

# Frequently asked questions

Sign Making training - August 2020

## Q How do we apply for Apprenticeship Boost funding for employers with 'new' or '1st' or '2nd' year apprentices?

### Apprenticeship Boost Scheme for Employers

**Paid monthly in advance.**

Employers can apply for the Apprenticeship Boost which only applies to apprentices in their first or second year. (new and existing)

Employers can receive an Apprenticeship Boost subsidy for a maximum of 20 months up until April 04, 2022.

**The subsidy scheme finishes on April 04, 2022 (need to apply ASAP):**

IE: If you apply in September 2020 = 19 months, October 2020 = 18 months, November 2020 = 17 months employer subsidy, etc... etc.

How much you receive depends on whether your apprentice is in their first or second year of training:

- employers of first year apprentices can get \$1,000 a month
- employers of second year apprentices can get \$500 a month.
- These amounts don't include GST. If you're GST registered, you'll be paid the amount plus GST.

### Process

There needs to be:

- An employment agreement in place
- **New apprentice:** Contact Competenz to sign up candidate as an apprentice
- **New apprentice:** Competenz, employer and apprentice work together to create a training plan
- Employer registers and applies for Apprenticeship Boost subsidy through work and income (see link on the right) – for any existing first and second year apprentices or any new apprentices
- Apply for first month's payment/s
- You'll need to reconfirm each month with Work and Income
- You can reconfirm by logging back into your Apprenticeship Boost account. They'll send you a message when it's time to do this
- You must pay your apprentice at least the minimum or training wage.
  - Minimum wage: \$18.90 per hour
  - Training wage: \$15.12 per hour

### Work and Income

The link below takes you through the process of applying for the Boost funding through Work and Income/Ministry of Social Development. Your apprentice must be signed up by *Competenz Industry Training Organisation* prior to applying.

<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/employers/subsidies-training-and-other-help/apprenticeship-boost.html>

## Q Can a 90 day trial be built into an apprenticeship?

**A** *Excerpt from the Code of Good Practice for New Zealand Apprenticeships* "Only employers who are able to commit to supporting an apprentice for the duration of their training should consider employing an apprentice"

### Code of Good Practice for New Zealand Apprenticeships

<https://www.tec.govt.nz/assets/Publications-and-others/The-code-of-good-practice-for-new-zealand-apprenticeships.pdf>

## Q When is the best time for a trainee to do an apprenticeship – now or when the new apprenticeship format is released? Q Is there any cost to the student/apprentice?

**A** Apprenticeships are fees free from 01 July 2020 to December 31 2022, for all currently enrolled and new apprentices.

The initiatives not only include free apprenticeships, but also free traineeships in targeted areas, wage subsidies for employers of apprentices and equipment for existing learners who do not have access to technology.

### Benefits for employers and trainees of doing an apprenticeship now

<https://www.competenz.org.nz/jobseekers/free-apprenticeships/>

## Q What if we have existing employees that we want to put through an apprenticeship, will their prior industry knowledge be recognised? And what is the process and cost?

**A** People working in the sign industry that believe they have the knowledge and skills to be awarded the apprenticeship can apply to Competenz through Recognised Prior Learning (RPL).

The cost through Competenz depends on certain factors; how much assessment is required, how long it takes to identify missed learning knowledge and how long it takes to gain evidence that the candidate has all the knowledge required – can vary in cost from approximately \$6,000 to \$10,000 (user pays-not funded).

**Please note: Government Reform of Tertiary Education** (It will change from Competenz when the apprenticeships go to another provider – which at this point has not been confirmed who that will be – Yoobee Colleges or the New Institute of Technology) This transition is likely to happen mid 2021 and RPL will still be achievable through whoever the provider is)

Competenz have said that the price for RPL will be considerably lower when the apprenticeships go to a new provider as the RPL process will be a bit different.

### Competenz Recognised Prior Learning (RPL)

<https://www.competenz.org.nz/jobseekers/industries-for-jobseekers/engineering/rpl-programme/>

## Q Can the hours and knowledge of someone that has been learning on the job who is 'not' in an apprentice be recognised and put towards an apprenticeship?

**A** Unfortunately, The hours cannot be recognised.

However, if the person has achieved any sign making unit standards relating to an apprenticeship in Sign making, these will be recorded on their NZQA record of learning by the organisation where they did the training and they will not need to do these assessments again. For example, working at heights, etc.

**Yoobee Colleges** *(Please note: this still in proposal and negotiation stage with Competenz, the information below is based on what Yoobee is proposing)*

**Yoobee Colleges**  
<https://www.yoobee.ac.nz/>

**Aside from the apprenticeship, Yoobee are intending to create a stand alone Sign Making programme** made up of micro-credentials (chunks of learning for some unit standards from the apprenticeship). These unit standards will be recognised at no cost and automatically taken off the apprenticeship (RPL) for those wishing to pathway into an apprenticeship.

Skills and knowledge achieved during this programme will enable graduates to work in industry armed with some sign making skills or they can pathway on to achieve the apprenticeship for the rest of the unit standards.

**Yoobee Colleges are also intending to include specialist areas as micro credentials in the future** (chunks of learning for specialist sign making skills) for those already working in the industry and wishing to up-skill.

With regards to the government's reform of tertiary education, Yoobee Colleges are also considering taking over the apprenticeship training from Competenz – yet to be confirmed.

**Q Yoobee stand alone Sign Making programme – How many days of classroom learning will there be and for how long?**

**A** The intention is that Yoobee's stand alone programme will be 'full time' Campus based – in class learning during 4 schools terms over one year (120 credits = approximately 1/3 of apprenticeship). This will shorten the apprenticeship by at least one year for anyone wishing to continue on with an apprenticeship.

**Q What will the transition look like for year 1 and 2 apprentices, if currently in an apprenticeship if Yoobee take over apprenticeships?**

**A** If Yoobee take over the apprenticeships from Competenz, their intention for apprentices is to provide Campus and online learning – most likely 10 week block courses for any current apprentices in their first and second year at that time of take over and future apprentices in their first and second year.

**Q Will the year 3 and 4 apprentices benefit from the new format at all?** If Yoobee take over the apprenticeships from Competenz, any current apprentices at that time in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year, will continue as normal within the workplace.

The future intakes after any takeover from Competenz by Yoobee for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year apprentices, is yet to be determined by Yoobee as they may eventually change the whole model of how the apprenticeship is formatted and will most likely include micro-credentials and block courses.

**Q Will the Apprenticeship be shortened?**

**The current Sign Making Apprenticeship = 320 – 360 credits**

**A** The Apprenticeship cannot really be shortened at this stage and it generally takes a minimum of 3.5 years to complete – unless the government funding model changes. The current funding model received by providers/training organisations for apprenticeships is maximised at 75 credits per calendar year.