who paid all their fees at the start of their program gets a new concession entitlement, you can choose to apply the concession to any subjects they haven't yet started. Whether you choose to do this is at your discretion, and it should be included in your business process. Read the fact sheet: concessions for more information.

Contract variation

QUESTION	ANSWER
Can you change my Skills First contract during the term?	We will only change your contract after carefully considering the need for the change. We will give you as much advance notice of the change as possible. We might make a change: • where there is a legitimate need to protect the government interests and the change won't materially burden or disadvantage training providers • where there is a change in government policy • to ensure we're properly administering taxpayer's funds • to address external factors that have only become known after the contract started • where necessary to meet the jobs and skills needs of a sector of the Victorian economy or a geographic area of the state. For multi-year agreements, we sometimes make operational changes, for example if there are new government initiatives or to improve the contract in response to your feedback. We will tell you about a change to the contract either by a contract notification on SVTS or by writing to you directly.

Disallowed persons

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is a disallowed person?	Under Skills First, you must not engage, employ, contract, or otherwise deal with a disallowed person. An individual or registered training organisation (RTO) becomes disallowed if they are either: • subject to one of the events described in the definition of disallowed person • responsible for them by either their acts or omissions. For an individual to be disallowed, they must have been a relevant person at a training provider. This means someone at a sufficiently high level within an organisation to have exercised a material degree of control or influence over the management or direction of that organisation in relation to training delivery. Both RTOs and relevant persons at RTOs can become a disallowed person if, since 1 January 2011, the RTO has been subject to either: • a VET funding contract termination • a termination of any equivalent funding arrangement in another state or territory, or removal of Commonwealth approval to offer VET student loans. The termination must be for a performance reason under that contract or funding arrangement. For example, if a contract ends voluntarily, or a termination is applied to a group of RTOs for a government policy reason, these are not performance reasons. Read the fact sheet: disallowed persons for more information.
How do I know if somebody is a disallowed person?	We don't keep a list of disallowed persons. You must do your own due diligence when employing staff or entering contracts with individuals or organisations. This might include looking at various sources of information, such as information published by regulators about actions taken against other training providers. You might also look at our published list of contracts we've terminated. Read the fact sheet: disallowed persons for more information.

Electronic signature

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is an electronic action equivalent to a signature?	An electronic action equivalent to a signature is a way for someone to agree to or endorse information instead of using an ink-based signature on a piece of paper. You can use an electronic signature on a document required under your contract, but it must meet these conditions: • Identity – clearly identify the person undertaking the action • Consent – clearly indicate the person's agreement to the relevant information • Reliability – be as reliable as appropriate considering all the circumstances (including so at audit or review we can rely on the action as demonstrating the person's agreement). Read the fact sheet: using electronic signatures for more information.
What method should I use to collect an electronic action equivalent to a signature?	We expect you to have a business process for each situation where you collect signatures electronically. You must use a method that is proportionate to the risk associated with what is being agreed to or endorsed. Our fact sheet shows examples of how you could meet the expected standard for an electronic action equivalent to a signature for contract requirements. We don't specify what methods to use or endorse any electronic signature products. You should do your own research of products available. Read the fact sheet: using electronic signatures for more information.

Eligibility criteria

QUESTION	ANSWER
Who is eligible for Skills First funding?	To be eligible for Skills First funding, a student must be: • an Australian citizen or permanent resident, or a New Zealand citizen • physically present in Victoria or in a specified border region when they're doing training and assessment (unless they're temporarily overseas or interstate for an industry or practical placement, in which case they can do 50% of their total scheduled hours online). There are limits on the amount of subsidised training that a student can do. Read the fact sheet: student eligibility for Skills First for more information. The Victorian Skills Gateway has useful information for students about how to check their eligibility for Skills First. Refer to the guidelines about eligibility for the list of specified border region postcodes

QUESTION	ANSWER
Is there a limit on the amount of Skills First training students can do?	Yes, to encourage them to think carefully about what program is best for them and choose something they're more likely to complete. A student can't: • start more than 2 Skills First-subsidised skill sets in a year (the '2 skill sets in a year' rule) • start more than 2 Skills First-subsidised AQF qualifications in a year (the '2 AQF qualifications in a year' rule) • do more than 2 Skills First-subsidised programs (either skill sets or AQF qualifications) at the same time (the '2 at a time' rule) Some study is not counted when determining whether a student has reached these limits. Details are included in the guidelines about eligibility. Read the fact sheet: student eligibility for Skills First for more information. The Victorian Skills Gateway has useful information for students about how to check their eligibility for Skills First.

Eligibility exclusions

QUESTION	ANSWER
Are any there any students who aren't eligible for Skills First?	Yes. The following aren't eligible for Skills First funding: • students enrolled in a school (except if they're undertaking a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship (SBAT)) • prisoners held in a prison • persons detained under the Mental Health Act • persons detained in a youth justice facility. This is because there are other sources of government funding to support their training. However, a student can access Skills First if they are either on a community-based order under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 or are held in the Judy Lazarus transition centre and can attend training outside the centre without supervision.

