

Training Incentive Allowance Programme

This welfare programme for special assistance is established and approved under section 101 of the Social Security Act 2018 by the Minister for Social Development and Employment.

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Programme

1 Title

This programme is the Training Incentive Allowance Programme.

2 Commencement

This programme comes into force on 1 July 2021.

3 Purpose

The purpose of this programme is to provide financial assistance to eligible people receiving specified qualifying benefits to enable them to undertake education or training courses in order to:

- a) increase their skills for employment, and
- b) improve participants' employment outcomes in the future.

4 Interpretation

- (1) In this programme, unless the context otherwise requires-

Act means the Social Security Act 2018

applicant means a person who has applied, or on whose behalf an application has been made, for assistance under this programme

compulsory course fees means any fee which must be paid by the applicant to enrol in and complete the course (including tuition fees and compulsory student services fee)

Employment and Work Readiness Assistance

Programme means the programme of that name established under s 101 of the Act

Fees Free Programme means the Fees Free Tertiary Education and Training policy as set out in the funding delegation issued to the Tertiary Education Commission by the Minister of Education

New Zealand Qualifications Framework means the qualifications framework administered by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and established under the Education and Training Act 2020

other care costs means the actual and reasonable costs of childcare, care for older people and disabled people and the associated costs necessary for the applicant to participate in education or training courses (for example, transport to the care provider)

recognised course of study has the same meaning as in Regulation 2(1)(a) of the Student Allowances Regulations 1998

sole parent has the same meaning as in the Act

specified qualifying benefit means the following benefits:

- i. Sole Parent Support;
- ii. Supported Living Payment payable under Part 3, Schedule 4 of the Act only where the applicant is eligible in their own right;

- iii. Young Parent Payment, payable to a sole parent;
- iv. Jobseeker Support, payable to a sole parent; or
- v. Emergency Benefit, payable to a sole parent.

working-age —

- i. means an age in the range 18 to 64 years inclusive; and
- ii. includes an age of or over 65 years in relation to a person who is not qualified to receive New Zealand superannuation.

52-week period means a period of 52 weeks commencing from the date the assistance commences

- (2) Other terms defined in Schedule 2 of the Act have the same meanings in this programme.

5 Application of the Act

- (1) Sections 19, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 204, 205, 217, 219, 290, 292, 293, 294, 298, 301, 303, 304, 305, 308, 317, 318, 325, 337, 338, 340, 391 and 417 of the Act apply to this programme as if the special assistance authorised by this programme was a benefit under the Act.
- (2) Nothing in subclause (1) limits or affects the application of any other provision of the Act.

6 Eligibility for assistance

- (1) MSD may, in its discretion, grant any of the types of assistance described in clause 10 in respect of an applicant who meets the eligibility criteria in subclause (2).
- (2) A person is eligible for assistance who —
 - (a) is of working-age; and
 - (b) meets the residency criteria in subclause (3); and
 - (c) is eligible for and receiving a specified qualifying benefit; and
 - (d) is enrolled in an eligible course as set out in clause 8.

- (3) For the purposes of subclause (2)(b), an applicant meets the residency criteria if they are ordinarily resident in New Zealand; and is either —
- (a) a New Zealand citizen or a person who holds or is deemed to hold a residence class visa under the Immigration Act 2009 that permits the holder to work in New Zealand; or
 - (b) a person recognised as a refugee or protected person under that Act; or
 - (c) a person holding a temporary class visa under that Act that permits the person to work in New Zealand and who is —
 - (A) awaiting the outcome of their claim for recognition as a refugee or a protected person (within the meaning of that Act); or
 - (B) a person applying for a residence class visa under that Act who is compelled to remain in New Zealand because of unforeseen circumstances.

7 Ineligibility for assistance

- (1) An applicant is ineligible for assistance under this programme if they have completed a qualification at Level 7 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework in the 5 years prior to applying for assistance under this programme.
- (2) Despite subclause (1), MSD may grant assistance under this programme if it is satisfied that the assistance will significantly improve the client's employment outcomes.

8 Courses for which assistance is available under this programme

An eligible course for the purpose of this programme is a recognised course of study that increases the applicant's skills for employment, and:

- (a) is 12 weeks or more in duration; and
- (b) is on Level 1 to Level 7 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.

