Skilling Queenslanders for Work – Participant Eligibility

Who can participate on a SQW project?

Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) targets unemployed and underemployed Queensland residents.

Individuals currently accessing Australian Government employment services can participate on a SQW project regardless of the length of time they have been unemployed or receiving assistance.

Participants must be:

- Queensland residents
- aged 15 years or older and no longer at school
- an Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident (includes humanitarian entrant), temporary resident with the necessary visa and work permits on a pathway to permanent residency, or a New Zealand citizen.

There is no upper age limit.

Key target groups

SQW targets a range of people who require assistance to get a job including:

- young people (15-24 years), including those in and transitioned from out-of-home care
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- mature age job seekers (45+ years)
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- people with disability, including those with mental health, alcohol, and other drug issues
- women re-entering the workforce
- veterans, ex-Australian Defence Force (ADF) members and their families
- recently released prisoners

More broadly, job seekers and underutilised Queensland workers are able to access assistance under SQW and **do not** have to belong to one of the target groups listed above.

Each SQW program provides targeted assistance - a summary is in the eligibility table. For further details on participant eligibility for specific programs, please reference the program guidelines.

The selection of participants is at the discretion of the funded organisation, subject to the above eligibility criteria.

Permission to recruit participants outside of the above criteria needs to be sought from the Department of Trade, Employment and Training.

Program eligibility table

Program	General Eligibility
Community Work Skills	• Minimum of 15 years • No longer enrolled in school
Work Skills Traineeships	• Minimum of 15 years • No longer enrolled in school • Unemployed
Get Set for Work	• 15-19 years • Priority given to early school leavers
Community Foundation Skills	• Minimum of 15 years • No longer enrolled in school
Youth Skills	• 15-24 years • No longer enrolled in school • Engaged with Youth Justice or Queensland Corrective Services

Workforce Australia participants

Workforce Australia participants, regardless of their level of support, are eligible to participate on a SQW project if they have barriers to employment and require complementary services to get job-ready.

Work Skills Traineeships – exception

Unemployed individuals accessing the new online service or personalised support with a licensed provider under Workforce Australia are eligible to undertake a Work Skills Traineeship, as they will be exiting employment services and income support to take up paid employment as a trainee.

Participation of school students

Participation of school students on SQW projects is **restricted** - considered on a case-by-case basis and is subject to approval from the DTET Regional Director, in collaboration with the Regional Director (Education).

The recruitment of school students is not expected to be a widespread practice under SQW. Participation is dependent on age and legislative requirements as a young person aged 15 years is of compulsory school age.

A business case will be required for any 15-year-olds who have an active school enrolment, to maintain their school enrolment while on a SQW project.

Priority must be given to young people who have already left school i.e. they are considered early school leavers or young job seekers with multiple barriers to undertaking education, training or gaining employment.

SQW providers **must not recruit an enrolled school student** onto a SQW project, **without the prior approval** of the relevant DTET Regional Director. If approval is not granted, the enrolled school student will be referred back to the school Principal for alternative school-based interventions and re-engagement strategies.

What about existing qualifications?

Individuals who have an existing qualification are still eligible to participate in SQW as the initiative offers people a change to retrain and gain new skills and qualifications.

SQW provides supported training opportunities to individuals who require additional and/or different skills or a qualification to:

- successfully gain employment (full-time or part-in a permanent, temporary, casual, or self-employed capacity)
- advance in their work or secure more hours of employment
- retrain in another occupation due to industry downsizing or disruption
- gain current industry skills as they may have an outdated qualification no longer recognised by employers

Some individuals may have undertaken previous training to meet activity test requirements for income support or have a qualification that is now outdated. In these circumstances, individuals still facing barriers to employment can undertake another qualification or skill set through SQW.

Please note, SQW is not intended to be used by individuals who are not disadvantaged, have successfully completed vocational qualifications through the Career Start program and who now wish to complete another qualification.

Visa holders

Temporary visa holders are eligible to participate on a SQW project, however these visa holders need to be on a pathway to permanent residency and have the necessary training and/or work permits as part of their visa conditions. It is the responsibility of the funded organisation to ensure that residency requirements are met by the participants.

Bridging Visas

Individuals on a Bridging Visa A, B, C or E are eligible. Refugees and evacuees from Afghanistan, Ukraine, Palestine and Israel on Temporary Humanitarian Stay (subclass 449) and Temporary Humanitarian Concern (subclass 786) visas are also eligible to participate on SQW projects.

Other considerations

A key issue that needs to be carefully considered when recruiting is the capacity of the individual to undertake and successfully complete nationally recognised training and the requirements of the project.

Capacity to train and work

Even though SQW provides tailored support for participants to complete training, individuals who meet the eligibility requirements must also possess the motivation to engage in the training, in order to ensure successful completion and progression into employment.

Repeat participants

DTET does not support the repeated recruitment of participants across multiple projects or programs as there is an annual budget under SQW and the state government cannot continuously subsidise ongoing training.

DTET has consistently applied the principle that given the cost of SQW, people should only have one opportunity to participate. Given SQW has been delivered for 10 years, it is likely that people may have been assisted in the past.

Exemptions due to extenuating circumstances or time passed will be considered on an individual case-by-case basis, with approval granted from DTET central office.

Human Rights consideration

The intention of the *Human Rights Act 2019* (the Act) is to ensure every person in Queensland is treated equally and without discrimination.

Although the eligibility criteria under SQW may limit the rights of some Queenslanders, this is described as reasonable and justifiable under the Act (Section 13(2)) as SQW aims to achieve the purpose of the Act by supporting and encouraging equitable participation across a broad range of cohorts that generally face barriers to their participation in skills development and the labour market.

More information

For more information on SQW, click here. Alternatively, please call 1300 369 935 or email sqwapps@dtet.qld.gov.au.