

## [SSG CIRCULAR/RPD/2023/2]: Compliance with Changes to Funding Policies

### Circular (For Compliance)

Dear Registered Training Providers (RTPs), Programme Partners (PPs) and CET Centres (CETCs),

1. This is a Circular issued pursuant to the *SkillsFuture Singapore Agency Terms for Training Providers* (“**Terms**”), and it applies to all RTPs, PPs and CETCs. All capitalised terms which are undefined herein shall bear the same meaning as they do in the Terms.
2. As part of SkillsFuture Singapore’s continual efforts to streamline our rules and processes, we will be implementing the following funding policy changes, for compliance by all RTPs, PPs and CETCs.
  - a. Conditions for offering course fee discounts (Annex A). This is effective for courses commencing from 2 Oct 2023;
  - b. Removal of minimum 75% attendance as a requirement for course fee funding and absentee payroll funding (Annex B). This is effective for courses commencing from 1 Jan 2024; and
  - c. Revised course fee funding eligibility for related companies (Annex C). This is effective for courses commencing from 1 Feb 2024.
3. Details of the changes and the respective effective dates are stated in the Annexes. The changes will also be incorporated into the Terms in the coming months.
4. For RTPs, PPs and CETCs with Funding Agreement(s)<sup>1</sup> with SSG, this Circular shall form part of the contract between these RTPs, PPs or CETCs and SSG, and serves to vary the existing Funding Agreements, where applicable.
5. A set of Frequently Asked Questions is provided in Annex D.

### Clarifications

6. Should you require any further clarification, please contact us at 6785 5787 or via our feedback portal at <https://service-portal.skillsfuture.gov.sg/s/feedback/>.
7. Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> *Funding Agreements (FA) are applicable to PPs and CETCs who have been appointed by SSG to offer a comprehensive array of courses for training as well as additional services, such as employment advisory and placement.*

## **Annex A: Conditions for offering course fee discounts**

1. Discounts on full course fees charged are sometimes offered by RTPs, PPs and CETCs to promote their Funded Courses. For clarity, effective for courses commencing from 2 Oct 2023, SSG will allow RTPs, PPs and CETCs to offer course fee discounts (which include but not limited to bulk discount, early bird discount, membership discount and referral discount), subject to the following conditions:
  - (a) The discount must be transparent and given up-front on full course fee. SSG's course fee funding will be based on the reduced course fees (i.e. full course fee less any discounts.). The discount must be explicitly reflected in invoices to trainee/companies when they make payment.; and
  - (b) The discount must not be structured based on trainees' eligibility for SSG's course fee funding, to prevent cross-subsidising and skewing of grant eligibility across different groups of trainees. For example, the RTPs, PPs and CETCs must not offer a discount targeted only at those who are not eligible for course fee funding, or only eligible for a lower rate of course fee funding.
2. RTPs, PPs and CETCs should ensure that course fee discounts are entered into TPGateway when submitting enrolments, so that SSG's course fee funding can be adjusted accordingly.
3. With the above, RTPs, PPs and CETCs with Funding Agreement(s) with SSG will no longer need to seek SSG's prior written approval for offering course fee discounts.

## **Annex B: Removal of minimum 75% attendance as a requirement for course fee funding and absentee payroll funding**

1. With the implementation of e-attendance via SingPass, SSG is also streamlining our rules and processes and shifting the minimum attendance requirement from the trainee-level to course-level.
2. For courses commencing from 1 Jan 2024, SSG will no longer require a minimum 75% attendance for course fee funding and absentee payroll funding<sup>2</sup>. TPGateway will no longer check this requirement for grant disbursement of course fee funding and absentee payroll funding. Attendance taking will continue to be mandatory as absentee payroll continues to be funded based on actual attended hours. Existing requirements on passing of assessments and co-payment of course fees will continue to ensure learning outcomes and commitment from individuals and employers.
3. The removal of the minimum 75% attendance requirement applies only for (a) courses offered by SSG-appointed CETCs/PPs and funded via Funding Agreements; and (b) other SSG-approved certifiable courses. The minimum 75% attendance requirement will remain for **non-certifiable courses**, until SSG stops funding such courses after 31 Dec 2024.
4. While SSG will no longer require a minimum 75% attendance for course fee funding and absentee payroll funding, SSG will impose a minimum attendance requirement at the course level for the purpose of course renewal. Details on attendance requirement for course renewal will be shared at a later date.

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<sup>2</sup> *The removal of the 75% attendance requirement will also apply to absentee payroll and training allowance under the Workfare Skills Support (WSS) scheme under Workforce Singapore.*

### **Annex C: Revised course fee funding eligibility for related companies**

1. Currently, training provided by a RTP, PP or CETC for its own employees as well as employees of related companies will be considered in-house training and accorded in-house course fee funding rates.
2. SSG recognises that training for employees of companies related to RTPs, PPs and CETCs will contribute to upskilling and reskilling of the individuals and add to labour force mobility. Therefore, for courses commencing from 1 Feb 2024, training provided by RTPs, PPs or CETCs to employees of related companies will **no longer be deemed as in-house training and will be accorded course fee funding for external training**. Enrolments will only be considered as in-house training if the RTP, PP or CETC is also the employer that is sending its trainee for training, as determined by Unique Entity Number (UEN).