Evidence of eligibility

QUESTION	ANSWER
How do I sight and retain evidence of eligibility?	You can sight evidence in a variety of forms, including originals, certified copies, using the Commonwealth government's document verification service (DVS) or looking at a digital version of a document. Make sure you check the guidelines about eligibility and read the fact sheet: sighting and retaining evidence of eligibility for more information about what you should retain in each case.
What do you accept as evidence of citizenship or permanent residence?	For Australian citizens, we accept: • Australian birth certificate (**not** birth extract) • current Australian passport • Australian citizenship certificate • current green Medicare card • Australian certificate of registration by descent. For New Zealand citizens, we accept: • current New Zealand passport • New Zealand birth certificate • New Zealand citizenship certificate • current green Medicare card. For permanent residents, we accept: • current green Medicare card • formal confirmation of permanent residence granted by the Department of Home Affairs **AND** the student's foreign passport or ImmiCard.

QUESTION	ANSWER
What should we do if a student doesn't have a document to prove they are eligible?	You must make all reasonable efforts to help the student prove their eligibility with one of the accepted documents. In exceptional circumstances, we may accept a proxy declaration. This might include where a student: • grew up in a remote location and their birth was not registered • is experiencing disadvantage or estrangement from family or guardians and they don't have access to identity documents. If the student is simply unwilling to bear the cost or inconvenience of obtaining documents, this won't be considered exceptional circumstances. You must submit an SVTS enquiry and ask us to approve your use of a proxy declaration. You should include any supporting information to make the case for the student. If we approve the proxy declaration, you must keep a copy of it and our approval. Read the fact sheet: sighting and retaining evidence of eligibility for more information.
Do I have to use your evidence of eligibility and student declaration form?	No. You can make your own version of this form, or you can customise the form for different types of enrolments, as long as you still gather all relevant information to assess eligibility.
If I've checked a student's citizenship once, do I have to check again if the student enrols in another program with us?	No. You can keep evidence of a student's citizenship on file if you collected it for one enrolment and use it again for the next enrolment, provided the evidence has not expired by the time the next enrolment happens. Though the transaction does not include the expiry date of the evidence verified, you can rely on evidence of eligibility verified through the DVS without retaining the expiry date for subsequent enrolments that occur within the same calendar year as the original DVS check. Read the fact sheet: sighting and retaining evidence of eligibility for more information.
What if a student objects to us retaining their evidence of eligibility?	If a student objects to you retaining their evidence of eligibility for privacy reasons, you should try to reassure them by explaining your privacy measures. If a student continues to object to you retaining their personal information for privacy reasons, you can sight their evidence without retaining it. Instead of keeping a copy of their document, you must prepare a written declaration that you have sighted it. This must only be done if a student has specifically raised a privacy concern with you and remains concerned after you have made all reasonable attempts to reassure them of your privacy measures. Read the fact sheet: sighting and retaining evidence of eligibility for more information.

Evidence of participation

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is evidence of participation?	Under Skills First, you must keep evidence to prove to us that each student participated in their learning and assessment. This is called evidence of participation (EOP). It is a form of funding assurance you give us to support your claims for payment for Skills First funding. Read the fact sheet: evidence of participation for more information.
What forms of EOP do you accept?	We only accept these items as EOP: • evidence of work submitted • Skills First teacher notes • attendance rolls • evidence of assessment • login and engagement evidence • flexible and distance learning records • a statutory declaration (in exceptional circumstances). You must meet certain requirements for each form of EOP. These are listed in clause 9.7 (a)–(g) of Schedule 1 of the contract. Read the fact sheet: evidence of participation for more information.

QUESTION	ANSWER

How many items of EOP do I have to collect for each subject?	The number of EOP items you are required to keep depends on the subject.
	If the subject:
	• is 30 days duration or fewer, you must keep 1 item of EOP.
	• is more than 30 days duration, you must keep 2 items of EOP where:
	    ○ the first is no later than 30 days after the activity start date (and no earlier than it)
	    ○ the second is evidence of assessment for the subject.
	• has an RPL outcome, you must keep 1 item of EOP, which must be evidence of assessment for the subject, regardless of the duration.
	• has a withdrawn outcome, you must keep 1 point of EOP, regardless of the duration
	• is delivered under the Literacy and Numeracy Support program (TAFEs and dual sector providers only), you must keep 1 item of EOP, regardless of the duration.
	Read the fact sheet: evidence of participation for more information.

Can I use an attendance roll for EOP if I use clustered delivery?	Yes, if the attendance roll shows clearly what subjects were delivered in the lesson. We may ask for additional evidence to show what subjects were delivered in each training session, such as a delivery schedule (a timetable, lesson plan or equivalent) to verify that the attendance roll provides sufficient EOP. Read the fact sheet: evidence of participation for more information.

