



Automatic upgrade of superseded qualifications – Frequently asked questions

What is an 'upgrade' to a qualification?

An 'upgrade' to a qualification is the process of changing a superseded qualification to its replacement qualification on a training contract. A qualification is deemed to be superseded by another in accordance with the mapping shown under a qualification's details in training.gov.au

For example, FNS40611 Certificate IV in Accounting was superseded by FNS40615 on 25 March 2015. By the end of the applicable transition period, all 'in training'* contracts registered under FNS40611 need to be upgraded to FNS40615 if training is to continue. This change from the superseded qualification of FNS40611 to its replacement of FNS40615 is what the Apprenticeship Office refers to as an 'upgrade' to a qualification.

*'In training' contracts include active and suspended training contracts. Training contracts that have ceased in effect (i.e. expired, pending, completed, terminated or cancelled) will not be affected.

What is the transition period relating to a superseded qualification?

When a qualification is superseded by another qualification, a transition period is allowed within which a registered training organisation (RTO) must transfer the student to the replacement qualification or issue the student with a qualification or statement of attainment (if appropriate).

The transition period is generally 12 months, however the Department of Training and Workforce Development is aware of, and has reflected on our system, the six month extension of transition period granted (from 12 months to 18 months) for training products endorsed between September 2015 and March 2016. There may be further exceptions granted by the Training Accreditation Council and/or the Australian Skills Quality Authority upon application from an RTO.

Using the Certificate IV in Accounting example above, the transition period for FNS40611 would expire on 24 March 2016. From 25 March 2016, RTOs may no longer enrol nor confer competency to students in the FNS40611 qualification.

What happens if an RTO wishes to continue delivering the superseded qualification after the transition period has expired?

The RTO must apply to the Training Accreditation Council or Australian Skills Quality Authority to be granted an extension to the transition period. The RTO will need to provide evidence of the approval to apprenticeshipoffice@dtwd.wa.gov.au so that the Apprenticeship Office can update the relevant record accordingly.

In the email to the Apprenticeship Office, the RTO should also include the relevant qualification details, the new transition period expiry date and the full name and ID of the training contract the extension is applicable for.

What is an automatic upgrade of superseded qualifications after the transition period has ended?

Previously, RTOs have had to monitor the relevant transition period applicable to their students who are on an apprenticeship or traineeship training contract and notify the Apprenticeship Office in writing to upgrade qualifications on the records of the training contracts when and where necessary.

To remove the administrative burden on the stakeholders and to ensure training contract records are updated in a timely manner, from 9 June 2017, Western Australia's Training Records System (TRS) will automatically upgrade a superseded qualification to its replacement qualification on a training contract following the expiration of the applicable transition period.

Which training contracts does the automatic upgrade apply to?

The automatic upgrade applies to all 'in training' contracts in Western Australia with a registration date on or after **6 April 2015**, if the nominated qualification has been superseded. The applicable contracts will be automatically upgraded on TRS to the replacement qualification when the relevant transition period of the superseded qualification expires.

No automatic upgrade will apply to training contracts that were registered prior to 6 April 2015. The upgrade to the superseded qualification for these contracts will be applied on notification from the nominated RTO. For the purpose of this system change, the registration date is when the Apprenticeship Office approves a training contract on the system and sends the 'nomination to train' notification to an RTO.

I recommenced my training contract after 6 April 2015 however; I initially enrolled in the same qualification prior to 6 April 2015. Does the auto-upgrade apply?

The automatic upgrade may not apply if the original enrolment occurred prior to 6 April 2015. RTOs can make a request to the Apprenticeship Office to exclude training contracts from the auto-upgrade if this scenario occurs.

For example, an apprentice hairdresser commenced an apprenticeship enrolled with the RTO and commenced training in September 2014. However the apprentice terminated her original training contract on 1 June 2016 and recommenced with another employer on the 1 July 2016.

In this instance, the RTO can advise the Apprenticeship Office that the qualification should not be automatically upgraded as the apprentice enrolled in SIH30111 before the 6 April 2015.

How is the automatic upgrade applied?

A one-off retrospective upgrade will be applied to all existing 'in training' contract records where the nominated qualification has not already been upgraded following the expiry of the transition period. For example, a training contract whose qualification's transition period expired in January 2016 will be automatically upgraded to the replacement qualification.

Except for the one-off retrospective upgrade, all future upgrades will occur on the day the superseded qualification's transition period expired. For example, the transition period of qualification AHC40410 expires on 27 December 2017. All 'in training' contracts nominating this qualification, with a registration date on or after 6 April 2015, will be automatically upgraded to the replacement qualification AHC40416 on 27 December 2017.

When an upgrade has occurred on TRS, a report capturing all relevant training contracts affected by the replacement qualification will be generated, which will help to identify records that may have not been successfully upgraded as required.

Does the RTO need to update or sign a new training plan?

Where a superseded qualification is upgraded to its replacement qualification, there is no requirement for the RTO to sign a new training plan. However the qualification name, code and units on the training plan should be reviewed and updated where necessary to ensure they reflect the correct details and meet the packaging rules associated with the current qualification.

What happens if an RTO does not have scope for the replacement qualification?

TRS will run a check on the nominated RTO's scope of the replacement qualification, before applying the automatic upgrade. Where the existing RTO does not have scope for the replacement qualification, those contracts will not be upgraded.

The Apprenticeship Office will notify the parties to the training contract, the existing RTO as well as the relevant Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) provider of the situation. A new RTO with the scope to deliver the replacement qualification may be nominated. Once the change of RTO has been actioned, the upgrade to the replacement qualification will be applied to the training contract.

What happens if the qualification is superseded by a qualification that cannot be delivered through an apprenticeship/traineeship pathway?

If a qualification is superseded by a qualification that is not prescribed for apprenticeship/traineeship delivery, those affected contracts will not be upgraded automatically following the expiry of the transition period. The Apprenticeship Office will send notification to the parties to the contract, the existing RTO and the relevant AASN provider advising of the situation.

Should the parties wish to continue the training contract, they must vary the existing qualification to a qualification that is eligible for apprenticeship/traineeship pathway.

What happens if a qualification is superseded by more than one qualification?

If a qualification is being replaced by more than one qualification (for example AUR30405 was superseded by AUR30412, AUR30612, AUR30812, AUR31112 and AUR31212), those affected contracts will not be upgraded automatically following the expiry of the transition period.

The Apprenticeship Office will send notification to the parties to the contract, the existing RTO as well as the relevant AASN provider advising of the situation and requesting them to confirm which replacement qualification they wish for the training contract to be upgraded to.

Can a qualification in a training contract be upgraded prior to the expiration of the transition period?

Yes, an upgrade to a replacement qualification can happen prior to the expiry of the relevant transition period, provided that the RTO has scope to deliver the new qualification. In addition, at the time of the upgrade the replacement qualification needs to be prescribed to be eligible for an apprenticeship/traineeship delivery.

To initiate a manual upgrade, the RTO simply needs to provide written advice to the Apprenticeship Office identifying the applicable training contract/s and the replacement qualification details. Once the written notification has been received, the Apprenticeship Office will manually upgrade the qualification in the relevant training contracts on TRS.

**The term 'apprentice' covers apprentices, trainees, cadets and interns.*