



Fees-free info sheet: How school learning programmes and secondary-tertiary programmes fit within fees-free settings

This document sets out how school learning programmes and secondary-tertiary programmes work within fees-free settings.

Applies to 2021

To be eligible for fees-free, a learner must meet the prior study criteria

To be eligible for Fees Free for provider-based tertiary education and industry training, a student or trainee must have either:

- a. been enrolled in a school in the current or preceding two calendar years other than as an ¹adult student; or
- b. not undertaken more than half a year of equivalent full-time tertiary education (0.5 equivalent full-time student (EFTS) units or 60 credits) at Level 3 or above on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF), including tertiary education at an equivalent level undertaken in any country.

The following credits must not be included in measures of prior tertiary education in when determining eligibility for Fees Free:

- i. any tertiary education undertaken while enrolled in school prior to 1 January 2019 (unless as an ¹adult student);
- ii. any tertiary courses undertaken as part of the student's or trainee's school learning programme or secondary-tertiary programme on or after 1 January 2019;
- iii. any credits achieved as part of any industry training programme that consists of fewer than 120 credits that are reported after 1 January 2018;
- iv. any tertiary study or training in respect of which fees support is provided through the TTAF;
- v. any tertiary study or training that is funded through the Youth Guarantee (YG) or Māori and Pasifika Trades Training (MPTT) fund after 1 July 2020; and
- vi. any tertiary study or training that is funded through the Refugee English Fund.

¹ An adult student, under the Act, is any student whose 19th birthday occurred before 1 January of the current year. This definition does not apply to students deemed to require special education under Section 37 of the Act.

Defining a “school learning programme (SLP)” and a “secondary-tertiary programme (STP)”

	School learning programme	Secondary-tertiary programme
Definition	Any school approved study at level 3 or above on the NZQF that a learner participates in while enrolled in that school. This may include tertiary education and excludes study done for personal interest not arranged through a school.	“A full-time programme for a participating student that— a. has a secondary component and a tertiary component; and b. is co-ordinated by a provider group or a lead provider.” ²
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › NCEA level 3 courses. › A learner is enrolled at a secondary school. They excel at maths; have completed NCEA levels 1, 2 and 3 maths and are now undertaking maths courses at university to support their learning requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Trades Academies › Gateway, and › the Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource (STAR).
How we identify if a learner is undertaking this type of study	<p>TEOs report these courses as a STP in monthly <i>Fees Free All Enrolments and Costs</i> returns using the non-standard fee field.</p> <p>There is no Source of Funding code for a school learning programme. As such, we can’t identify this type of study through the Single Data Return (SDR). We rely on the information you provide us in your monthly <i>Fees Free All Enrolments and Costs</i> return to identify where a learner is undertaking study as part of their school learning programme.</p>	<p>TEOs report these courses as a STP in monthly <i>Fees Free All Enrolments and Costs</i> returns using the non-standard fee field.</p> <p>We can also double check some of these courses through the Source of Funding code recorded in the SDR.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Trades Academies – Source of Funding code 24. › Gateway – Not recorded in the SDR. Schools aren’t required to report learners undertaking Gateway learning. › STAR – Source of Funding code 05.
Does this study affect a learner’s fees-free eligibility or entitlement?	No – the learner will not use any fees-free entitlement and the study will not be included in measures of prior study for eligibility purposes.	

Further explanation about a school learning programme

If a learner is undertaking tertiary study arranged by their school, then the study is part of a ‘school learning programme’ regardless of whether the learner is also undertaking NCEA level 3 (including University Entrance), Cambridge International, the International Baccalaureate, or other equivalent secondary school study.

The test is not about *how* the courses are funded, but whether they are part of a programme of learning undertaken as part of their schooling.

² Section 10, Education and Training Act 2020.

Courses and industry training programmes that are “*not* part of a school learning programme or secondary-tertiary programme” are eligible for fees-free

So if a learner undertakes study or training that is *not* a school learning programme or secondary-tertiary programme (as defined above) they will start using their fees-free entitlement.
