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Kia ora!

Fees Free is now live for 2023!

This is special edition newsletter to provide you with an update on:

- the alignment of Fees Free with the Unified Funding System,
- eligibility criteria changes for 2023,
- updates to zero fee courses for 2023,
- the end of the TTAF and how it interacts with Fees Free
- updates to the Fees Free and TEC websites, and
- your 2023 Fees Free funding agreements and allocations.

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The Unified Funding System

The Unified Funding System (UFS) has minimal impacts on Fees Free

Fees Free will continue to apply separate eligibility and entitlement settings to provider-based study and work-based learning (previously industry training).

Provider-based study is reported through the Single Data Return (SDR) and the Fees Free All Enrolments and Costs returns, and work-based learning is reported through the Industry Training Register (ITR) and the Fees Free Programmes and Fees returns. TEOs delivering both modes will be reporting their Fees Free delivery in both returns.

The eligibility criteria for courses and programmes now refer to the new DQ3-7 and DQ7+ funds, instead of SAC3+ and the ITF. [Check out the eligibility criteria for 2023 on the TEC website.](#)

Learner eligibility criteria

Provider-based study

There is one addition to the provider-based residency criteria for 2023.

Learners may now access Fees Free for their 2023 provider-based study if they are:

- a holder of a residence class visa who is a family member of a Christchurch Response (2019) Permanent Resident Visa holder, or a family member of a residence class visa holder who would have been eligible for the Christchurch Response (2019) Permanent Resident Visa.

Otherwise, there are no other changes to the provider-based residency criteria for 2023. [Find the full 2023 Fees Free residency criteria for provider-based learners starting their study in 2023 here.](#)

If a learner is unsure if they meet the criteria for Fees Free, they should [contact the TEC](#) for assistance. Remember a learner should not generate a statutory declaration if they are not sure whether they meet the criteria.

Work-based learning

We have made amendments to the work-based learning residency criteria for 2023 to align eligibility for Fees Free with eligibility for domestic tuition subsidies, meaning that only funded learners (including grand-parented non-residents) are eligible for Fees Free for work-based training from 1 January 2023.

Learners who started using their Fees Free entitlement prior to 2023, who no longer meet the work-based residency criteria for Fees Free in 2023, will be able to continue accessing Fees Free until they have used their full entitlement. These learners will have a 'Starter' status already.

[Find the full 2023 Fees Free residency criteria for work-based learners starting their training in 2023 here.](#)

If a learner is unsure if they meet the criteria for Fees Free, they should [contact the TEC](#) for assistance. Remember a learner should not generate a statutory declaration if they are not sure whether they meet the criteria.

Zero fee courses

Zero fee courses will not affect Fees Free entitlement or eligibility from 2023

Provider-based courses with zero fees undertaken on or after 1 January 2023 will no longer use a learner's Fees Free entitlement, or be counted against learner eligibility for future years. The purpose of this change is to make the policy more equitable and better support educational success and pathways for learners to transition from lower to higher levels of qualifications.

This change has not been applied retrospectively. All zero fees study at or equivalent to NZQCF level 3 or above undertaken before 1 January 2023 is still included when determining eligibility, and still uses a learner's entitlement.

We will update the validation of Fees Free returns to automatically exclude 2023 courses that have zero tuition fees and zero compulsory course costs in Services for Tertiary Education Organisations (STEO) from a learner's entitlement use. In addition, TEC will develop a process to allow TEOs to inform us of courses that charge zero fees to all learners, where the course has fees recorded in STEO. We will communicate this process to TEOs in due course.

Definition of a zero fee course

For the purposes of Fees Free eligibility and entitlement settings, a "zero fee course" is a provider-based course that:

- is funded by the New Zealand Tertiary Education Commission,
- starts on or after 1 January 2023, and
- has no tuition fees and no compulsory course costs for any learner enrolled in the course.

