

# Career Ready SAS EOI information session

## TALKING POINTS

### Slide 1: Cover slide

- In the spirit of reconciliation, the Department of Trade, Employment and Training recognises the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

### Introduction

- Welcome. This information session provides an update on the new Skills Assure Supplier framework being developed through the Queensland Skills Strategy in particular, the Career Ready SAS Expression of Interest.

### Slide 2

### Queensland Skills Priorities

- In May 2024, the *Good Jobs. Great Training: Queensland Skills Strategy 2024 – 2028* was released.
- Informed by the most significant review in almost a decade, the strategy is a five-year plan to make the state's strong training system even stronger.
- It aims to ensure we grow the skills our economy needs – and that also open doors to good jobs for Queenslanders.
- Queensland has a strong economy– a growing health care and support sector and housing and construction industry, ... to name a few. To support a strong economy, Queensland needs more and higher skilled workers.

### Slide 3

### Building on a strong training system

- During consultation on the strategy, we heard that our training system is strong – but needs to evolve.
- As you can see in the diagram on screen, a high-performing training system relies on everyone playing a role — governments, training providers, industry and employers, and students themselves.
- We all have a role to play.

- Government's role includes being a steward of the system – and an investor in priority skills growth as well as access and equity.
- Here in Queensland, we have a healthy mix of training providers – public, private, not-for-profit and dual-sector universities – they all contribute to Queensland's strong and vibrant training system.
- Within this dynamic system, we fund training in a way that grows the skills our economy needs while supporting Queenslanders to access the lifelong benefits of training for good jobs.
- Our public providers are supported by Skills Assure Suppliers to deliver training that is publicly funded.
- We currently have more than 350 Skills Assure Suppliers approved to deliver training and assessment services funded by the Queensland Government.
- Participation in funded training is at a decade high – with more than 244,000 students undertaking a funded course in 2023-24, which is up 9% on the previous year.

#### **Slide 4 – transition slide**

### **Training Priorities Plan**

- This brings us to our first Training Priorities Plan, which was released last year.
- The plan is also Queensland's Jurisdictional Action Plan under our national agreement with the Commonwealth Government.

#### **Slide 5**

### **Our first annual plan**

- With a budget reaching \$1.5 billion, this plan outlines how we prioritise this significant investment through funded training and other programs.
- It recognises that economic and social imperatives are two sides of the same coin – changing lives and skilling workforces at the same time.
- This annual planning approach ensures our investment remains responsive to skills needs.

- **Available online**, our 2024-25 plan maps out Queensland's skilling priorities and how they inform investment decisions.

## Slide 6

### Queensland priorities and commitments

Our Training Priorities Plan considers:

- our economy
  - our workforce
  - and
  - our people and the skills they need.
- Looking at our priorities, we can see a number of key drivers – including:
    - The need to support economic growth through the **supply of skilled workers** aligned to employment opportunities
    - The need for more people with **higher skills** required for future jobs
    - The need to **support apprenticeship and traineeship** participation
    - The need to address skills needs in **rural and remote communities and economies**
    - The need to enable **workforce participation** for Queenslanders
    - The need to address **skills needs in priority and emerging industries** – care and support, manufacturing, agriculture, construction, digital and technology, hospitality and more
    - and
    - There are also opportunities and commitments under the **National Skills Agreement**.

## Skills for all career stages

- Queenslanders want and need training for all career stages.
- Our skills strategy delivers through funded training.
- This includes:
  1. Career Ready – skills to get a headstart while at school
  2. Career Start – skills to help with getting a job
  3. Career Boost – skills to take careers to the next level.
- As you can see, we have mapped our current subsidised training programs against these career stages.
- We are supporting a more student-focused training system which is why we will be developing new programs that are more clearly aligned to these important vocational learning stages in people's lives.

## How do we prioritise?

- Our approach is about investing where it counts – providing Queenslanders with the right skills to support a thriving economy.
- At every career stage, our investment model supports Queenslanders to develop skills for jobs in demand.
- Our training priorities plan outlines the settings that inform what courses are funded and who is eligible.
- It shows how we target investment in qualifications to deliver job outcomes – drawing on data, analysis and industry advice.
- As this diagram shows, we look at **skills in demand**. What core skills do we need to meet the needs of our economy now and into the future?
- We take into account industry advice, student outcomes, statewide and regional economic needs, as well as the needs of industry, employers and small businesses.

