



# NSW Trainee Information Handbook

**RTO Code: 90897**

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## Introduction and Welcome

Welcome to Real Estate Training Solutions (RETS), a Registered Training Organisation (RTO – RTO Provider Code: 90897) currently offering a range of real estate and strata management training in NSW and the ACT.

RETS is approved by the National Regulator for Vocational Education & Training (VET), the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) to deliver nationally training.

RETS conducts training in compliance with relevant Commonwealth, state or territory legislation and regulatory requirements. These include:

- The VET Quality Framework
- Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
- NSW Smart & Skilled Contract, Terms and Conditions, Operating Guidelines and related policies
- The ACT Government Training Initiative Funding Agreement, the ACT Quality Framework and Standards for Delivery of Subsidised Training

RETS is approved by and under contract with the NSW Department of Education to deliver subsidised training, specifically the Smart and Skilled initiative.

This Traineeship Handbook provides you with information you may need whilst studying as a trainee with Real Estate Training Solutions (RETS). If you enrol as a student with RETS, you will be expected to comply with the policies in this handbook. If for any reason you are unsure of any information in this Handbook, please contact our office for clarification on 1300 850 980 or [admin@rets.com.au](mailto:admin@rets.com.au). RETS reserves the right to modify, revise or supplement the information including policies and procedures in this Handbook at its discretion.

The most recent copy of this Handbook can be found at the RETS website - [www.rets.com.au](http://www.rets.com.au)

**It is vital that you read this document in conjunction with the RETS Student Handbook.**

## What is a Traineeship?

Traineeships combine work-based training with an employer and formal training from a training provider (RTO). For a traineeship to be set up, a Training Contract must be established between the employer and you, the trainee. Training contracts are regulated by government.

During your traineeship, you will combine on-the-job training with formal study. This improves the likelihood that you will get the skills and experience future employers are looking for. Traineeships are offered 2 years full time, 3 + years part time.

### **School based traineeships:**

School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBAT) allow year 10, 11 and 12 high school students to complete a traineeship.

School-based trainees work part-time and complete their formal or off-the-job traineeship training by the end of their HSC year. The on-the-job and off-the-job training undertaken by school-based trainees can contribute to their HSC.

## Apprenticeship & Traineeship Act, 2001

The traineeship (and apprenticeship) system in NSW is regulated by the *Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001*. The NSW Department of Education's State Training Services (STS) administers this Act and registers and monitors apprenticeships and traineeships in NSW. STS acts in the interests of employers, apprentices and trainees in ensuring quality training is delivered with nationally recognised outcomes.

All traineeships (and apprenticeships) require:

**Training Contract** that is signed by both the employer and apprentice or trainee approved by STS

**Paid Employment** under an appropriate industrial arrangement (for example, an award or enterprise agreement)

A **Training Plan** endorsed by an RTO that specifies the training required to achieve the appropriate nationally recognised qualification.

## Training Contract

A Training Contract is a legally binding agreement between the employer and you, the trainee, and covers the duration of your traineeship. A completed and signed training contract is used to register your traineeship and protects both the employer's and employee's interests and outlines each party's obligations, including the training and supervision that must be provided. The training contract consists of:

- qualification to be undertaken
- estimate of how long it will take to complete
- the number of hours of training and of employment to be provided each week
- each party's obligations to each other
- what to do if there is a problem
- off-the-job and on-the-job training and assessment arrangements.

The completion and registration of your Training Contract is completed by a provider from Apprenticeship Connect Australia (commonly called an Apprenticeship Centre).

## Paid Employment

The terms of your employment include pay arrangements; this is described in your Training Contract.

## Training Plan

A **Training Plan** is a formal document which describes how the training and assessment will be carried out during your traineeship. The Training Plan specifies:

- how, when and where training will be delivered
- what assessment methods will be used.

Each trainee has their own Training Plan, which is developed collaboratively by:

- your employer
- you, the trainee
- the supervising Registered Training Organisation (RTO), that is RETS.

RETS develops a Training Plan for you within 12 weeks of commencement. It will be customised with consideration of the nature of your employer's business and your duties within the workplace.

