



Fees-free info sheet: Eligibility criteria

This document sets out the eligibility criteria for fees-free study and training in 2018 and 2019.

To be eligible for fees-free support (payments), a learner needs to meet the eligibility criteria **and** enrol in an eligible course or industry training programme.

2018 provider-based

This criteria applies to learners starting provider-based study in the 2018 calendar year.

A provider is anyone of the following: an institute of technology, polytechnic, private training establishment, university, or wānanga.

Learner eligibility criteria

A learner eligible for fees-free provider-based study:

- a) is one of the following:
 - i. a New Zealand citizen, or
 - ii. ordinarily resident in New Zealand and either:
 - 1) have been living in New Zealand for at least 3 years while holding a residence class visa, or
 - 2) be a refugee or protected person, or
 - 3) be sponsored into New Zealand by someone in their family who, at the time of sponsorship, was a refugee or protected person.
- b) is not concurrently enrolled in a school at the start date of the course or programme (except for those enrolled in school as a returning adult student, see Appendix), and
- c) has either:
 - i. been enrolled in a school at any time during 2017 or 2018 (all 2017 or 2018 school leavers who meet criteria a and b above will be eligible for fees-free tertiary education regardless of any prior tertiary study undertaken), except that a returning adult student (see Appendix) must meet the criteria in paragraph (c)(ii) to be eligible for fees-free tertiary education, or

- ii. not undertaken more than half a year of equivalent full-time tertiary education (0.5 EFTS or 60 credits) at level 3 or above on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF), including tertiary education at an equivalent level undertaken in any other country, but excluding any tertiary education undertaken while enrolled in a school, except for returning adult students (see Appendix).

Course eligibility criteria

To be eligible for fees-free, a course must start in 2018 and be funded by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) through either the:

- Student Achievement Component (SAC) provision at level 3 and above on the NZQF, or
- Industry Training Fund, or
- Section 321 grants, administered by the TEC that fund TEOs to deliver tertiary education provision.

2018 industry training

This criteria applies to learners starting industry training in the 2018 calendar year.

Learner eligibility criteria

A learner eligible for fees-free industry training:

- a) is not concurrently enrolled in a school at the start date of the course or programme (except for those enrolled in school as a returning adult student, see Appendix), and
- b) has either:
 - i. been enrolled in a school at any time during 2017 or 2018 (all 2017 or 2018 school leavers who meet criteria a above will be eligible for fees-free tertiary education regardless of any prior tertiary study undertaken), except that a returning adult student (see Appendix) must meet the criteria in paragraph (b)(ii) to be eligible for fees-free tertiary education, or
 - ii. not undertaken more than half a year of equivalent full-time tertiary education (0.5 EFTS or 60 credits) at level 3 or above on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF), including tertiary education at an equivalent level undertaken in any other country, but excluding any tertiary education undertaken while enrolled in a school, except for returning adult students (see Appendix).

Programme eligibility criteria

To be eligible for fees-free, an industry training programme must start in 2018 and be:

- on the NZQF at level 3 or above, and
- approved by the NZQA, and
- comprise at least 120 credits (this includes all New Zealand Apprenticeships).

2019 provider-based

This criteria applies to learners starting provider-based study in the 2019 calendar year.

Learner eligibility criteria

A learner eligible for fees-free provider-based study, is one of the following:

- a. a New Zealand citizen, or
- b. ordinarily resident in New Zealand and:
 - a. have been living in New Zealand for at least 3 years while holding a residence class visa, or
 - b. a refugee or protected person, or
 - c. sponsored into New Zealand by someone in their family who, at the time of sponsorship, was a refugee or protected person.

The learner must also have either:

- a. been enrolled in a school in or after 2017, other than as an adult student (see Appendix), or
- b. not undertaken more than half a year of equivalent full-time tertiary education (0.5 equivalent full-time student or 60 credits) at level 3 or above on the NZQF, including tertiary education at an equivalent level undertaken in any country.

The following credits must not be included in measures of prior tertiary education to determine eligibility for fees-free:

- a. any tertiary education undertaken while enrolled in school prior to 1 January 2019 (except for tertiary education undertaken as an adult student, see Appendix), and
- b. any tertiary courses undertaken as part of the student's or trainee's school learning programme or secondary-tertiary programme on or after 1 January 2019, and
- c. any credits achieved as part of any industry training programme that consists of fewer than 120 credits that are reported after 1 January 2018.

Course eligibility criteria

To be eligible for fees-free, a course must be:

- a. funded by the TEC from either:
 - i. the SAC level 3 and above fund, or
 - ii. grants under s321 of the Education Act 1989 for tertiary provision that is part of a qualification or training scheme on the NZQF at level 3 or above, or
 - iii. the Youth Guarantee fund and leads to the award of a qualification on the NZQF at level 3 or above, and
- b. not part of a school learning programme or secondary-tertiary programme.

2019 industry training

This criteria applies to learners starting industry training in the 2019 calendar year.

Learner eligibility criteria

To be eligible for fees-free industry training, a trainee must be legally entitled to reside and work in New Zealand.

The learner must also have either:

- a. been enrolled in a school in or after 2017, other than as an adult student (see Appendix), or
- b. not undertaken more than half a year of equivalent full-time tertiary education (0.5 equivalent full-time student or 60 credits) at level 3 or above on the NZQF, including tertiary education at an equivalent level undertaken in any country.

The following credits must not be included in measures of prior tertiary education to determine eligibility for fees-free:

- a. any tertiary education undertaken while enrolled in school prior to 1 January 2019 (except for tertiary education undertaken as an adult student, see Appendix), and
- b. any tertiary courses undertaken as part of the student's or trainee's school learning programme or secondary-tertiary programme on or after 1 January 2019, and
- c. any credits achieved as part of any industry training programme that consists of fewer than 120 credits that are reported after 1 January 2018.

Programme eligibility criteria

To be eligible for fees-free, an industry training programme must be:

- a. at NZQF level 3 or above, and
- b. approved by NZQA, and
- c. comprised of at least 120 credits (which includes all New Zealand Apprenticeships), and
- d. not part of a school learning programme or secondary-tertiary programme.

Appendix: Definitions

2018 returning adult student criteria

“Returning adult student” means a person over the age of 19 years who has enrolled at a school after at least one year since they left school. For the avoidance of doubt:

- a) returning adult students do not automatically qualify for fees-free tertiary education as school leavers, and
- b) returning adult students can be concurrently enrolled in school and tertiary study and be eligible for fees-free tertiary education, and
- c) tertiary study undertaken while enrolled as a returning adult student must be taken into account as prior tertiary study.

2019 adult student

An adult student, under the Education Act 1989 (the Act), is any student whose 19th birthday occurred before 1 January of the current year. This definition does not apply to students deemed to require special education under Section 9 of the Act.



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