

**Tertiary Education  
Commission**  
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua



# **Employer-led Workplace Literacy and Numeracy Fund**

## **Application Guide 2017**

**SKILLS  
HIGHWAY**  
Take your business places

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# 1. Increasing organisation productivity through better communication

The purpose of this document is to guide employers to make a successful application to the Employer-led strand of the Workplace Literacy and Numeracy Fund (EWLN).

Productivity increases when employees can read, write, speak, listen, add numbers or measure correctly. There is reduction in: waste, mistakes, accident rates, staff turnover, and missed deadlines. Better communication leads to more opportunities to improve productivity through innovative ideas and solutions from staff.

Organisations sometimes just call this good communication.

Employers interested in building the literacy and numeracy skills of their employees can apply for funding through the Employer-led strand of the Workplace Literacy and Numeracy Fund (EWLN, the Fund). The Fund has been established to help employers provide high-quality literacy and numeracy programmes that are relevant for their specific workplace and their specific productivity problems.

Applications should focus on how literacy and numeracy upskilling will increase productivity

## 2. Employer and programme eligibility requirements

To be eligible to receive funding, the employer must be a body corporate and must provide a literacy and/or numeracy programme to a minimum of **20 employees** or be part of a consortium arrangement with other employers that delivers literacy, numeracy, or literacy and numeracy, provision to a minimum of **20 employees**.

The Fund supports the provision of tailored literacy and numeracy programmes that are contextualised to applicants' workplaces and delivered to employees with low literacy and/or numeracy skills. The tuition must be delivered at the intensity of 40 hours over a 10 to 40 week period. The total hours of tuition is expected to be between 25 and 80 hours per employee.

### 2.1 Employee eligibility

Employees who can't perform the reading, writing, numeracy or digital technology demands of the job or who have insufficient English language skills to communicate at work may be eligible.

To determine an employee's skill level in literacy and numeracy employers must use the Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool (Assessment Tool) or the Starting Points tool.

EWLN Funding can only be used for a learner who:

- (a) is a Domestic Student as defined under section 159 of the Education Act 1989; and
- (b) has low skill levels in literacy, numeracy, or literacy and numeracy, as determined by us; and
- (c) is in the paid workforce; and
- (d) is not:
  - (i) enrolled as a full-time student at a TEO; or
  - (ii) accessing TEC-funded literacy, numeracy, or literacy and numeracy, provision at another TEO or workplace; or
  - (iii) enrolled in an industry training programme at Level 3 or above on the NZQF; or
  - (iv) enrolled in a New Zealand Apprenticeship or a Modern Apprenticeship programme.<sup>1</sup>

## 2.2 Consortium arrangements

A consortium consists of two or more employers delivering literacy and numeracy provision to a minimum of 20 employees. There is a Lead Employer who is the applicant. The other employers within a consortium are Consortium Employer Participants. We form a funding relationship with a Lead Employer.

Often consortiums have employers with very similar workplace literacy and numeracy issues (section 6) which means a similar programme is required (section 8) with similar metrics of success (section 9). Our expectation is that this form only captures those details that are specific to Consortium Employer Participants.

The Lead Employer (the applicant), often with support from a provider, is responsible for answering the major questions of substance for all parties to the consortium. Our view is that this is efficient as it allows a simple expression of the common issues of employers in the consortium.

These questions the Lead Employer will answer for all consortium partners are:

- › Question 6 – workplace literacy and numeracy issues
- › Questions 8-18 – the proposed programme
- › Question 19 – sustainability
- › Question 20 – investment

Every Consortium Employer Participant needs to complete the Consortium Employer Participant form. The Lead Employer should attach the forms for every Consortium Employer Participant to the application. Only employers with a Consortium Employer Participant form we accept are eligible to participate in the consortium. New or replacement consortium members can be added when we accept an employer's Consortium Employer Participant form, this should be discussed with the relationship manager before it is submitted.

The Skills Highway has a [guide](#) to forming a consortium.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that the Modern Apprenticeship programme ends 31 December 2017.

### 3. Funding for programmes

Funding for programmes is **up to** \$92.50 (GST exclusive), per hour of tuition. All costs are to be calculated exclusive of GST.