RETS will ensure that you will have input into developing your Training Plan and that you are provided with a copy of the Training Plan.

Before your Training Plan is completed, RETS will check that your employer has the facilities, equipment, knowledge, skills and supervisory staff to provide you with your work-based training.

RETS must review and update your Training Plan regularly to ensure it remains current.

### **Traineeship costs**

In NSW, traineeships are funded under the NSW Government's Smart and Skilled Program. Smart and Skilled is a reform of the NSW Vocational Education and Training (VET) system. It's helping people in NSW get the skills they need to find a job and advance their careers.

Under Smart & Skilled, each government-subsidised qualification has a fixed qualification price made up of (a) a government subsidy and (b) a student fee.

**Under the NSW Government's current initiative, traineeships commenced after 1 July 2018 are fee free. This means that you can complete an apprenticeship in NSW under no cost to you.**

For more about the NSW Government's Smart and Skilled program, visit

<https://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/>

## The Application and Enrolment Process

Your employer or an Apprentice Connect Australia Provider will contact RETS to let us know that you wish to commence a traineeship and that you wish to complete your chosen qualification with RETS.

Before you enrol or commence training and assessment, RETS must provide you with advice about the course (training product) in which you wish to enrol. To provide you with accurate advice, we first must consider your learning needs and your current skills and competencies. We carry out this process in a number of ways:

- We talk to you to explore your interest and motivation in completing a course of study.
- We have a 'competency discussion' with you to assess your current work role, if any, your workplace skills, previous qualifications, etc.
- We will ask you about your Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN skills). You must have a sufficient level of English and be capable of reading, writing and understanding English, as all RETS courses are delivered in this language. If your level of English is not appropriate, your Application may be declined (Please see the Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) section later in this Handbook).
- If you qualify for subsidised training, we may ask you some questions to confirm your eligibility.
- We ask you if you have any support needs that would help you to successfully complete your course and discuss possible support services that we could provide to you if you have support needs.

If we have assessed that your chosen course is appropriate to your current skills, then we will provide you with further information to help you make a final decision about starting your studies with RETS.

To finalise your enrolment in your traineeship, there are a number of documents that we need to send to you and your employer, including, but not limited to:

- RETS Application Form
- Student Handbook
- Confidentially/ Consent Agreement Form
- Trainee Information Handbook
- Employer Information Handbook

We will also ask your employer to talk to you about your course, to send us their feedback on your training program and to confirm that they have all the resources and facilities to provide you with the training at your workplace.

## Traineeship eligibility

The following eligibility criteria apply for Smart & Skilled subsidised traineeships:

- at the time of Commencement, the New Entrant Trainee and has an approved Training Contract in NSW
- the qualification that you are undertaking is on the NSW Skills List
- the qualification that you are undertaking is shown on your Training Contract

You also must have the capacity to undertake the proposed traineeship. Issues that RETS may assess include:

- Disabilities
- Literacy and numeracy skills
- Previous performance

For more information about Smart & Skilled, go to:

<https://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/>

For more information about traineeship qualifications, go to:

<https://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/for-students/apprenticeships-traineeships>

## Evidence of Eligibility

You must provide evidence to support your eligibility for your subsidised traineeship under the Smart and Skilled program. To be eligible for subsidised training for any Smart and Skilled program, you must:

- live or work in NSW (determined by postcode of the usual place of residence or place of work); or
- If you are an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainee who does not live or work in NSW but lives in specific defined interstate NSW border areas, you are eligible for government-subsidised training under Smart and Skilled
- Be Australian citizen; or a permanent Australian resident; or a New Zealand citizen; or a humanitarian visa holder or a partner visa holder whose sponsor is a humanitarian visa holder
- be aged 15 years or older; and
- be no longer in secondary education - excluding registered home school students

For more information about eligibility for Smart & Skilled subsidised training, view the Smart and Skilled Student Eligibility Policy at:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/resources/smart-and-skilled-student-eligibility-policy>

## Informing the NSW Government about your enrolment

As part of the enrolment process for prospective students who are in receipt of subsidised training, RETS must notify the NSW Department of Education that you are being enrolled to complete a course with RETS as part of your traineeship. This process is called the *Notification of Enrolment Process*. RETS must follow certain steps to notify the Department that you are commencing a course of study for which RETS will receive a subsidy from the NSW Government for providing you with the training for your traineeship course of study. RETS notified the Department about you online using the State Training Services (STS) portal.