## **Annex D: Frequently Asked Questions**

### **A) Conditions for Offering Course Fee Discounts**

| <b>S/N</b> | <b>Question / Answer</b>   |
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| <b>1.</b>  | <p><b>Do training providers need to seek SSG's approval to offer direct course fee discounts?</b></p> <p>No, all training providers, including training providers with existing valid Funding Agreements with SSG, do not need to seek approval from SSG with the latest policy effective for courses commencing from 2 Oct 2023, as long as they meet the conditions for offering course fee discounts.</p> |
| <b>2.</b>  | <p><b>Why must the course fee discounts be applied on the full course fees instead of on the nett course fees (after SSG's course fee subsidies)?</b></p> <p>This will ensure proper reflection of the discounted course fees before subsidies, and ensures that the course fee subsidies are also adjusted proportionately.</p>   |
| <b>3.</b>  | <p><b>Are there any restrictions on how many course fee discounts a trainee can receive?</b></p> <p>No, there are no restrictions on the number of course fee discounts that the training provider may give to the trainee.</p>  |

### **B) Removal of Minimum 75% Attendance as a Requirement for Course Fee Funding and Absentee Payroll Funding**

| <b>S/N</b> | <b>Question / Answer</b>  |
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| <b>1.</b>  | <p><b>What is the reason for removing the 75% attendance requirement?</b></p> <p>As part of SSG's continuous review and improvement to Training Providers' (TPs) operations, and to better manage the attendance-taking and administration process, SSG has mandated the use of e-attendance via SingPass to replace the existing attendance-taking modes for classroom and synchronous e-learning modes of training for course sessions commencing from 1 Oct 2023. This will enable SSG and Training Providers to better track trainee attendance in real-time for course completion and help strengthen grant governance.</p> <p>With the implementation of e-attendance, SSG will remove the minimum 75% attendance requirement for course fee funding and absentee payroll eligibility from 1 Jan 2024, to streamline our rules and processes.</p> |
| <b>2.</b>  | <p><b>With the removal of the 75% attendance, is attendance-taking no longer mandatory?</b></p> <p>Attendance-taking will continue to be mandatory. While SSG will no longer require a minimum 75% attendance for course fee funding and absentee payroll funding, instead of imposing attendance requirement at trainee level, SSG will impose a minimum threshold for the attendance requirement at the course level for the purpose</p>  |

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|           | of course renewal. Requirements on passing of assessments and co-payment of course fees will continue to ensure learning outcomes and commitment from individuals/employers.   |
| <b>3.</b> | <b>Will the removal of the 75% attendance requirement apply to all courses?</b><br><br>The removal of the 75% attendance requirement will apply to all SSG-funded courses except for non-certifiable courses. Non-certifiable courses funded by SSG will continue to be subject to the 75% attendance requirement until SSG stops funding such courses after 31 Dec 2024.  |
| <b>4.</b> | <b>Will there be any changes to the other existing course fee funding and absentee payroll eligibility criteria?</b><br><br>No. There will not be any changes to the other eligibility criteria for course fee funding and absentee payroll (AP). Passing of assessments and payment of nett course fees will continue to be grant disbursement requirements for course fee grant and AP. For AP, the amount disbursed will be based on actual attended hours. |

### C) Revised Course Fee Funding Eligibility for Related Companies

| <b>S/N</b> | <b>Question / Answer</b>   |
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| <b>1.</b>  | <b>What is the reason for revising the course fee funding eligibility for related companies?</b><br><br>SSG recognises that training for employees of companies related to the training providers will contribute to upskilling and reskilling of the individuals and add to labour force mobility. As such, SSG will no longer deem these as in-house training for courses commencing from 1 Feb 2024, but accord such training with the same level of course fee funding as external training. |
| <b>2.</b>  | <b>I am a training provider who is training employees under my payroll. How will the revised course fee funding eligibility for related companies affect me?</b><br><br>There is no change to the funding rates for such enrolments. Where the training provider is also the employer that sent its employees for training, prevailing in-house funding rates continue to apply. SSG will no longer fund in-house training for course runs that commence after 31 Dec 2024.                      |
| <b>3.</b>  | <b>Will trainees currently undergoing a course which will end after 1 Feb 2024 be affected by the revised course fee funding eligibility for related companies?</b><br><br>No. The revised course fee funding eligibility for related companies will be applicable to courses commencing from 1 Feb 2024.  |
| <b>4.</b>  | <b>Some of the related employers have already enrolled their employees into courses that only commence after 1 Feb 2024. Does the removal of the revised course fee funding eligibility for related companies apply to them?</b><br><br>Yes, the revised course fee funding eligibility for related companies applies to courses that commence from 1 Feb 2024, regardless of when enrolment is done. This is to ensure parity across the trainees taking the same course run. Where there are   |

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|  | employers affected by the above changes, training providers are to inform the employers of the subsidy changes and adjust their billing where necessary. |
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