We will prefer applications that represent value for money

As at March 2017, the average price per hour of tuition in programmes for 2017 is significantly below \$92.50 (GST exclusive). The price is lower as we have more programmes with reduced costs because they are:

- › repeat programmes (and therefore have minimal start-up costs);
- › concentrated geographically;
- › large scale; and/ or
- › programmes that originated as TEO-led programmes.

Demand for the Fund is often greater than funds available. Therefore the we will prefer applications that represent the best value for money.

Employers may apply for funding for multiple years of funding. Employers may also reapply for the Fund. Typically first time employers commit to a small programme within a 12 month period. Please contact us at [EWLN@tec.govt.nz](mailto:EWLN@tec.govt.nz) if you want to discuss this before making an application.

Funding may be revoked if employers do not continue to meet the eligibility requirements for the duration of the funded programme.

### 4. Programme details with 2017 flexibility

The total hours of tuition is expected to be between 25 and 80 hours per employee. One response to this greater flexibility may be to offer different strands within a programme.

#### Example 1

An employer identifies three strands of learners with literacy and numeracy needs and customises the response to those groups:

- › Strand 1 – 10 supervisors who need to upskill on numeracy
- › Strand 2 – 40 production workers at an average of Step 2 Reading who need to be more deeply involved in the literacy and numeracy of quality management and health & safety
- › Strand 3 – 20 production workers who are new residents who need to do the Strand 2 programme but also need an ESOL module to better understand the New Zealand idiom in the literacy and numeracy of quality management and health & safety.

In this example, Strand 1 and Strand 2 employees do learning at 2 hours a week. Strand 3 employees do the Strand 2 programme as well as an extra hour a week ESOL, as well as 2 hours a week for 2 weeks prior to and after the Strand 2 programme. Therefore the Programme details looks like this:

Programme	Employees	Hours	Weeks	Start	Finish
Strand 1 “Supervisors”	10	26	13	27 February 2017	29 May 2017
Strand 2 “Production”	40	40	20	27 February 2017	17 July 2017
Strand 3 “Production Plus”	20	68	24	13 February 2017	31 July 2017
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>3,220</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

### Example 2

An employer wants to provide a programme to 50 staff covering speaking and listening in meetings, recipes, health and safety communication, and budgets. The employer wants a 40 hour programme where the ESOL needs of the diverse staff are wholly integrated into the programme. Staff will be released for two hours a week. Therefore there are no strands and the Programme looks like this:

Programme	Employees	Hours	Weeks	Start	Finish
“Expanding Opportunities”	50	40	20	February 2017	July 2017
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

## 5. Use of funding

Employers receiving support through the Fund must use the funding solely for the purposes of the activities contracted, responsibly, and in a manner consistent with the appropriate use of public funds.

Workplace Literacy and Numeracy funding **cannot** be used for:

- › capital items, such as computers, software purchase costs
- › employee wages
- › relief employee wages covering employees released for literacy and numeracy support
- › course enrolments or exam fees
- › major development of learning tools and materials
- › administration costs not directly related to the programme
- › unreasonable resource development/preparation time
- › employee professional development that does not specifically focus on gaining fundamental literacy and numeracy skills in the workplace, including for the purposes of delivering literacy or numeracy training (for example, train the trainer programmes).

We expect that businesses will make a reasonable contribution to the cost associated with the workplace literacy and numeracy programme. Analysis shows the average contribution of employers is typically greater than 30% of the total cost of the programme.

The **Employer contribution** can be made up of items including:

- › cost of staff time commitment (wages and salaries) including replacement staff and management time – this is typically the largest part of the employer contribution
- › use of employer’s facilities at market rates
- › capital items related to the course.

### **Total Employer Investment**

The applicant should provide a breakdown of the estimated employer contribution.

## **5.1 Sustainability**

Workplace Literacy and Numeracy funding for employers is intended to be “seed funding”. This means that we expect employers to use the Fund to develop the company’s own sustainable approach to employee literacy and numeracy, which can be maintained within the organisation after the funding period is completed. This should be fully explained in the employer’s application.