As part of this process, RETS must:

- Ensure that you meet eligibility criteria for trainees to receive subsidised training
- Get all required consent from you, the prospective trainee. This includes you signing or electronically accepting (including by ticking a check box) a consent form that includes specific wording required by the Department. If you do not provide your consent, RETS cannot proceed with the Notification of Enrolment Process.
- Where applicable, inform you of any third-party arrangements, that is when someone else is delivering services to you on behalf of RETS
- Provide you with the details of the fee that you would have to pay for the approved qualification that you are completing during your traineeship
- Capture your Unique Student Identifier (USI)
- Get a declaration from you about the correctness of the information provided by you and that confirming that you are not completing the same qualification or Units of Competency at the same time somewhere else
- Confirm that you have received information from RETS about fees
- Report enrolments with all required information (including the proposed date of Commencement (the Planned Start Date)) to the Department.

The Notification of Enrolment Process will be completed for you, the prospective trainee when all the above steps have been undertaken. Then a **Commitment ID** is issued by the Department for you.

You only become an Enrolled Student once the Notification of Enrolment Process has been completed, a Commitment ID has been issued and you have enrolled in the relevant Approved Qualification with RETS.

If a Commitment ID has been issued to you and you do not enrol with RETS or cancel your enrolment, RETS will cancel the Commitment ID immediately.

RETS will also:

- Commence you in the Approved Qualification connected to the Commitment ID on the Planned Start Date
- Submit Training Activity Data for you within 6 weeks of the Planned Start Date.
- If your Training Activity Data is not submitted within 6 weeks of the Planned Start Date, your Commitment ID will expire.

## Credit transfer

During your enrolment process, we will tell you about Credit Transfer (CT).

A key pillar of the national VET system is that nationally endorsed qualifications, skill sets and units of competency are recognised and portable across the country—regardless of where they were issued. This is called Credit Transfer. It means that if you have completed VET studies at another RTO or in a different state, you are not required to repeat any unit in which you have already been assessed as competent (unless a regulatory requirement or licence condition, including an industry licensing scheme, requires this). If you provide RETS with suitable evidence that you have successfully completed a unit at any RTO, then RETS will provide credit for the unit.

## Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) **is a form of assessment** that acknowledges the full range of an individual's skills and knowledge, irrespective of how they have been acquired.

RPL involves matching what you already know and can do (their competencies) with learning outcomes of units in an accredited course.

**Please note, RPL is not a short cut or necessarily a 'quick' way of completing a course.**

You may use RPL to gain credit in a course, or for employment related purposes. These competencies may have been gained in a variety of ways:

**work experience** – this includes both work that is paid e.g., working in a supermarket, and unpaid e.g., helping run the family business.

**industry experience** – previously working in real estate or strata.

**education** – this includes courses undertaken at school or college in Australia or overseas, attending adult education classes, and training programs at work; and

**life experience** – this includes being a voluntary worker for a community organisation, running a household, caring for relatives, and leisure pursuits.

What matters is whether the knowledge and skills that you have gained helps to meet the assessment criteria – not where or how they were gained. If you already have the skills and knowledge that a course of study would teach, then you may not have to repeat that part of the course. Similarly, RPL can be used to gain entry into an occupation, in situations where skills need to be recognised, and for award classification purposes.

RETS uses an 'RPL Kit' to assess your application, and it requires you to submit a wide range of supporting evidence. If there is sufficient evidence in the application and supporting documentation, no further assessment may be necessary. If further assessment is required, it may take a practical form consistent with the assessment criteria for your claimed competencies. You may also need to complete some

written assessments if there are knowledge gaps in the RPL evidence you have provided.