Fees

QUESTION	ANSWER
Is there help available under Skills First for students who can't afford to pay any tuition fees?	Yes. The government supports some students who may be in hardship through fee waivers. When there's a fee waiver in place, you can't charge a tuition fee. There are also fee waivers to support priority cohorts or encourage students to train in priority programs. Check the guidelines about fees for the conditions a student must meet to get a fee waiver, and any evidence you must keep of their entitlement. The current fee waivers available under Skills First are for students: • from the Judy Lazarus transition centre • referred to training under conditions of a community-based order made under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 • referred to training under the Skills First Youth Access Initiative and are training at a TAFE or learn local organisation • doing Free TAFE priority courses or short courses • who self-identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island descent.
If I can't charge a tuition fee because there is a fee waiver, do you provide any funding to make up for lost revenue?	Yes, we pay a contribution toward the revenue you lose by charging zero tuition fees when there is a fee waiver in place. This is called the fee waiver contribution.
How do you calculate the fee waiver contribution when I grant a fee waiver?	In general, we calculate the fee waiver contribution by multiplying: • the fee waiver contribution per hour for the program as found in the funded programs report by • the number of scheduled hours the training provider is entitled to be paid contact hour funds for that student in that program. This calculation can vary slightly for different types of fee waivers. For example, fee waiver contributions paid under the Free TAFE for priority courses initiative are calculated using the Free TAFE contribution per hour for the program as found in the Free TAFE fee waiver reimbursement schedule. Read the fact sheet: payments under Skills First for more information.
Can I charge a student no tuition fees?	Yes, there are no minimum tuition fees under Skills First. But, we only pay you for the revenue you lose if you're applying a mandatory fee waiver. This is because the government has decided on the industries and student cohorts it wants to support through fee waivers to help build the future jobs and skills Victoria needs.

Foundation skills

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is a foundation skills program?	Foundation skills are a group of programs that focus primarily on skills in language, literacy and numeracy. They are separated into 3 domains: • A (general education, vocational pathways and literacy and numeracy) • B (English as an additional language and related programs) • C (disability-specific programs). You can only deliver these programs if you have been through our additional quality assurance process and are added to the foundation skills approved provider list. You may be approved to deliver in one or more of these domains.
What is the foundation skills approved provider list?	The foundation skills approved provider list is a list of the training providers we've quality assured and approved to deliver foundation skills programs under Skills First.
How do I get added to the foundation skills approved provider list?	You can only be added to the foundation skills approved provider list by taking part in our quality assurance application process We usually make an application process available as part of the provider selection process.
Can a student get Skills First funding to repeat a foundation skills program?	The student might be eligible to repeat in the same program. However, students are not eligible for Skills First in foundation skills if they hold an AQF level 5 (diploma) or higher qualification or are in the Commonwealth's Skills for Education and Employment program. You must also clearly document why an enrolment in Skills First is the most suitable training option for the student and will give them additional relevant competencies. This could include documents provided by a medical professional or the student's employer to explain why re-training is necessary.

Funded programs report

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is the funded programs report?	The funded programs report (available on SVTS) contains detailed information about the programs that are subsidised under Skills First. The funded programs report includes information about program types (skill set or AQF qualification), subsidised training end dates and subsidy rates for different commencement periods. It also includes funding information about superseded programs that continue to be funded under Skills First during their transition period, even though they are no longer listed on the training needs list. We use the information in the funded programs report to determine payment of funds for training that's delivered under Skills First. We also publish the training needs list. This also lists the programs we fund, but with less of the detail in the funded programs report. It also includes an indication of the level of demand for each program.

Funded scope

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is funded scope?	Funded scope is the name for the specific programs that an individual training provider can deliver under their Skills First contract.
How do you decide what goes on a training provider's funded scope?	Funded scope is not restricted for TAFEs and dual sector universities. So, if a program is on both your scope of registration and our training needs list, then it is automatically added to your funded scope. For all other training providers, we determine funded scope based on our assessment of the PDPs training providers submit during the process of entering a Skills First contract. A program must be both on your scope of registration when you apply for a Skills First contract and on the training needs list.
Can I add to my funded scope after I accept a Skills First contract?	Yes, we may open a process where you can apply to add new programs to your funded scope and will notify you about how this works. We decide whether new programs can be added by examining issues such as Victoria's labour market needs, individual training provider capacity and capability, and the overall budget for Skills First training.

Funds

QUESTION	ANSWER
What are funds under Skills First?	Funds means the payment we make to you under the contract, including for hours of training, any fee concession contributions, fee waiver contributions and special initiatives. Read the fact sheet: payments under Skills First for more information.

Guidelines

QUESTION	ANSWER
What are the guidelines under Skills First?	The guidelines are documents we issue that provide operational information about contract requirements. We publish 3 guidelines: • guidelines about eligibility describe the requirements you must apply when assessing and evidencing a student's eligibility for Skills First. • guidelines about fees describe the requirements about fees, and the financial and accountability requirements for fees for Skills First training. • guidelines about apprenticeship/traineeship training delivery detail the additional requirements you must apply when delivering Skills First training to apprentices and trainees.

Home-schooled students

QUESTION	ANSWER
Are home-schooled students eligible for Skills First funding?	No. Students enrolled in home-schooling aren't eligible for Skills First funding.
Can a home-schooled student do a SBAT and get Skills First funding?	No. Home-schooled students can't do a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship (SBAT) and get Skills First funding. This is because SBATs can only be done as part of a senior secondary program delivered by a registered senior secondary provider. Parents or guardians who home-school can't be registered as senior secondary providers and so aren't able to be accredited to deliver SBATs.