9 Further considerations when granting assistance

- (1) When exercising its discretion under clause 6(1), MSD may have regard to whether the person is or may be entitled to any other publicly funded assistance for the same or similar purpose under the Act or another enactment.
- (2) MSD may grant assistance under this programme for the amount of other care costs in excess of any other publicly funded financial assistance available to the person up to the maximum amount as set out in clause 11(1).
- (3) MSD may refuse to grant an allowance if the applicant has, having previously been granted an allowance under this programme or the Employment and Work Readiness Assistance Programme to attend an eligible course within the past 5 years —
 - (a) failed or refused to answer any questions as to whether the applicant completed that course and the results or results the applicant achieved in that course; or
 - (b) failed to complete that course without, to the satisfaction of MSD, a good and sufficient reason; or
 - (c) any other factors as determined by MSD having regard to the purpose of this programme.
- (4) MSD must not grant financial assistance to an eligible applicant to pay compulsory course fees, if those compulsory course fees can be met through the Fees Free Programme.

10 Types of assistance

MSD may grant assistance under clause 6 to an eligible applicant for one or more of the following costs:

- (a) compulsory course fees; and
- (b) the applicant's actual and reasonable course-related costs as determined by MSD including, but not limited to, transport costs, textbooks, laptops and assistance with internet connection, assistance with childcare or other care costs.

11 Rates of assistance

- (1) MSD may grant assistance to an eligible applicant, based on the amount of the applicant's compulsory course fees and the actual and reasonable course-related costs, of up to \$114.19 for each week the assistance for the course is payable, to a maximum of \$4567.60 within a 52-week period.
- (2) The maximum amount of assistance available under this programme must be adjusted every year in line with an increase in the Consumers Price Index through the Annual General Adjustment process.

12 Applications for assistance

- (1) An applicant seeking assistance under this programme must provide any information to MSD that MSD reasonably requires to assess the applicant's eligibility for assistance.
- (2) MSD may require an applicant to complete an application form in order to assess eligibility for assistance. If MSD requires an application form to be completed, MSD must not grant assistance until MSD has received the completed application form, to the satisfaction of MSD.
- (3) MSD may waive all or part of a requirement to provide information (including information specified in an application form) if MSD is satisfied that it:
 - (a) already holds the information concerned; or
 - (b) already holds enough other information to determine the matter for which the information concerned is required.

13 Payment of assistance

- (1) MSD may, in its discretion, having regard to the kind of assistance, pay any assistance granted under clause 6(1):
 - (a) to or on account of the applicant personally; or
 - (b) if the assistance is for the purpose of purchasing any goods or services for an eligible applicant, to the provider of the goods or services; or

- (c) as a periodical payment or payment of a lump sum in advance of the period or part of the period for which it is granted; or
 - (d) in any other manner MSD reasonably thinks fit.
- (2) It is a condition of an allowance that the applicant must, if withdrawing from the course, seek a refund of the amount paid for compulsory course fees or any additional course-related costs granted to the applicant under this programme. If the course provider provides a refund, or partial refund, direct to the applicant, the applicant must repay the amount refunded to MSD.

14 When assistance starts

- (1) Assistance commences on such a date as MSD specifies when making the grant.
- (2) Assistance commences on 1 July 2021 if an applicant started an eligible course before 1 July 2021 and MSD receives an application between 1 July 2021 and 29 July 2021 inclusive.
- (3) MSD must not grant assistance in respect of any application received on or after 1 January 2025.

15 When assistance ends

- (1) If it has not ended earlier, eligibility for assistance under this programme ends on a date not later than the date the applicant
 - (a) dies; or
 - (b) has a change in circumstances that means they are no longer eligible for assistance under this programme; or
 - (c) has a change in circumstances that means they are no longer eligible for a specified qualifying benefit.
- (2) MSD may suspend payments if it is satisfied the applicant is not attending the course.
- (3) MSD may grant assistance for compulsory course costs for an eligible course up to the close of 30 June 2025.

16 Expiry

This programme expires on the close of 30 June 2025.

Minister for Social Development and Employment

At this day of 20

Explanatory Note

This note is not part of the programme, but is intended to indicate its general effect.

This programme is established and approved under section 101 of the Social Security Act 2018 and comes into force on 1 July 2021.

The programme provides assistance for people receiving certain benefits to enable them to undertake recognised courses of study which increase their skills for employment and improve their employment outcomes in the future. The programme expands assistance previously available under the Employment and Work Readiness Assistance Programme for courses at Level 1 to 3 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. Under the programme, assistance is available for compulsory course fees and course-related costs for study up to and including Level 7 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.