



Kia ora!

Welcome to the Fees-Free newsletter for August, with tips to help make Fees-Free easier for you, and easier for your learners.

Please encourage all those working on Fees-Free enrolments and reporting in your organisation to subscribe to this newsletter and receive updates directly.

If you'd like to view Fees-Free newsletters from previous months, they're on the TEC website on the [Fees Free Guidance page](#).

TEC takes action on false declarations

In implementing Fees-Free, we've introduced several monitoring activities to ensure the policy is effective and that government funds are used responsibly.

We routinely check for potentially false declarations and take appropriate action where they're identified. This has led to the [TEC laying charges against three individuals](#) under [section 292A of the Education Act 1989](#) for making a false representation for the purpose of receiving, or continuing to receive, free tertiary education from a tertiary education organisation (TEO).

It's important that individuals understand their obligations when making a statutory declaration. The information they provide must be accurate.

If you have information about a learner that might change their Fees-Free eligibility status, please provide this information to us

This could include where you find information about a learner with a 'yes' eligibility status that may change their eligibility status to 'no.'

You can inform us via the *Fees Free TEO Change Learner Eligibility Status* report in Workspace 2.

The following information about courses undertaken by the learner (if applicable) must be entered in the **Description of evidence** field:

- The course start date and course end date.
- The TEO the course was undertaken at.
- The country the course was undertaken in.

If the Fees-Free team requires a more detailed description of evidence, the status of a learner's review will be changed to **Awaiting TEO response** in the report.

You'll be notified by the Customer Contact Group when the report has been updated. We ask you to check those with the status **Awaiting TEO response** and provide the requested information in the same report as soon as possible.

You're not required to supply a copy of the learner's transcripts.

For more information about Workspace 2 please see the [TEC website](#).

A learner's 2018 eligibility status may be updated to 'yes' in some circumstances

For example, where we've:

- approved a late 2018 statutory declaration
- used data matching to identify an eligible learner not reported to us in 2018, or
- reconsidered a learner's circumstances based on new information.

In these cases, the learner's 2019 eligibility status will be updated to '2018 Starter'.

This means that:

- the learner is eligible to receive Fees-Free payments for any eligible study or training they undertook in 2018 (up to the value of \$12,000), and
- *(if they're undertaking provider-based study)* they're entitled to receive Fees-Free payments in 2019 if they undertook less than one equivalent full-time student (EFTS) and used less than \$12,000 in 2018 (until they reach either the 1 EFTS or \$12,000 cap).

We'll inform you if we update the 2018 eligibility status of any learner enrolled at your organisation, and alert you to the next steps needed. For example, we'll ask you for the learner's 2018 course enrolment information. We'll then work with you to make payments as quickly as possible.

Changes to a learner's eligibility status (including to a '2018 Starter') will be notified via the 2018 and 2019 Fees Free Eligibility files available on Workspace 2. In some cases, where we've been working with you or

individual learner's to determine their 2018 eligibility status, we'll contact you directly to notify you of the change.

Once we've notified you that a learner's 2018 eligibility status has changed to 'yes', you can no longer request payment or take any kind of recovery action for the learner's 2018 fees (up to the value of \$12,000). Where the learner has already paid 2018 fees, we expect these to be refunded as quickly as possible.

Invoicing eligible learners (applies to providers)

While you're able to invoice learners with a 2019 'yes' or '2018 Starter' eligibility status, you're **not** able to request payment from them where they have Fees-Free entitlement remaining.

Please see the *NSNs Consuming Fees Free in 2018* report on Workspace 2 to check whether a '2018 Starter' has fully consumed their Fees-Free entitlement (consumed) or whether they have some Fees-Free entitlement to carry forward (carryover).

When invoicing a 2018 Starter...

Where possible, please indicate to learners that the amount they're being invoiced may change later depending on how much carryover they're entitled to.

Remind learners to check their eligibility status on the Fees-Free website

We want to make sure that no eligible learner is missing out on their Fees-Free entitlement. So it's important to **advise all learners (including school leavers)** enrolling at your organisation to check their eligibility status at feesfree.govt.nz.

If a learner has an 'unknown' eligibility status, and they meet the eligibility criteria, advise them to complete and submit a statutory declaration as soon as possible so they can receive Fees-Free for any Fees-Free eligible study or training they undertake. **We highly recommend that learners submit their statutory declaration before midnight 31 December 2019** so they're guaranteed to receive their Fees-Free entitlement for any eligible study or training they undertake this year.

How industry cash contributions (ICC) work within Fees-Free settings (applies to industry training organisations)

We acknowledge that, while the [Industry Training Fund \(ITF\) conditions](#) were updated to reflect the introduction of the Fees-Free policy, the ICC methodology for calculating the amount of ICC was not.

We're working to update the methodology so it takes into consideration the Fees-Free policy. In the meantime you must ensure that each employer of industry trainees or apprentices who are enrolled with you makes a financial contribution towards the cost of each industry trainee's or apprentice's training. Note that there may be some specific circumstances where the full financial costs of training and assessment for a trainee could be met by the financial contribution from ITF and the Fees-Free tertiary education initiative.

Reporting

Reporting information not reaching the right person?

Please email the Customer Contact Group at sectorhelpdesk@tec.govt.nz if you need a staff member added as a Fees-Free data return contact for your organisation. Include their name, job title and email address. Your organisation can have more than one data return contact.

Reporting schedule

8 August	August <i>Fees Free All Enrolments and Costs</i> template and instructions sent to you via Workspace 2
9 August	Extract date for August <i>Fees Free All Enrolments and Costs</i> return
21 August	August <i>Fees Free All Enrolments and Costs</i> return due to TEC by uploading to Workspace 2
11 September	September <i>Fees Free All Enrolments and Costs</i> template and instructions sent to you via Workspace 2
12 September	Extract date for September <i>Fees Free All Enrolments and Costs</i> return
18 September	September <i>Fees Free All Enrolments and Costs</i> return due to TEC by uploading to Workspace 2

Update on invoicing – industry training organisations

Last month we noted that we're making improvements to the current invoice process based on feedback. We're hoping these improvements will be in place by September. In the meantime, your invoices are due on the fourth working day of each month.

Contact us

If you have any questions or comments about this newsletter, or any other Fees-Free issues, please contact the Customer Contact Group at sectorhelpdesk@tec.govt.nz.

Free to unlock your potential

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Our mailing address is:

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