Maximum payable hours

QUESTION	ANSWER
What are maximum payable hours?	These are the maximum number of hours that we will pay contact hour funds for a program delivered under Skills First. The maximum payable hours for each program are listed on the funded programs report.

Notices

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is a notice?	A notice is a formal communication between us and any training provider with a Skills First contract. We can issue notices to you or vice versa. When a communication is defined in the contract as a notice, it must be made in writing and signed by the party giving it (including by electronic signatures). Notices can be emailed, hand delivered, or posted via prepaid priority post.

Notification of events

QUESTION	ANSWER
What events must I tell you about?	You must notify us of certain events that might result in a risk for us, which are listed in clause 7 of the contract. For example, you must tell us if there is a change in control in your organisation. A change in control means that any person or organisation will start to have, or will finish having, control over your training provider. You must also notify us via SVTS about: • changes to ownership • changes to your CEO, or any other person who holds an equivalent position to a CEO • terminations of other VET funding arrangements, including within your training provider group, such as interstate funding contracts • changes to your operations, including your financial viability, or if you've decided to stop operating as a registered training organisation in Victoria. Read the fact sheet: change in control and other significant changes for more information.

Online training and assessment

QUESTION	ANSWER
Are there any specific Skills First requirements for online training and assessment?	Yes. When you deliver online training and assessment, you must: • consider a student's digital capability • provide learning materials that meet the high-level principles of the W3C guidance on the web content accessibility guidelines, so that all learning materials are presented in a manner that is perceivable, operable, understandable and robust. Read the fact sheet: quality in online delivery for more information.

Overseas qualifications

QUESTION	ANSWER
Are overseas qualifications relevant to Skills First eligibility?	Overseas qualifications are only relevant to assessing Skills first eligibility if the student is enrolling in a foundation skills program. Students are not eligible for Skills First in foundation skills programs if they hold an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level 5 (diploma) or higher qualification. So, if an overseas qualification held by the student has been formally assessed to be equivalent to a diploma level or above in the AQF, they're not eligible to enrol in the foundation skills program. You only need to consider overseas qualifications if they have already been formally assessed to be equivalent to a level in the AQF – you don't need to request that an assessment be done. You'll need to check with the student whether they have had an educational institution deem the overseas qualification to be equivalent to a level in the AQF. Educational institutions use a process that involves detailed matching of content and learning outcomes between different types of qualifications. This is different to the processes used to assess overseas qualifications for migration and employment purposes. Read the fact sheet: student eligibility for Skills First for more information.

Physical presence requirement

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is the 'physical presence' requirement?	It is government policy that students must always be physically present in Victoria, or in a specified border region, when they are doing their training and assessment. This applies regardless of the mode of delivery. The only exception to this is where a student is doing an industry or practical placement and is temporarily located interstate or overseas for a defined period, in which case no more than 50% of the total scheduled hours can be online training and assessment during this period. The physical presence requirement ensures that Skills First funding is for Victorian students and is delivered to benefit the Victorian economy. Each state offers its own subsidies for training. Interstate students can access funding from their own state government. But we support training for students that live or work close to an interstate border. They can get Skills First funding if they cross the border into Victoria to do their training or if they are in a specified border region. Refer to the guidelines about eligibility for the list of specified border region postcodes.
Can a student who lives interstate access Skills First funding?	Yes, students don't have to live or work in Victoria to access Skills First funding. Students can cross the state border and access Skills First funding, but they must always be physically present in Victoria, or in a specified border region, when they're doing training and assessment. There may be times where interstate students living in a border region might prefer to train with a Victorian training provider. For example, if they are employed in Victoria, or the program is not offered in their home state. The only exception is that apprentices and trainees must be employed in Victoria to receive Skills First funding. Refer to the guidelines about eligibility for the list of specified border region postcodes.

Practical placement

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is a practical placement?	A practical placement is when a student goes into a workplace to develop or reinforce skills relevant to their Skills First training. This can be either with a host employer or the student's own employer. This includes both a placement that is required as part of a program, or a placement that the student does voluntarily. A practical placement is not formal training or assessment – it is an opportunity for a student to practice and consolidate skills. However, at times a teacher might attend the workplace to deliver some training and assessment while the student is doing their practical placement.
What is a practical placement agreement?	A practical placement agreement is an agreement between a student, training provider and employer/host employer that contains important information about the placement, such as each person's rights and obligations. You need a written practical placement agreement any time a student is placed in a workplace to develop or reinforce skills relevant to their Skills First training. This also applies to practical placements: • that are voluntary • that are mandated practical placements as part of a training package or program requirements • with the student's own employer • with a host employer. A written agreement is necessary should a student need to make an insurance claim for an injury sustained at the host workplace, so it is important that it is put in place for every student undertaking a practical placement. Read the practical placement guidelines for more information.