The Skills Highway has worked with public libraries since 2016 to connect employers and libraries. This supports the sustainability of programmes and supports public libraries with their mission. Contact the Skills Highway to find out the latest on this developing relationship.

## **6. Programme delivery: in-house or third-party trainer**

Employers should consider the needs of their employees and business when determining the type of trainer they will use. There are differing benefits and requirements from delivering a programme through in-house trainers and third-party trainers.

In-house trainers may allow more flexibility for the employer. Because in-house trainers are more familiar with their work environment, they may also be able to more readily embed literacy and numeracy within the workplace. In addition, by committing to an in-house resource, an employer may be able to build a more sustainable literacy and numeracy programme that can be used across the workplace for the long term. Note that professional development for in-house trainers (training for the trainer) is not an expense that is covered through this Fund.

Third-party trainers may have more breadth in terms of their expertise and knowledge. They may also be able to provide an independent assessment of a workplace that could be important in determining the level of literacy and numeracy issues and the best way to address those issues. A [list](#) of workplace literacy providers is maintained by the Skills Highway.

We want to know how the employer will maintain oversight of any third party and requires a copy of any contract.

## 6.1 Qualification requirement for adult literacy and numeracy tutors

Tutors are required to hold appropriate qualifications. We expect all foundation-level tutors to:

- › have the base-level skills and knowledge required for a professional adult and tertiary teaching practitioner
- › know how to embed literacy and numeracy effectively in teaching activities and in a New Zealand context
- › be skilled at using our educational resources (such as the Learning Progressions for Adults and the Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool (Assessment Tool))
- › be able to effectively meet the needs of all adult learners, particularly Māori and Pasifika learners
- › participate in professional development where possible and show evidence of practice change as a result.

These skills and knowledge can be found in the 40 credit New Zealand Certificate in Adult Literacy and Numeracy Education (Vocational/Workplace) (Level 5) [Ref: 2754] – NZCALNE (Vocational/Workplace). They are also partially covered in the 60 credit New Zealand Certificate in Adult and Tertiary Teaching (Level 5) [Ref: 2993] – NZCATT (Level 5).

Dependent on programme design, they may also be found in programmes leading towards:

- › New Zealand Certificate in Adult Literacy and Numeracy Education (Educator) (Level 5) [Ref: 2755].
- › New Zealand Diploma in Adult Literacy and Numeracy Education (Level 6) [Ref: 2756].

### **The Adult Literacy Educator fund can help with costs of qualifications**

Adult Literacy Educator grants are available which will help offset the financial costs of completing Level 5 adult literacy and numeracy qualifications.

There are 145 grants available annually and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. These grants are available via two private training establishments (PTEs), VisionWest and Adult Literacy Education and Consulting (AELC) Limited. Contact these TEOs directly for more information

Further information can be found here: <http://www.tec.govt.nz/focus/our-focus/adult-literacy-numeracy/our-expectations/>

## 6.2 English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Many of the EWLN programmes have ESOL components. We expect tutors to demonstrate ESOL expertise in these cases.

## 6.3 Migrants

Some migrants have prepaid English language tuition (prepayment for English for Migrants tuition is often a condition of residence visa). We administer the prepaid tuition on behalf of the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (MBIE). We are concerned that not all migrants access their contributions. It may be appropriate for employers to remind relevant migrant employees of their right to access their funds for opportunities in addition to this programme.

Learn more about the [Migrant Levy](#).

## 7. Developing and submitting an application

The Industry Training Federation (ITF) has been contracted by us to manage the Skills Highway programme, which supports the Fund.

The ITF can provide advice to employers to develop an application for funding. If your business is interested, contact the ITF's Programme Manager Nicky Murray on 04 8943 190 or [here](#).

Please use the Workplace Literacy and Numeracy application form to submit your application. The form contains the assessment criteria against which your application will be considered.

Applications must be made on the Workplace Literacy and Numeracy application form we provide. Application forms can be downloaded from our website.

Completed applications and any accompanying evidence must be emailed in Word and PDF format to [ewln@tec.govt.nz](mailto:ewln@tec.govt.nz) and with the subject line **Workplace Literacy and Numeracy Funding Application for Employers**.

The application process remains open while there is money left in the Fund for us to invest. Assessments of applications will happen as applications are received.

