

# Smart and Skilled

SMART AND SKILLED UPDATE – NO. 217 - 218

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## 1. THE 2023 NSW STUDENT OUTCOMES SURVEY OPENED ON THURSDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2023

The NSW Student Outcomes Survey (NSW SOS) is an important data collection method that provides information about the NSW VET market. This survey is an extension of the Student Outcomes Survey run by the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research (NCVER).

The NSW SOS provides greater coverage of VET in NSW as it surveys all NSW students, including those who did not successfully complete their training. This yields more reliable insights into the NSW VET market, which include a student's reasons for training, employment and further study outcomes, and satisfaction with training. Data collected will help to improve the relevance and quality of training.

All government-funded VET students in NSW who completed training in 2022 are invited to participate in the NSW SOS. The survey is open for four weeks.

Please help support the continued improvement of NSW VET student outcomes by encouraging students to participate in the 2023 NSW SOS.

The NSW Student Outcomes Survey can be accessed on the Social Research Centre website at <https://srcentre.com.au/our-research/nswsos>

If you have any questions about the survey or want to make any comments, please email [nswsos@srcentre.com.au](mailto:nswsos@srcentre.com.au) or call the Helpdesk on 1800 130 007.

## 2. FINANCIAL CAP REVIEW #2

The second Financial Cap Review process for 2023-24 will commence on Wednesday 18 October 2023 at 9.00am.

To optimise the supply of training for skills in demand under Smart and Skilled, regular reviews are conducted to assess whether providers are on track to utilise their allocated Financial Caps and are also complying with the contractual requirements to operate within the cap limits.

For each review, the department also determines whether contracted providers will have an opportunity to request adjustments to their Approved Qualifications Activity Schedule(s) by seeking to vary their Financial Caps or approved qualifications.

The second Financial Cap Review for 2023-24 will apply to:

- Smart and Skilled Entitlement Full Qualifications
- Targeted Priorities Full Qualifications
- Entitlement Foundation Skills\*
- Skilling for Recovery Priority Qualifications\*.

*\* Noting that Entitlement Foundation Skills and Skilling for Recovery Priority Qualifications programs are for continuing students only.*

The key requirement of providers is to review their cap utilisation and submit a response addressing factors relevant to the cap utilisation assessment, for each Financial Cap. This may lead the provider to request an adjustment to its Financial Cap(s), which could include returning excess Financial Cap to the department, transferring allocation between current caps or to create a new cap, or requesting an increase or new Financial Cap.

A new functionality has been developed on the Smart and Skilled Application Portal where contracted providers will find the assessment of Financial Caps, the areas to be covered in their response, and the capability to successfully submit their response to the Financial Cap Review and make adjustment requests. Access to this functionality will be released to providers as of 9am Wednesday 18 October 2023.

Once the Financial Cap Review process has commenced, providers will have two weeks to review the information and submit their adjustment requests. **Financial Cap usage assessment**

In preparation for this process, the department has reviewed progress in relation to each Financial Cap. For each Financial Cap, the Cap Usage Estimate is expected to be at an identified level. Activity and payments must also be managed within the Financial Cap amount.

A provider must respond to the Financial Cap Review through the portal if they have a Financial Cap allocation for 2023-24. Providers can use the Application Portal to provide information to the department regarding their utilisation of each Financial Cap, including a detailed outline of their organisation's plan to manage any affected Financial Cap(s) while continuing to fulfil the obligations to deliver Subsidised Training to currently Enrolled Students.

#### **a. Financial Cap Review module**

The Financial Cap Review period and review module is pre-populated based on each provider's Financial Cap Performance report, current market requirements, gaps and opportunities.

Providers will be able to undertake a number of actions:

- If a provider will not use all of an allocated Financial Cap in the Activity Period, they are expected to request a reduction in that cap.
- A provider may also request an increase in a Financial Cap. However, cap increases are dependent on commitments and forecasts for the program and the capacity to reallocate funding to support skills priorities. Consideration for increasing a provider's Financial Caps will factor in whether additional supply of training is needed along with provider performance assessments and classifications. Applications for new Financial Caps or increase in current Financial Caps are not guaranteed.

- Providers will be able to request a new Financial Cap for Entitlement Full Qualifications and Targeted Priorities Full Qualifications regions only. Markets eligible for additional supply will be accessible via the Portal.

**b. Further information**

Detailed information about the Financial Cap Review process, including a link to the Smart and Skilled Application Portal and frequently asked questions is available in STS Online and on the [department's website](#).

If you require clarification, please contact your Regional Provider Support Manager or Strategic Relationship Manager.

**3. CONTINUED PROVIDER EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT: MARKETING AND PROMOTION WEBINAR**

The department is continuing its educational support for providers. This includes the delivery of webinars and face-to-face workshops, and the development of additional resources designed to facilitate excellence and quality in vocational training and compliance under the Smart and Skilled contract.

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