QUESTION	ANSWER
What should be covered in a practical placement agreement?	A written practical placement agreement is between you, the student and the organisation hosting the placement. You must include enough information so that everyone is aware of what will happen during the placement. You must explain what insurance coverage is given to the student. Read the practical placement guidelines for more information. The minimum information you must include in a practical placement agreement is: • the rights and obligations of the student, training provider and organisation hosting the placement • the program being studied and what skills are to be developed or reinforced • the location and address of the placement • the start and finish dates, and the total length of the placement. You also need to make sure that the placement sufficiently and appropriately meets the vocational outcomes of the subjects it relates to. For interstate placements, make sure the written practical placement agreement states that: • the student is enrolled with a training provider in Victoria • most of the work (in this case completion of the qualification) is connected to Victoria • the interstate practical placement is no longer than 6 months.

Pre-training review

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is a pre-training review?	A pre-training review is the process you must follow with each student to decide if the training is suitable and appropriate for them. This includes deciding which is the most suitable and appropriate program if the student is considering a number of options. You must have a clear and documented business process for how you will do pre-training reviews and it must be consistent with the Skills First objectives. You must also document how you determined a program was suitable and appropriate for each student that you enrol.
Why must I do a pre-training review?	The pre-training review is a fundamental component of Skills First. It ensures that training both meets the student's needs and the Skills First objectives that training will lead to a job, further study or access to learning for those experiencing disadvantage.
When do I have to conduct a pre-training review?	You must do a pre-training review either as part of enrolment or before the student starts training.
What do I have to consider as part of a pre-training review?	When you do a pre-training review, you must consider: • the student's objectives for training and whether the development of new competencies and skills is likely to result in a job or an option for further study • whether the student has previously acquired competencies (including through RPL, recognition of current competencies or credit transfer) • the student's existing educational attainment and capabilities, literacy and numeracy skills, and digital capability (if the program includes portions of online training and assessment) • whether the proposed learning strategies (including online training and assessment) and materials are appropriate for the student, and whether any steps need to be taken to help them overcome any barriers. You can use our optional Skills First pre-training review template from the documents section of SVTS to help you record the review. It will help you understand all the considerations involved and why they are important. Read the fact sheet: how to consider literacy and numeracy skills for more information.
Do I have to do a formal literacy and numeracy test as part of a pre-training review?	No. You must consider a student's literacy and numeracy as part of the pre-training review, but you don't have to use a formal test. You should make a professional judgement about what is the best way to consider a student's literacy and numeracy. But you must ensure the way you consider literacy and numeracy gives you enough information about each student to decide if the training is appropriate for them. You must also make sure you consider any specific requirements for literacy and numeracy levels set out in training packages and entry requirements for programs. Read the fact sheet: how to consider literacy and numeracy skills for more information.
Do I have to conduct a new pre-training review for a student who returns to resume their training in the same program or in the superseding version of a program?	In most cases, you don't have to do a new pre-training review if a student who took a break from study returns to you to restart training in the same program or in the superseding version of that program. But, sometimes you should reconsider whether the training is suitable and appropriate for the student. For example, a student who has had a particularly long absence from training may have lost previous competencies. Similarly, the new learning strategies and materials in a superseding version of a program may be unsuitable for a student. If your review identifies substantial differences in the student's abilities and what is required of them, you may need to think about whether they need any extra support to succeed.

QUESTION	ANSWER
Can we use information from the student's pre-training review to enrol them in another program?	Yes, you can use some of the information your organisation has already collected about a student in a previous pre-training review, if it is still current and relevant. But you still need to make sure the new training is suitable and appropriate for the student.
Do I still need to do a pre-training review for apprentices and trainees when they've already agreed with their employer about what program to do?	Yes. You must do a pre-training review for an apprentice or trainee even if they and their employer has decided what program they will do. You must make your own decision about whether the training is suitable and appropriate for them. The review also helps you to decide whether the apprentice or trainee needs extra support or adjustments to help them to succeed in their training. If you conclude that the training is not suitable and appropriate for the student, you should initiate communication between the student, the employer and the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) provider to discuss alternative pathways for the student.
Is there a pre-training review template?	Yes. We've published an optional Skills First pre-training review template in the documents section of SVTS. You can choose to use and customise the template to your needs or use only parts of it. You are welcome to take ideas from it to improve your organisation's own templates and business processes. It isn't mandatory to use it.

Program allocation

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is a program allocation?	A program allocation is a maximum number of commencements that can be delivered in a specific program. A program allocation can be made to apply across the whole market or for an individual training provider. Program allocations allow us to reduce the potential oversupply of training in any individual program and ensures that training is aligned to jobs and skills needs and Victorian government priorities. We also apply commencement allocations when we offer contracts. This puts a limit on the total number of commencements you can have within a specified period.
How do you set a program allocation?	We use your program delivery plans (PDPs) to set program allocations. Your PDPs tell us what training you want to deliver and how many students you think you'll be able to train. We analyse the data from all the submitted PDPs, to decide if there is a risk of oversupply in a particular program and whether to limit the amount of training in a program that can be delivered under Skills First. In reaching this decision, we consider Victoria's jobs and training needs, Victorian government priorities and individual training provider capability and capacity.
Can I increase my program allocation?	Sometimes we'll remove the limit placed on the delivery of a program or offer a process for you to apply for an increase to a program allocations. When we evaluate an application to increase a program allocation, we'll consider issues such as labour market needs, Victorian government priorities and individual training provider capacity and capability.

