



INVESTING IN EXPERIENCE (SKILLS RECOGNITION & TRAINING)

Quick reference guide for applicants

Investing in Experience (Skills Recognition & Training) is an Australian Government program that helps mature age workers (aged 50 years and over) to gain nationally recognised qualifications. The program is designed to provide an opportunity for mature age workers to have their current capabilities recognised and to receive training to fill any knowledge or skill gaps, so they can obtain nationally recognised qualifications at the Certificate III to Advanced Diploma level.

Investing in Experience (Skills Recognition & Training) replaces the 'More Help for Mature Age Workers' program, which ended on 30 June 2012. The program forms part of the Australian Government Skills Connect initiative and is designed to link industry to funding for whole-of-workforce planning and development.

Available funding

Investing in Experience (Skills Recognition & Training) will provide \$20 million from 2012-14 to support up to 5,000 mature age workers.

Grants to \$4,400 (includes GST) are available to employers. The grants are to assist with the costs of employees completing a skills assessment by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and achieving formal recognition. Funds are paid in two instalments.

- \$3,300 (includes GST) is paid to the employer upon completion of a skills assessment or the Recognition of Prior Learning process conducted by an RTO
- \$1,100 (includes GST) is paid to the employer upon completion of any identified gap training

Where mature age workers already have formal qualifications at the Certificate III or above level, they may be eligible to receive funding to complete an approved skill set from within a nationally endorsed Training Package.

The funding is a fixed grant per employee. Any funding not spent on training can be used to assist employers with administrative costs, employee 'down time' for the assessment/training, licences or tickets. Participating businesses will incur any expenses over and above the grant.

Benefits from retaining mature age workers

The Australian Government recognises that mature age workers bring an enormous amount of knowledge and skill to the workplace, and that a lack of formal qualifications can lead to their early retirement and career limitations.

Who can apply

- Employers from all industry sectors who employ mature age workers aged 50 years and over, who are under an award or certified agreement
- Small business owners, including sole traders, operating in Australia who are themselves mature age workers
- State and territory governments, the organisations they establish and local governing bodies that meet the eligibility criteria

All industry sectors are eligible.

Those who are eligible to receive training

Mature age workers (50 years or over) who:

- have worked in the same field for many years and have developed considerable knowledge and skills but have no formal qualifications in that field, or
- have outdated, inadequate or irrelevant qualifications and need to obtain new qualifications to remain in their job or transition to new work, or
- due to an injury or other issue are no longer able to do the job that they used to do and need to transition to a new role for which they don't have the 'right qualifications', or
- are only able to undertake part of their job because they do not have the required qualification to do the other aspects of the role.

Eligible employee requirements include all of the following:

- Mature age worker 50 years of age or older
- Employed for financial remuneration for 14 hours or more per week under an Australian award or certified agreement (or, in the case of small businesses, self employed)
- Be an Australian citizen (or permanent resident or humanitarian refugee)
- Wishing to obtain formal qualifications relevant to their current or future employment
- Wanting to have their previous industry experience formally recognised

How it works

The funding for training is to cover a skills assessment and any gap training that is identified through that assessment and required to complete the qualification.

Training must be for nationally recognised qualifications at Certificate III to Advanced Diploma and skill sets from within nationally endorsed Training Packages.

In the case of mature age workers who already have a qualification at the Certificate III to Advanced Diploma level, the Department may approve training in an approved skill set from within a nationally endorsed Training Package. This will occur only if it is entirely relevant to the mature age worker's current or future employment and improves the worker's employability.

How to apply

Information on how to apply can be found at the Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education website:

<http://www.innovation.gov.au/Skills/SkillsTrainingAndWorkforceDevelopment/InvestingInExperienceSkillsRecognitionAndTraining/Pages/default.aspx>

*Please remember to include all required supporting documentation when submitting your application.

To find out more

For more information about the program, including eligibility rules, see the Investing in Experience (Skills Recognition & Training) Program Guidelines website at:

<http://www.innovation.gov.au/TertiaryEducation/skills/IIESRT/Documents/ProgramGuidelines.pdf>

If you have a whole of workforce proposal or are interested in more than one program, further information can be found at the Australian Government Skills Connect website at:

www.skillsconnect.gov.au - Please contact Australian Government Skills Connect by email to: skillsconnect@innovation.gov.au or phone 13 38 73 between 8.00 am to 6.00 pm Monday to Friday.