- We look at the **supply of skills** – we model occupational demand and qualification supply. Do we have enough of the right skills in the skills pipeline, at the right time?
- We also look at our **priority and emerging industries** to explore opportunities to enhance workforce capacity and capability.
- And, very importantly, we support **access and equity** through our eligibility settings and delivery standards.
- You can read more about these settings in the new Training Priorities Plan.

### Slide 9 – transition slide

#### A new SAS framework

- Implementing a new Skills Assure Supplier framework is a core deliverable under the strategy and underpins many of its initiatives.

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#### What is the SAS framework?

- The SAS framework is how Queensland contracts and quality-assures RTOs that deliver training and assessment services funded by the Queensland Government, known as Skills Assure Suppliers (or SAS).
- The framework gives students, parents and employers confidence that their funded training providers can deliver high-quality, industry-standard training that best meets their learner and job seeker needs.
- This is why the SAS framework is so important.
- Our new framework will update our contracting approach to align with policy directions in the strategy – implementing an enhanced evidence and performance-based investment model.
- In addition to better targeting investment, it will aim to meet the needs of students, including those in rural and remote areas, as well as diverse and disadvantaged learners.
- The new SAS framework is key to shaping the modern, responsive and accessible training system needed to achieve our state priorities and national commitments.
- During the consultation that informed the development of the Queensland Skills Strategy, RTOs told us about challenges, such as the cost of delivery

in rural and remote areas, and opportunities, including ways to streamline contracting.

- We heard from providers who wanted an opportunity to partner with us as providers of quality funded training in Queensland.
- We listened to this feedback – and are opening contracting under the new SAS framework as a result.

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### What will stay the same?

- While there will be changes in the new SAS framework, some things will stay the same.
- Importantly, Queensland's funded training will be:
  - aligned to state priorities
  - and
  - informed by industry advice.
- Funded training will be focused on quality training provision and achieving job outcomes for students. It will be important for providers to maintain currency and have strong links to industry and employers.
- Funded training will continue to support access and equity – breaking down barriers for priority groups.
- The department's quality assurance and monitoring activity will continue to operate under a new SAS Framework
- and
- SAS will continue to have dedicated Contract Managers – who they can contact for help to meet their obligations as funded training providers.

## What is changing?

### Streamlined contracts

- Under the new framework, SAS contracts will change.
- We have listened to SAS and RTOs – and are streamlining arrangements – including:
  - **single agreements**
    - that means no more multiple agreements for different subsidised training programs
  - **we will introduce multi-year agreements where appropriate and in line with incoming government commitments**
    - providing greater year-to-year continuity for students and providers, so that people and providers can make longer-term plans
  - **we are also working towards a simplified funded course list**
    - one list identifying what courses are delivered, including apprenticeships and traineeships
  - **we will also be ensuring that funded training is delivered by the SAS that we have a contract with**
    - this means third-party delivery by exception only and not exceeding 50% of training and assessment services per qualification for Career Ready, and limited changes of ownership.

## What is changing?

### Enhanced focus on quality training that delivers results

- Moving forward, the new SAS framework will have an enhanced focus on equity, access and outcomes for students, including those in regional, rural and remote Queensland.
- We have piloted our first student survey and will build on this to develop an evidence base to ensure student voices are heard during investment decision-making.

- We will also undertake more outcomes-focused performance monitoring, which will include new reporting requirements for SAS.

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## **What is changing?**

### **Actively-managed investment**

- The new SAS framework will see government investment actively managed by the department.
- Evidence and data will inform what qualifications will be delivered, by what providers and where.
- When we assess what providers we need in the SAS network, we will look at:
  - industry advice
  - current and projected skills needs
  - supply and demand
  - provider performance and job outcomes
  - regional coverage.

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## **What is changing?**

### **New subsidised training programs**

- Queensland's subsidised training programs are changing to better meet student needs.
- Under the new SAS framework there will be 3 new programs aligned to career stages.
- The 3 new programs are:
  - 1. Career Ready VET in Schools**
    - this program aims to put school students on a path to employment, with new Career Tasters led by TAFE and CQU, with more industry-connected training at school, including school-based apprenticeships and traineeships



- **2. Career Start**

- this program provides Queenslanders with access to a first post-school certificate III qualification, so they can enter the workforce and access jobs.