If you think you may be eligible for RPL please contact the RETS office to discuss. The matter further. After an initial assessment, we will confirm if you are eligible for RPL and send you an RPL Kit to commence the process.

## Fees and Charges

Fee arrangements for Smart & Skilled subsidised students adhere to the NSW Department of Education's Smart & Skilled Fee Administration Policy which can be viewed at:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/resources/smart-and-skilled-fee-administration-policy>

If you are a School based trainee (SBAT) please see:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/resources/smart-and-skilled-sbat-fee-administration-policy>

### General Fee Protection

RETS will only accept a maximum initial payment (prepaid fee) of no more than \$1500 from you before the commencement of your course. If you have agreed to pay further additional fees after commencement for services yet to be delivered by RETS, these additional fees will not exceed \$1,500 on each occasion that an additional fee is paid.

### Smart & Skilled Student Fees

The following information is taken from the *Smart & Skilled Fee Administration Policy* and describes how qualification costs are structured.

- The total course fee for a government subsidised qualification (traineeship course) is called the *Qualification Price*. It is made up of two parts:
  - *The Student Fee* (payable by the student / employer /trainee) and
  - *The Subsidy* (paid by the relevant government body to RETS).

There are different categories of student fees for different Smart & Skilled programs, for different qualifications and the characteristics of you, the student. The NSW Government has a portal that allows RETS to calculate the student fee.

For more information about Smart and Skilled, go to:

<https://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/home>

For more information about current Smart & Skilled student fees and subsidies, go to: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/vocational/funding/smart-skilled-fees>

RETS must ensure that any fees that it publishes or charges you for Smart and Skilled subsidised training match the fees published on the Smart & Skilled Qualification Prices and fees register:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/resources/qualification-prices-fees>

## **Fee Exemptions and Concessions:**

### **Student Fee Concessions – Smart and Skilled**

To see details relating to Smart and Skilled Fee concessions:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/noindex/2024-05/fee-administration-policy-1-jul-24-to-30-jun-25.pdf>

### **Credit transfer concessions:**

If you provide RETS with AQF certification documentation issued by any other RTO, we will provide Credit Transfer towards the qualification you wish to complete. This is at no cost.

### **Fees for transferring students**

*Of their own accord*

You are undertaking a Smart and Skilled qualification as part of your traineeship, you may withdraw from a qualification with RETS and transfer to another Smart and Skilled approved RTO to complete your qualification because:

- You chose to of their own accord
- Your initial RTO (RETS) closes., or
- Your initial RTO's (RETS) Smart and Skilled Contract has been terminated.

If you transfer of their own accord from their initial Smart and Skilled RTO to RETS to complete their training, standard credit transfer rules will apply when calculating your student fee.

To do this, RETS must get a statement of attainment from you (issued by the initial RTO) to determine what credit should be granted. RETS will then use the Smart and Skilled Provider Calculator to determine the student fee that you need to pay, if applicable.

In this situation, the student may end up contributing more towards the cost of their training.

### *Due to the closure of the RTO*

The following rules apply to you if you transfer to RETS due to your first RTO's:

- closure
- the termination of the first RTO's Smart and Skilled Contract.
- The first RTO cannot continue to deliver training in the agreed delivery mode

The following fee rules apply in the above situation:

- The fees charged in total by the first and RTO and RETS cannot exceed the student fee quoted by the first RTO.
- Where the combined fee exceeds the original fee quoted, the RETS must contact the Department to confirm fee to be charged, before enrolling the student and charging any fees. Any fee gap will be paid to the RETS by the Department.

If you transfer from your first Smart and Skilled RTO to RETS to complete their training, and the transfer is not your decision, RETS must get the following documentation:

- A statement of attainment issued by the previous Smart and Skilled RTO
- An up-to-date training plan (issued by the first RTO) that lists all units of competency that you have achieved, commenced but not completed, and/or not started; and
- A statement of fees issued by the first RTO.

RETS can then enter the details into the Smart and Skilled Provider Calculator to determine your Student Fee.

Getting the above documentation may not be possible where the initial RTO closes. In these instances, RETS will seek assistance from the Department to determine your Student Fee.