Program delivery plans

QUESTION	ANSWER
What's a program delivery plan (PDP)?	A PDP is a document you must fill out with details of the training you want to deliver in the coming year and an estimate of how many students you think you'll be able to train. We use this to guide our decisions about commencement allocations and program allocations. You must submit your PDPs when you first apply for a Skills First contract and then again prior to each additional calendar year if the contract is a multi-year agreement.

Recordkeeping

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is a record under the contract?	A record is any document within the meaning of the Evidence Act 2008 (Vic) that a training provider or staff produces or gains possession of in the course of performing its obligations under the contract. Some examples are: • evidence to support your claim for payment, such as evidence of eligibility, evidence of participation, evidence of a student's entitlement to a concession or fee waiver or evidence of the pre-training review • evidence that training and assessment was appropriate and of high quality • information about Skills First teachers • quotes, invoices and receipts to subcontractors and other third parties • bank statements to confirm fee payment. Read the fact sheet: recordkeeping requirements for more information.

QUESTION	ANSWER
How long do I have to keep records under the VET funding contract?	You must keep a record for 3 years after the student completes or withdraws from their program. But sometimes we may ask you to keep a record for longer. Also, we can ask you to start keeping a record you are not currently keeping, if we think this is necessary. Remember that, aside from being required under the contract, you may need to retain records for longer if required to do so by any applicable law or standard. Read the fact sheet: recordkeeping requirements for more information.
What should I do with records when I don't need to keep them any more?	Dispose of records when they are no longer required. You must have a process to dispose of records with personal information that identifies a student, promptly and securely. Before disposing of records check whether you still need to keep them for regulatory or other legal reasons.

Recognition of prior learning

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is recognition of prior learning (RPL)?	RPL is a process of assessing a student's existing competency—acquired through formal and informal learning—to determine if they already meet the requirements for a subject they want to enrol in. Under Skills First, RPL is considered part of the training and assessment you deliver to students. This is because RPL involves you undertaking a rigorous assessment of whether a student has formally or informally achieved the required learning and competency outcomes of a program or part of a program.
Can I claim funds for RPL?	You can claim for RPL if: • an RPL subsidy appears on the funded programs report for the program; and • you keep evidence of participation as you would for other training and assessment. You can't claim for credit transfer and recognition of current competency (RCC) under Skills First. Credit transfer and RCC are about recognising the formal study the student has successfully completed in the past. This is different to undertaking a rigorous RPL assessment. However, we consider credit transfer and RCC to be training services under which we pay Skills First funding to contribute to their cost.

Skill sets

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is a skill set?	Skill sets are programs on the funded skill set list, and may include: • programs with the title 'course in….' • a skill set from a training package • an accredited single subject • a group of accredited subjects. They are industry-validated short courses that responds to skills shortages and workforce demands. Read the fact sheet: understanding skill sets for more information.
Can a student get Skills First funding for skill sets?	Yes, a student can get Skills First funding for skill sets on the training needs list. Students need to meet the usual Skills First eligibility requirements to enrol in a skill set. Read the fact sheet: understanding skill sets for more information.

Skills First objectives

QUESTION	ANSWER

What are the objectives of the Skills First program?	These are the key goals of the Skills First program. You must apply them in your delivery of training services, which must be:
	• high quality and relevant to industry and employers
	• provided to Skills First students to:
	  o enable them to get the skills they need to make them job-ready
	  o help them to undertake further education
	  o promote and enable participation in training for disadvantaged learners
	• provided by the training provider in the best interests of Skills First students.
	You must behave in a way that upholds these objectives.
	You must perform your contractual obligations consistently with these objectives, in a manner that promotes their achievement, and apply them to resolve ambiguities in how the contract is interpreted. However, this must not limit or be inconsistent with any of your obligations or our rights or powers.
	The Skills First quality charter explains what we expect from you when providing key aspects of training services under the contract.

Skills First teacher

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is a Skills First teacher?	Skills First teacher is the term used in the contract for a person who delivers training or assessment. Only Skills First teachers with the qualifications and experience set out in regulatory requirements can deliver Skills First training and assessment.

Special initiatives

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is a special initiative?	A special initiative is additional funding we give to training providers for government priorities. This may be in the form of grants or extra subsidies. These are documented in a separate schedule to your contract.

Statement of fees

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is a statement of fees?	The statement of fees is a document that sets out fee and other information for students. You must give it to students before they start their training. The statement provides the student with: • the code, title and currency of the program they are enrolling in • the cost of the program, including if they will get a concession or fee waiver • approximately how much the government will contribute to their training • other applicable fees, such as student services fees. You must give students a statement of fees before they start their training.
How do I calculate hourly tuition fees?	You calculate the hourly tuition fee by dividing the tuition fee you charged the student by the number of scheduled hours of supervised training and assessment. This is known as the contact hours. This amount is reported in cents in the client tuition fee field in your training activity NAT00120 file. Read the fact sheet: payments under Skills First for more information.
Do I need to give a student a statement of fees if someone else, such as their employer, is paying their tuition fees?	Yes. You must give students a statement of fees regardless of who is paying for the training. It gives the student information about the cost of their training and how much the government is contributing to it.