- **3. Career Boost**

- funding higher-level training qualifications – from certificate IV and above, and priority industry skill sets – this program promotes lifelong learning by funding opportunities for workers to upskill in high priority areas.

It is important to note that apprenticeships and traineeships will be part of all 3 programs, including the Career Boost stage.

You can learn more about these new programs in the Training Priorities Plan.

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## What is changing?

### Supporting a stable transition

- Transitioning to new programs will mean the department's current Certificate 3 Guarantee, User Choice, Higher Level Skills and VET in Schools programs will be replaced by the 3 new programs.
- Supporting a stable transition for students and training providers is a priority.
- To begin with, eligible SAS contracts have been renewed to 30 June 2025 and, for VET in Schools delivery, they will be extended to enable new student enrolments for training commencing before the end of the 2025 school year.
  - Career Start and Career Boost programs will start from 1 July 2025
  - Career Ready VET in Schools will begin at the start of the 2026 school year.
- There will be continuing student arrangements for students enrolled in discontinuing programs so students can continue their funded course and will not be disadvantaged.
- Information about these arrangements will be published online soon.

**Slide 17 – transition slide****Career Ready - VET in schools**

- How does the Career Ready program assist school students?

**Slide 18****Key points we heard about VET for school students**

- During consultation, VET at schools was an interest area for a lot of stakeholders and we heard key messages that:
  - access to VET for school students as a pathway to employment was strongly supported
  - the purpose of VET needs to be clear, and aligned with student career aspirations
  - connections to industry are vital but is not happening enough at the moment.

**Slide 19****Supporting VET for school students**

- We recognise that the Department is one of many organisations that support the transition from school to work, and that the Career Ready program complements and works alongside these.
- The focus of Career Ready is secondary students who have career aspirations aligned to VET careers and pathways to support their transition from school to work.
- Our objectives for Career Ready include:
  - **Exploration:** Promoting VET pathways and supporting secondary students to make informed choices about the right career and training options for them
  - **Employment:** Providing strong pathways to employment and further training opportunities
  - **Access:** Enabling access to a range of Career Ready training options across the state

- **Responsible budget management:** Achieving a balance in DTET subsidised training delivery across all career stages to meet Queensland's need for more post-school qualified and higher skilled workers.

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### What it will mean for schools and secondary students

- Brings together oversight for Gateway to Industry Schools; Career Tasters and subsidised training (certificates and SATs) under the banner of Career Ready to provide a **suite of complementary programs** and training from Year 7 to 12.
- More information and support for secondary students to select the right training for them through the **introduction of non-accredited Career Tasters**; Year 10 students to have access to up to two tasters.
- Certificate training delivery (formally VETiS and what this EOI is focused on) to be focused on Year 11 and 12 students, with SATS available for Year 10-12; Students to have **access to one DTET funded accredited training** opportunity, with the possibility of a second funded opportunity as a SAT.
- A greater emphasis on quality provision with **strengthened entry criteria** for Skills Assure Suppliers delivering VET in schools including strong experience in delivery to school students and facilitation of industry connections.
- A more **targeted list of eligible qualifications** so that students can have confidence that industry supports a clear pathway into post school employment or further training.
- A contracting model that **considers delivery regions** to ensure access across the state.

## Slide 21 – transition slide

### New EOI process

- In this next section, we will run through the new EOI process in more detail.

## **Two different EOI processes**

- It is important to highlight that there are 2 separate processes, one for Career Start and Career Boost that is currently underway, and a separate new process for Career Ready – VET in schools.
- At the end of 2024, we opened up contracting via a new SAS EOI process for Career Start and Career Boost. Applications are currently being assessed and contracting will occur before 1 July 2025.
- The new Career Ready SAS EOI for delivery of qualifications through VET in schools is now open.
- RTOs should refer to the department's website for more details about the Career Ready SAS EOI including key dates.
- Please note, Career Ready Career Tasters are not part of this process.

## **Career Ready Skills Assure Supplier (SAS) EOI process – map**

- This diagram shows that the new Career Ready SAS EOI process will cover a two-year delivery period from 1 January 2026 until 31 December 2027.
- All RTOs must apply – including public providers and current SAS.
- The Career Ready EOI will be open for one calendar month.
- RTOs will need a Partner Portal account in order to submit a Career Ready SAS EOI response.
- RTOs must meet ALL of the mandatory eligibility criteria in order to progress to assessment of selection criteria.
- All RTOs that apply will be subject to an Independent Financial Assessment by Corporate Scorecard.
- Assessment against selection criteria will include due diligence checks, followed by assessment by an independent external organisation.
- Recommendations will be made by an independent panel.