### *Transitioning Qualifications*

The Student Fee will remain the same if you are required to move from a superseded qualification to a new qualification.

## **Fee Refunds**

To find out more about the refund policy and procedure please see here:

[www.rets.com.au/forms1.html](http://www.rets.com.au/forms1.html)

## Withdrawal without penalty

As a trainee you have seven (7) days from formalisation of your enrolment to withdraw without penalty from the course.

You are considered to have formalised your enrolment when RETS has generated a *Notification of Enrolment - Provider Copy* letter on the NSW Department of Education's State Training Services Portal, STS Online.

If you request a withdrawal within this 7-day period and, if any fees have been paid, those fees will be refunded, less a \$75 administration fee.

## Recovery of Outstanding Student Fees

RETS collects all fees due to be paid before the scheduled completion date of your subsidised training. RETS has a robust process for the recovery of outstanding fees from a student.

RETS generates AQF certification documentation for you within 30 days of you completing your training. RETS will not release your AQF certification documentation until all outstanding fees are recovered.

For significant student debts, formal debt collection actions may also be undertaken by RETS.

## Lost and Replacement Certificate/Document Fees

RETS is required to keep a record of all AQF certification documentation issued to you for 30 years.

If you have lost your copies of AQF documents issued to you following completion of your training, RETS will reissue these AQF documents.

If you need your AQF documents to be reissued, you will need to contact RETS office in writing via email and include a copy of your certified photo identification with your written request. You will be invoiced the applicable reissue fee (see below) and upon payment, you will receive your new AQF documents by post within 7 working days.

| <b>Replacement of documents lost or misplaced</b> | <b>Cost (incl GST)</b> |
|---|------------------------|
| Replacement of both Transcript and Certificate    | \$55                   |

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## Unique Student Identifier (USI)

It is a government requirement that all students (and continuing students) have a Unique Student Identifier (USI). This USI must be provided to your RTO prior to issuance of your qualification or statement of attainment at the completion of your course.

RETS requests that you create a USI and provide it to us as soon as possible. When we have your USI we will verify it against your name and date of birth details you have provided to us on your enrolment form.

After 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015, if we do not have this USI we are unable to issue you with AQF certification documentation on completion of your course.

To find out more about the USI go to the link: <https://www.usi.gov.au/students>

### How do I get a USI?

1. Go to [www.usi.gov.au](http://www.usi.gov.au)
2. Click 'I am a student'
3. Click Create your USI
4. Click on "who are you - Australian or International student"
5. Have a form of ID as mentioned before clicking continue
6. Click continue
7. Read Terms and Conditions
8. Click agree tick box and click next
9. Click create USI
10. Fill in personal information in required fields
11. Click Next
12. Confirm your details check to see that they are all correct make changes if needed
13. Click Next
14. Tick which form of ID you will be using and click next
15. Fill in required field regarding you form of ID
16. Click next
17. Create a password and set questions
18. Click next

### **Your USI should appear on the screen! Please record and return your USI number.**

When creating your USI please ensure that the access controls are set to allow the Department and RETS appropriate levels of access to your USI records.

Once RETS receives your USI, we will confirm its authenticity using the Student Identifier Register.

## Deferral, Discontinuation and Transfer

### Deferring your traineeship

- If you tell us that you wish to defer RETS training, RETS will make every effort to assist you to continue the training component of your traineeship where possible.
- If you proceed with the deferral of training, RETS can only permit a deferral of no more than 12 months from the date of receipt of written deferral notice from you.
- RETS will advise you of the deferring of your subsidised training.
- If you do not recommence training within a 12-month period of deferral, you will be reported as a discontinuing Subsidised Training.
- If you wish to recommence training after discontinuing your subsidised qualification, you will be treated as a new student and a new the Notification of Enrolment Process must be conducted.