Student information

QUESTION	ANSWER
What information should I give students about their Skills First training?	You must give students certain information as they move from prospective students through to completing their Skills First training. This includes maintaining an up-to-date profile on the Victorian Skills Gateway, not offering enrolment incentives, explaining how accessing Skills First training will affect their future entitlement, and giving them a statement of fees. Read the fact sheet: student information and protection for more details about the types of information you must provide.

Students under 17

QUESTION	ANSWER
Can I enrol a student under 17 in Skills First training?	Yes, you can enrol a student under 17 in Skills First training, but only if they have been given an exemption from school attendance to attend training. Students under 17 who are still enrolled in school and doing a Skills First-funded school-based apprenticeship or traineeship (SBAT) don't need an exemption. Students under 17 who have a year 12 or an equivalent qualification also don't need an exemption. Read the fact sheet: enrolling students under 17 for more information.
How can a student who is under 17 get an exemption from school attendance to undertake Skills First training?	Schools usually manage student exemptions. The process for getting an exemption involves the school, the student and their parents or carers. You don't have a formal role in this process, but you should advise the school or parents/carers about suitable and appropriate training options for the student. For example, you can choose to do all or part of a pre-training review with the student so that you can provide a letter of offer that explains why the training would be suitable and appropriate for the student. This will help the school principal or the department regional director decide whether enrolment in training is in the student's best interests. You can't ask for an exemption on a student's behalf. Read the fact sheet: enrolling students under 17 for more information.
What exemption documents should I sight and retain?	Before enrolling a student who will be under 17 when their training starts, you must sight and retain a copy of their exemption from school attendance. You must not enrol a student who cannot provide evidence of their exemption. The evidence of exemption you need to sight and retain is different depending on whether the student has completed year 10 or is not currently nor ever been enrolled in a Victorian school, such as having been home-schooled students or those from overseas or interstate. Our fact sheet: enrolling students under 17 explains what exemption documents you must check, sight and retain before enrolling a student under 17.
What happens when a student with an exemption wants to change program or training provider?	If a student still under 17 wants to change their program or move training provider, this change must be formally approved by the original approver of the exemption from school attendance − either the school principal or the department regional director. You must sight and retain confirmation of the change before enrolling them. Read the fact sheet: enrolling students under 17 for more information.
What should I do if a student still under 17 stops attending or completes training?	You must notify the department's regional office and the student's previous school if the student stops attending, disengages from, or completes their training – and is still under 17. They will help the student resume school or start another full-time education, training or employment pathway. Our fact sheet: enrolling students under 17 has contact details for the Youth Pathways and Transitions teams at all regional offices.
If a student turns 17 by the time their training starts, do I still have to sight and retain evidence of an exemption from school attendance?	No. If the student will be 17 years old when their training starts, you don't have to sight and retain evidence of an exemption from school attendance. Read the fact sheet: enrolling students under 17 for more information.

Subcontracting

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is subcontracting?	Under Skills First, subcontracting is when you engage either a business, or a person operating under a business structure, to carry out training services on your behalf.

QUESTION	ANSWER
Can I subcontract training services?	Yes, you can subcontract any of the training services you provide under the contract, except for the pre-training review. Some types of subcontracting have specific requirements. **Subcontracting training and assessment** You must get our written approval before you subcontract training and assessment. We'll inform you about the process to apply to subcontract training and assessment. You must demonstrate that the proposed subcontracting arrangement is genuine and specialised, limited, and has appropriate governance in place. If we approve your subcontracting of training and assessment, you must meet extra conditions. This includes making it clear to students that they are enrolled to do their training with you and not the subcontractor. **Sole traders** You do not need our approval to directly engage a genuine sole trader to do training or assessment. A sole trader operates as an individual under a sole trader business structure, rather than through any company or other corporate or legal structure. If they hold an Australian business number (ABN), this must be in their personal capacity. You must get our written approval before subcontracting to these business structures, because they are **not** sole traders: • company • trust • partnership • body corporate • body politic • partnership • incorporated or unincorporated association. **Brokering Services** You must report to us your use of brokering services (subcontracting where you pay a third party to recruit students) and publish information about these services on your website. **Subcontracting other training services** You don't need our approval to subcontract other aspects of training services, such as administrative tasks or marketing. But you must still follow all the subcontracting rules set out in your Skills First contract.
What do I put in a subcontracting agreement?	Your subcontracting agreement for training services must include conditions that: • clearly detail exactly what the subcontractor is being asked to do • prevent the subcontractor from subcontracting to someone else • require the subcontractor to provide any information, documentation or assistance that may be required under your contract, such as records of training services • require the subcontractor to cooperate with any audits or investigations • allow you to terminate the agreement immediately if your subcontractor holds a Skills First contract and has it terminated • allow you to suspend or terminate the subcontracting agreement immediately without notice if your contract is suspended or terminated. We can ask you for a copy of any executed subcontracting agreement.