This does not include:

- courses that have fees, but the fees were paid by a scholarship, student loan, employer, or another zero fees scheme (unless otherwise specified),

- free courses undertaken overseas,
 - courses that you have withdrawn from and been granted full or partial fee refund, and
 - courses that have zero tuition fees, but do have compulsory course costs associated with the course.
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The end of the TTAF

The Targeted Training and Apprenticeship Fund (TTAF) is ending on 31 December 2022.

Some courses or programmes that start prior to 31 December 2022 and end in or after 2023 may only be partially covered by the TTAF. [Find more information on the allocation rules for the end of TTAF here.](#)

You must ensure that your learners are aware that the TTAF is ending on 31 December 2022, and that they will need to organise payment of fees not covered by the TTAF after this date.

Any tertiary education and training for which the fees were covered by the Targeted Training and Apprenticeship Fund (TTAF) between 1 July 2020 and 31 December 2022 will not be counted on a learner's Fees Free entitlement use, nor will it be included when determining a learner's eligibility for Fees Free. This means that a learner who has previously only undertaken study covered by TTAF, may be able to access Fees Free in 2023.

- Learners that started accessing Fees Free before accessing TTAF will only be able to access Fees Free in 2023 if they have remaining Fees Free entitlement.
- Learners that wish to access Fees Free for the first time for their study will need to meet the eligibility criteria for 2023. This includes if they are enrolled in a course that is partially covered by the TTAF (i.e. in a course that starts in 2022 and finishes after 31 January 2023).

TEOs will need to report any provider-based courses that start before 31 December 2022 and continue past 31 January 2023 in their 2022 Fees Free returns. Any courses that start after 31 December 2022 can be reported in their 2023 Fees Free returns as usual.

Work-based learning is reported and paid based on the fees for each month only, so TEOs reporting work-based learning will start using Fees Free returns again from January 2023.

Website and Workspace 2 updates

The Fees Free website has been updated with the criteria for 2023.

Learners can now be directed to check their eligibility status for study or training in 2023 on the Fees Free website. They can do this by entering their NSN into the [eligibility checker on the homepage](#), and selecting 2023 as their study year.

We've made some minor updates to the Fees Free website, including the Frequently Asked Questions page. If your learners have any questions regarding these updates or the eligibility criteria for 2023, please direct them to [contact us](#).

The TEC website has also been updated for 2023

The eligibility criteria for 2023 can now be found on the [TEC website](#). We've also included a new [UFS and 2023 Changes](#) page which summarises the changes to the Fees Free policy for you to refer to at any time, and a [Marketing Toolkit](#) to help you promote Fees Free to your learners. Additional material will be added to the toolkit throughout November.

Further changes to the site are coming soon, including:

- the 2022 wash-up methodology,

- the 2023 indicative allocation calculation methodology, and
- updates to the info-sheets, reporting guides, and Starter Pack for 2023.

If you have any questions about these changes, please [contact us](#).

Learner eligibility statuses have been updated on Workspace 2

You can find a list of learners eligible for Fees Free in 2023 who have remaining entitlement on the home page on Workspace 2. You can also send a list of NSNs in a CSV file to customerservice@tec.govt.nz, and we'll return the eligibility statuses of those NSNs to you.

Funding Agreements and Allocations

We're currently working through the Fees Free funding agreements and allocations for 2023.

We'll send your funding agreements to you via Workspace 2 when they're ready. You'll need to return these before Friday 16 December at the latest to receive your January Fees Free payments.

We'll also notify you when your indicative Fees Free allocation for 2023 can be viewed in the My Allocations and Payments app in Ngā Kete.

Contact us

If you have any questions or comments about this newsletter, please contact the Customer Contact Group at customerservice@tec.govt.nz or 0800 601 301.

Fees Free information not reaching the right person?

Please email the Customer Contact Group at customerservice@tec.govt.nz, if you need a staff member added, as a Fees Free data return contact, for your organisation. Please include their name, job title and email address. Your organisation can have more than one data return contact.



Set yourself fees-free

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