### 7.1 Brokerage and support

A range of organisations, such as industry training organisations, industry or employer associations, unions, educational or workplace consultants are eligible to apply for a Skills Highway promotion and awareness payment.

This payment is for promotional, awareness-raising and development activities leading to significantly increased employer support for workplace literacy. It recognises organisations that have been brokering workplace literacy solutions that have not yet resulted in a successful EWLN application or the formation of a successful consortium.

Please contact the ITF's Programme Manager Nicky Murray on 04 8943 190 or [here](#) for more information about the availability of the payment.

### 7.2 Improving the Skills Highway Programme

The Skills Highway team may contact employers after the completion of a WPLN programme to discuss the impact of the programme. This is part of the Skills Highway research programme to better understand the long-term outcomes of the WLN programme.

## 7.3 The detailed process for applications

An Assessment Panel assesses applications every second Wednesday, except January. Applications are due the Friday prior to that date. We normally advise the result of the assessment within two days of the assessment.

The Assessment Panel consists of our staff and representatives from: ITF Skills Highway, Ministry of Education and Business NZ. Panel members may also include staff from business organisations such as employers' associations and chambers of commerce, relevant government departments and agencies, or other people agreed to by the our Deputy Chief Executive Operations.

We prefer to receive applications early so we can look for issues the Assessment Panel has previously said need strengthening. Where applications don't meet the Panel's standard our approach is to work with applicants on a re-submission the following month.

It takes approximately three weeks to get funding documents to the employer after the assessment.

Our main process steps for applications follows.

### **Receive application and prepare for assessment**

- › Acknowledge application and confirm the Assessment Panel date
- › Check on basic compliance, including body corporate status, hours, and intensity
- › Engage with applicant on any pre-Panel work to ensure any obvious deficiencies are made good prior to Assessment Panel meeting

### **Assessment panel deliberations**

- › Meeting of the Assessment Panel (every second Wednesday of the month except January)

### **Post-panel actions**

- › Provide feedback to applicant
- › Advise applicant of concurrent improvement and funding agreement work or improvement work leading to resubmission to the Assessment Panel
- › If Panel so advises, direct applicant to Skills Highway National Programme Manager for programme improvements or to Principal Advisor Skills Highway for conditions requirements (this is often done jointly)
- › Seek our DCE Operations authority to action Panel recommendations (authority memo).

### **Funding document process**

- › Draft funding agreement to employer once authority memo signed
- › Send funding agreement and payment forms to applicant
- › Recommend first payment on receipt of signed funding agreement and payment forms.

## 8. How applications will be assessed

We will consider applications against the assessment criteria and requirements in the application form.

We may also request further information or a resubmission from applicants where aspects of the programme are not clear or do not meet criteria and requirements.

We may also request information on an employer's previous access to WLN funding (if applicable).

Research, employer reports, and direct employer engagement show that we can identify high quality investment in literacy and numeracy when focusing on the employer's productivity problems.

Applications should focus on how literacy and numeracy upskilling will increase productivity

High quality applications will:

- › **describe the workplace issues your organisation experiences because of employees having low literacy and/or numeracy skills and/or English as a second language**
- › **describe how the workplace issues impacts on your productivity, including the way the organisation measures this impact**
- › **outline the content of your proposed programme and how it will address the workplace issues described**
- › **use the on-line adaptive Assessment Tool at the beginning and the end of the programme**
- › **understand and report on personal outcomes for employees that contribute to a higher performing workplace.**

We believe that clarity in these areas supports a sustainable organisational training culture, including literacy and numeracy training.

In some cases you may wish to submit the internal business case to support relevant sections of the application.

### 8.1 There needs to be clear measurements of change

The intended change to the productivity of the organisation from the literacy and numeracy programme needs to be measured. We encourage the use of existing business measures.

These measures may include:

- › quantitative measures, e.g. wastage, absenteeism
- › qualitative measures/practice changes, e.g. management opinion that incident reports are filled in more accurately, evidence of greater staff contribution in toolbox meetings

- › broad measures of customer satisfaction that can reasonably be related to the programme intervention
- › broad measures of personal outcomes for employees, e.g. employee satisfaction, reports of reading to children, making family budgets, making more community contributions.