- Outcomes advice will be issued in writing after all aspects of the EOI has been assessed and finalised.

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### **Mandatory eligibility criteria**

- To be eligible, RTOs must:
  - hold current registration with the Australian Skills Quality Authority (or ASQA) or the relevant jurisdictional regulator, and have done so for at least the last 2 years
  - have relevant scope of registration with ASQA and/or relevant jurisdictional regulator for the qualifications they would like to deliver. These qualifications will be listed in the online form and will be the basis of the new Queensland Subsidised Training List

RTOs must also:

- have 12 months delivery history in the full qualification they are applying for
- have sufficient history of delivery to Queensland students
- have a place of business in Queensland
- deliver at least 50% of the approved training and assessment services and acknowledge that any third party delivering training and assessment on behalf of the RTO must meet the National Standards for RTOs. School staff delivering training and assessment services on behalf of the RTO are classified as a third party arrangement and must not exceed 50% for the qualification. School staff supervising school students while training is delivered by the RTO are not classified as a third-party arrangement.
- have capacity to electronically report AVETMISS compliant training and assessment activity
- have RTO compliance, legal and trading history
- produce an ASIC current and historical extract dated within the last 30 days; and

- provide employer and school referees (these cannot be labour hire companies).

For more on these requirements, visit the website and refer to guidelines and frequently asked questions.

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### Selection Criteria

RTOs must provide written qualitative responses addressing pre-determined criteria:

- delivery of quality training outcomes
- meeting local community, employer and industry needs
- supporting the student journey
- RTO history and past performance

Due diligence checks and independent assessment of RTO's qualitative responses to criteria will inform recommendations for contracting.

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### Provisional Qualifications List

- A provisional list of certificate I and II qualifications, which may be subject to change, has been provided for the Career Ready SAS EOI application process.
- The Department is working with key industry stakeholders to review the list, to ensure schools and students can have confidence that industry supports the qualification as a clear pathway into post school employment or, further training.
- As a result, the Department reserves the right to remove, or place restrictions on, or not fund some of the qualifications from the Career Ready SAS EOI process based on industry advice about qualifications that are an effective school to post school employment and/or further VET study pathway.
- Qualifications which may be removed and/or restricted have been identified in the provisional list.

- Options for restricted delivery under consideration include
  - Making a funded qualification available only via a school-based traineeship pathway
  - Restricting delivery of a funded qualification to regional and remote areas
  - Restricting the number of funded places available
  - Restricting delivery to a specified supplier.

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### Partner Portal

- EOIs must be submitted through the Purchasing Online (POL) application in Partner Portal.
- The Partner Portal is a secure way eligible organisations can access departmental services.
- **RTOs that do not have a Partner Portal account** will need to create one and request access to Purchasing Online.
- Steps on how to do this can be found on the SAS contracting webpage, on the DTET website.
- It can take time, and we recommend you start this process sooner rather than later and please reach out if you have any issues.

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### Help and support

- Support is available to help EOI respondents access our systems.
- **For Partner Portal help:**
  - you can refer to our manuals online – these include information about accessing help for features supported by Australian Government agencies
  - you can email the Partner Portal team for Partner Portal issues only. Please note, the Partner Portal team cannot assist with other queries relating to the Career Ready SAS EOI.

We are also available to answer questions about the process. You can email us at [SAS.EOI@desbt.qld.gov.au](mailto:SAS.EOI@desbt.qld.gov.au).

We can provide advice on the EOI process, but for probity purposes, and to ensure the process is fair and equitable, the department is unable to help compile applications or provide advice on your application content.

### Slide 29 – transition slide

#### Learn more

- Information and resources are available.

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#### Learn more – website and enquiries

- Visit the department's website – at [desbt.qld.gov.au](http://desbt.qld.gov.au) – to learn more:
  - Download and read the Training Priorities Plan
  - Read about the new SAS framework
  - Learn about the EOI process
  - Access detailed guidelines for Career Ready SAS EOI
  - Read frequently asked questions.
- And, of course, email us if you have further questions.

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#### THANK YOU

- Thank you for your interest in working with us to deliver on the vision of the Queensland Skills Strategy.

**ENDS.**