

These questions & answers are provided by the Department of Education & Training and may be subject to change.
26 March 2020

What is 'Supporting Apprentice & Trainees'?

A part of the Government's Economic Response to the Coronavirus, \$1.3 billion will be made available to 70,000 small businesses to help keep around 117,000 apprentices and trainees across the country in work and training.

Supporting Apprentices & Trainees provides a wage subsidy to small businesses (including those using a Group Training Organisation) to support the retention of their existing apprentices and trainees. This recognises the benefits of training already undertaken by apprentices and trainees and the significant investment made by employers.

The wage subsidy is also available to employers of any size, including a Group Training Organisation, if they re-engage an apprentice or trainee that has been displaced from a small business.

The subsidy will support businesses to manage cash-flow challenges and help small businesses retain their apprentices and trainees. This will help to ensure the continued development of the skilled workforce that employers need.

How much is available to an employer?

Employers will be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$7,000 per quarter, per eligible apprentice or trainee.

The wage subsidy will be available for a maximum of nine months, covering wages paid over the nine month period 1 January 2020 to 30 September 2020, or paid from the date of re-employment for an apprentice or trainee who has been displaced.

When is this funding available from?

We have been advised that we will be able to apply for this funding from 2 April, however we are uncertain about how long this process will take before we receive the funding from the Apprenticeship Network Provider.

How do I access this funding?

1300apprentice will access this funding on behalf of your business and will pass it on to eligible businesses in full. We may have some questions to ask to you to make certain that we provide the Apprenticeship Network Provider with the most up to date and accurate information and will do our best to ensure that we can access this funding as soon as it is available.

Does the definition of small business include reference to full-time equivalent?

For the purposes of Supporting Apprentices & Trainees, the definition of small business does not include reference to full-time equivalent. The reference to employing fewer than 20 people is regardless of their status as full-time, part-time or casual.

For example, if a business employs 10 full-time employees, 8 part-time employees and 5 casual employees, they are considered to employ 23 employees and do not meet the definition of small business.

What is deemed a small business under the Supporting Apprentice & Trainee funding?

For the purposes of Supporting Apprentices & Trainees, a small business is a business that employs fewer than 20 people on 1 March 2020.

Are full-time, part-time of school based apprentices and trainees eligible?

Yes, pending you meet the eligibility criteria.

What happens if I'm a large business and I take on an apprentice who was with a small company and let go due to a lack of work?

An employer that re-engages an Australian apprentice may be of any size.

However, to be eligible for Supporting Apprentices & Trainees, the Australian apprentice must have been undertaking an Australian apprenticeship with a small business employer on 1 March 2020.

How much can an employer claim?

Supporting Apprentices & Trainees reimburses 50 per cent of the Australian apprentice's gross wage, over the nine month period 1 January 2020 to 30 September 2020.

Employers will be reimbursed up to a **maximum of \$7,000 per quarter**, per eligible Australian apprentice.

What are the effect dates for payment?

Please be reminded that there is a maximum of **\$7,000 per quarter**, per eligible Australian apprentice.

Eligible employers will be able to claim reimbursement of 50 per cent of wages paid, at intervals of at least three months in arrears.

Effect date one: 31 March 2020. Employers can claim payments for wages paid during the period 1 January 2020 to 31 March 2020.

Effect date two: 30 June 2020. Employers can claim payments for wages paid during the period 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020.

Effect date three: 30 September 2020. Employers can claim payments for wages paid during the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020.

Where an Australian apprenticeship is commenced or recommenced between effect dates, the employer will be eligible for payment from the date of commencement or recommencement to the effect date.

Where an Australian apprentice takes a period of leave that is unpaid during the Australian apprenticeship, is this taken into account when assessing the value of Supporting Apprentices & Trainees the employer is entitled to claim?

Supporting Apprentices & Trainees will not be reimbursed for any period of unpaid leave. Only wages paid to the Australian apprentice will be reimbursed.