### Discontinuing your traineeship

If you tell us that you wish to discontinue your training in the subsidised qualification, RETS will:

- Identify the reason(s) why you are discontinuing your training
- Establish if your reason for discontinuation is related to RETS delivery of training or other services
- Make all reasonable efforts to address your concerns around the reasons why you wish to discontinue your subsidised training

If you wish to proceed with discontinuing your course after this process, RETS will:

- Seek a formal notification from you about the date that you propose the training to end
- Refund any applicable Student Fees to you
- Issue you with a Statement of Attainment and associated transcript for any completed Units of Competency within 21 days of your notification of the discontinuance
- Update your Training Plan listing all Units of Competency where an outcome has been achieved, commenced but not completed and/or not commenced
- Provide you with your updated Training Plan

- Return to you any results of any outstanding completed training activities and/or assessments
- Notify the State Training Services (STS) Regional Office within 14 days of your notification of the discontinuation of training.

## **Transfer your traineeship to Another Provider**

### *Transfer Out Process*

- If you wish to transfer from RETS to another RTO (Transfer Out), RETS will provide you with advice as soon as practically possible.
- If RETS Smart and Skilled Contract is terminated or suspended, then your Transfer Out Process will be commenced before the termination of the contract and/or the ending of delivery of Subsidised training to you.
- The Transfer Out process will include giving you the following options and advice:
  - The date of forthcoming termination of the Contract or of ending the delivery of subsidised training
  - Options for continuing training, which may include:
    - Referring you to the Smart and Skilled website to identify an alternative RTO who can provide Subsidised Training
    - Referring you to the local State Training Services Regional Office for assistance
    - You opting to remain with RETS and continue training on a “fee-for-service” basis (without the benefit of Subsidies)
    - RETS to suggest an alternative Provider
  - Fee arrangements for transferring you (in accordance with the Fee Administration Policy)
  - Issuing you with Statements of Attainment/Qualification credentials reflective of their actual training and assessment progress to date
  - Issuing you with an updated Training Plan listing all Units of Competency where an outcome has been achieved, commenced but not completed and/or not commenced
  - Ensuring that if you are still receiving training at the time of your transfer request, you receive any refunds owed in accordance with the Fee Administration Policy

- Return results to you of any outstanding completed training activities and/or assessments
- Submit Training Activity Data to State training services NSW to finalise your record and, if eligible, receive any further payments of subsidies and loadings.

### *Transfer In Process*

If you are a student with another RTO, and you wish to transfer to RETS, then you will be treated as a new student.

RETS must carry out the Notification of Enrolment Process to notify the department about your new enrolment with RETS.

RETS may need to contact the Department to determine the Student Fee that you will need to pay, if applicable.

### *What happens to my assignments if I withdraw?*

- If you withdraw or cancel your traineeship part way through a unit of competency, then you will lose any work they you have completed for that unit.
- If you then wish to recommence your traineeship at a later point in time, any previous partially completed work (where the unit was not completed in full) will need to be re-submitted.
- For example, you started your traineeship and have completed 5 units, and you are 50% of the way through the 6<sup>th</sup> unit: You will receive a Statement of Attainment for 5 units, and all work completed for the 6<sup>th</sup> unit will be lost. To avoid this problem, you would need to login to the LMS before you withdraw, copy and paste your written responses for the incomplete unit and save them on your own device.

## Seeking Help

If you need help in choosing the right course option for you contact the RETS office, where one of our helpful staff members will provide you with the information you require.

If you have any questions about your training content or your assessment tasks, you can contact your assessor via email, phone or the RETS VET Campus direct messaging system. You can also request a phone call from our Trainers/Assessors for any assistance or advice.

If you have any other support needs, contact us for a confidential discussion.

## Policies & Procedures

RETS has a range of policies and procedures that set out how we manage the delivery of the training and assessment services we offer our students.

To read more about the policies and procedures listed below, go to:  
[www.rets.com.au/forms1.html](http://www.rets.com.au/forms1.html)

## RETS Contact Details

For further clarification on any material in this handbook contact RETS:

**Web:** [www.rets.com.au](http://www.rets.com.au)

**Email:** [admin@rets.com.au](mailto:admin@rets.com.au)

**Phone:** 1300 850 980

**PO Box 682  
Richmond, NSW, 2753**