Training and assessment strategy

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is a training and assessment strategy (TAS)?	A TAS is the plan for delivering a particular program. It must be tailored to the particular cohorts of students the program will be delivered to. The TAS must document how you will meet the needs of each student cohort within each Skills First-funded program. The TAS must cover particular things. For example, if you plan to deliver a program in a shorter time than set out in the AQF, you need to justify this in the TAS based on the cohort of students. Regardless of whether you're registered with ASQA or VRQA, you should develop your TAS in line with the national standards for RTOs 2015 and users' guide.

Training needs list

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is the training needs list?	The training needs list is the list of programs we subsidise under the Skills First program. It replaces the funded course list, funded skills set list and the jobs and training needs portal by combining them into one resource. It shows the demand for training by program and region based on industry needs, workforce demands, outcomes for students, government priorities and social needs.

Training plan

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is a training plan?	You must create a training plan that explains your obligations and the student's commitments to their training and assessment. It should include information about how much training, when, how and by whom. It must align to your training and assessment strategy, or you must document and justify why it doesn't. For apprentices and trainees, the training plan is developed with the employer, and also reflects their obligations. The plan is used to track the apprentice or trainee's progress as they achieve competencies, and to keep them and their employers up to date on this progress.
What do I have to put in a training plan?	**For students who aren't an apprentice or trainee** If your student is **not** an apprentice or trainee, then the training plan must include the: • name and contact details of the training provider • title and code of the program • expected duration of the program • title and code for each subject to be completed as part of the program • scheduled hours for each subject • timeframe for each subject including the start date and end date of each subject • delivery modes to be used for each subject • methods of assessment for each subject • persons responsible for the delivery and assessment of each subject (if this information is not available when you first give the student their training plan, it must be made available as soon as is reasonably practicable) • record of any RPL and credit transfer hours granted. **For apprentices and trainees** If your student **is** an apprentice or trainee, the training plan must also include the: • name and contact details of the training provider representative, employer and apprentice or trainee and, for school-based apprentices or trainees, the school's representative • timeframes for each subject including the start dates and end dates, and the actual dates if training has already started • delivery modes, detailed training activities and persons responsible for any workplace-based structured training and off-the-job structured training (if this information is not available when you first give the student their training plan, it must be made available as soon as is reasonably practicable) • time allocated for structured training outside routine work duties • any other specific requirements to be met in accordance with the training contract or the approved training scheme.
When should I give a student a training plan?	You must develop a training plan for each Skills First student for each program they are enrolled in. You can either give the training plan to the student before their training starts, or within 4 weeks after their training commencement date.
Does a training plan need to be signed?	For apprentices and trainees, the employer and the apprentice or trainee need to sign the training plan. If the training plan is for a school-based apprentice or trainee, it also needs to be signed by a school representative. For a non-apprentice or trainee who is doing training that takes place in their own workplace where they are an employee, the employer that manages and controls that workplace must also agree to and sign the training plan. You can have a training plan signed using electronic signatures. Read the fact sheet: using electronic signatures for more information.
Can a training plan be one document, separate documents or incorporated into an online learning management system?	For apprentices and trainees, the training plan must be in a single document. This makes it easier to make sure the apprentice or trainee and their employer have the same information, including information on the progress in gaining competencies. The training plan can be in electronic form. For students who are not apprentices or trainees, the training plan does not have to be in a single document. The information can be spread across multiple documents such as timetables, subject guides and enrolment summaries. The information can be provided to the student via an online learning management system. Your organisation must have a clear and documented business process that shows how the training plan is authorised and how it is made available to each non-apprentice or trainee student.

QUESTION	ANSWER
Why are there different timeframes for developing training plans and signing a training contract?	This is because the training plan is about what training providers need to do for students and the training contract mostly concerns the employers' obligations to their apprentices or trainees. Your obligation is to ensure the training plan is developed within 4 weeks after the student's training starts. The employers' obligation is to ensure their apprentice or trainee is enrolled with a training provider and has a training plan signed within 3 months of the start of the training contract (or 2 months for school-based arrangements). You must ensure that the student's enrolment and planning timeframes don't prevent the employer from meeting their obligation. However, you haven't failed to meet your responsibility if an employer doesn't engage with you until the 3-month period is almost finished.

Training services

QUESTION	ANSWER
What are training services?	Training services is the name given to all training-related activities that you might carry out under your contract. It includes: • advertising and marketing programs to students • giving students information about program offerings, fees, support and how training will affect their future access to Skills First funding • doing the pre-training review • testing whether students are eligible for Skills First funding and any concession or fee waiver • doing the enrolment process • developing and documenting a training plan • levying fees (including any concessions or fee waivers) • delivering training and assessment • collecting and maintaining evidence about the delivery of training services • reporting data and other information to us. We pay you Skills First funding to contribute to your cost of providing training services. Read the fact sheet: payments under Skills First for more information.

Victorian purchasing guides

QUESTION	ANSWER
What are the Victorian purchasing guides?	The Victorian purchasing guides contain information about the hours allocated for subjects and programs within training packages. Training delivered under the Skills First program must be consistent with any applicable guides. We will also not pay for training that is more than 2 times the hours per subject that are published in the guides.

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