We want to encourage organisations to continue their own workplace literacy and numeracy systems, and training systems in general, after the end of the funded programme. Therefore we want to see the measures that matter to the organisation. These measures are likely to be the measures that make the current business case to engage in training. These measures are also likely to support future business cases for training whether it has some government funding or is fully supported by the organisation.

## 8.2 Requesting additional information

If we require the submission of further information, this must be provided within 10 business days of the request. If the information is not satisfactory or provided within the required timeframe then we may request that the application be resubmitted.

# 9. Employers are notified of application outcomes

Normally, we advise employers of the outcome of their application within two days of a Panel meeting. The detailed reporting and monitoring requirements, as well as other terms and conditions, will be set out in a funding letter to be agreed between the successful applicant and us. A generic set of funding agreement documents is available on our [website](#). These documents detail the rights and obligations in an organisation's agreement with us.

What follows are a few things for successful employers to know.

## 9.1 Applying for an EDUMIS number

All recipients of government tertiary education funds must have an EDUMIS number, including employers in receipt of Workplace Literacy and Numeracy funding. An EDUMIS number can be obtained by making application to the Ministry of Education by phone at 0800 422 599 or via email at [service.desk@education.govt.nz](mailto:service.desk@education.govt.nz).

Employers will also need to fill in the Education Sector Authentication Authorisation and Authorisation (ESAA) login [form](#).

## 9.2 Using the Assessment Tool

The Assessment Tool is an online adaptive tool that provides robust and reliable information on the reading, writing and numeracy skills of adults. Employers must use the Assessment Tool at the beginning of the programme to identify employees' literacy and numeracy skill levels, and their eligibility to be funded.

Individuals who are not eligible may still participate in the proposed programme, but will not be funded through the Fund. The Assessment Tool must also be used at the end of the programme to measure the learning gains made by employees.

### **9.3 Reporting requirements**

The reporting periods and submission dates will be stated in the funding letter. A reporting template will be provided.

### **9.4 Monitoring requirements**

We will monitor key aspects of the programme through the progress and final reports. This includes employee participation, the number of hours and weeks of training per employee to ensure that the funding requirements are met.

Other information, such as employee satisfaction and general results of the programme on individual business outcomes may also be requested.

### **9.5 Funding recovery**

If the results of an audit, reporting or statistical returns indicate that the amount of a payment of funding provided was greater than it should have been, the amount of the over-funding will be repayable to the us on demand.

# Appendix: Resources to Support Programme Development

This Appendix has links to resources that may give employers ideas on how to set up a literacy and numeracy programme in their workplace.

## Getting started

A good place to start is in the “Employment Issue Definition Tool” section of the Skills Highway [website](#). Use the issue definition tool to answer a few quick questions to find out if introducing literacy and numeracy training could help your employees and strengthen and future-proof your business. In other sections, you’ll learn about preparing a business case, training options, getting started, measuring success, and how to make a programme sustainable. You will also find a series of case studies to learn how organisations just like yours made literacy and numeracy a priority – and what it’s meant for their businesses and their employees.

## Tutor information

The National Centre of Literacy and Numeracy for Adults has a number of [resources](#) that may assist tutors and those establishing programmes within their workplace.

## Pathways Awarua: Free resources to improve skills

Learners can go to Pathways Awarua for free resources to improve their reading, writing, listening, and numeracy skills using our Trade, Service and Community pathways [here](#).

## The key tutor qualification – NCALNE(Voc)

This qualification is useful because it has the content and outcomes related to embedding literacy and numeracy in a New Zealand context.

- › [NCALNE \(Voc\) – Alec](#)
- › [NCALNE \(Voc\) – VisionWest](#)
- › [NCALNE \(Voc\) – Literacy Aotearoa](#)
- › [NCALNE \(Voc\) MOOC – Pathways Awarua](#)
- › [NCALNE Lite](#) (this is not a replacement for the requirement for tutors, but may be a useful for others in your organisation to build capabilities) – [Pathways Awarua](#)

## The Assessment Tool

- › [Overview of Assessment Tool](#)
- › [Assessment Tool support](#)