



Tertiary Education
Commission
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua



Employer-led Workplace Literacy and Numeracy Fund Application Guide

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About this guide

This guide is to help employers apply for the Employer-led strand of Workplace Literacy and Numeracy (EWLN) funding.

1. What is the purpose of EWLN?

EWLN is a fund that supports employers to provide literacy and numeracy programmes for employees, contractors and temporary staff who meet the learner-eligibility criteria in the [Funding Conditions Catalogue](#).

EWLN can only be used for domestic learners. Please see the information on our website about [2023 requirements for other valid domestic enrolments](#). Note also, EWLN is not for training staff to *deliver* a literacy or numeracy programme.

EWLN is a strand of the Workplace Literacy and Numeracy (WLN) Fund, which is to:

- › increase the literacy and numeracy skills of employees, and
- › contribute to workplace productivity through the provision and evaluation of literacy and numeracy learning in a workplace context.

The TEC provides EWLN funding to employers to help them:

- › provide high-quality literacy and numeracy programmes customised for their workplace, and
- › address productivity problems where the root cause is in the literacy and numeracy skill levels of employees.

We fund literacy and numeracy provision in order to:

- › raise adults' literacy and numeracy skills
- › increase opportunities for adults to engage in literacy and numeracy learning, particularly those in low-skilled employment, and
- › improve the quality and relevance of provision, including the ability to identify learner need and learning gain.

2. Eligibility requirements

This section explains the organisation and learner eligibility criteria. It also provides information about consortium arrangements and details of appropriate qualifications for tutors of EWLN programmes.

2.1 Organisation eligibility

As an employer, to be eligible for EWLN funding, you must:

- › be a tertiary education organisation as defined by section 10(1) of the [Education and Training Act 2020](#), and
- › be a body corporate, and
- › deliver 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.

You must also:

- › provide programmes of tuition to learners that are generally between 25 and 80 hours in total and delivered at the intensity rate of 40 hours over a 10-to-40-week period.
- › provide good evidence of employee literacy and/or numeracy need in your application.
- › have an effective assessment process for determining literacy and numeracy needs of eligible learners at the beginning and end of the programme.

Your assessment process can use the Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool (LNAAT). If you want to check or authenticate the appropriateness and effectiveness of an alternative assessment, you can run it in parallel with or cross-check it against the LNAAT, before using it fully.

For more information, see the [LNAAT Guidelines](#).

2.2 Consortium arrangements

A consortium consists of two or more employers partnering to deliver literacy and numeracy provision to a minimum of 20 employees. Often, consortia have employers with very similar workplace literacy and numeracy issues, so that they need a similar programme with similar metrics of success.

The applicant for ELWN funding is known as the 'Lead Employer'. The other employers in a consortium are 'Consortium Employer Participants'. TEC forms a funding relationship with the Lead Employer.

Every Consortium Employer Participant needs to complete the Consortium Employer Participant form. The Lead Employer must attach the forms for every Consortium Employer Participant to the

application. Only employers with an accepted Consortium Employer Participant form may participate in the consortium.

Download here: [Consortium Employer Participant form](#)

The Lead Employer, often with support from a provider, is responsible for answering the major questions for all parties to the consortium. This allows the consortium's common issues to be clearly expressed.

The questions the Lead Employer answers for all consortium partners are:

- › Section 3 – Workplace literacy and numeracy issues
- › Section 3 – Proposed Programme
- › Section 4 – Sustainability
- › Section 5 – Proposed Budget

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

2.3 Learner eligibility

Learners who participate in the programme should be those with low literacy and/or numeracy skills. This may include difficulties in:

- › understanding written and/or verbal instructions
- › completing forms
- › reporting verbally and/or in writing
- › understanding and/or completing basic calculations
- › expressing literacy and numeracy through digital devices necessary for work.

Our [funding conditions](#) specify that a learner is considered to have a low skill level of literacy and/or numeracy if the learner:

- › has fewer than 80 credits on the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework (NZQCF) (or equivalent); or
- › has more than 80 credits on the NZQCF (or equivalent), and has fewer than 12 credits in literacy and/or numeracy in unit standards and/or achievement standards (or equivalent); or
- › is assessed using the LNAAT and presents at Step 3 or below on the Learning Progressions for reading, and/or Step 4 or below on the Learning Progressions for numeracy.

These difficulties may be increased by having English as a foreign language.

EVLN Funding can only be used for a learner who:

- › is a Domestic Student¹ as defined under section 10 of the Education and Training Act 2020; and
- › has low skill levels in literacy, numeracy, or both, as determined by us; and
- › is in the paid workforce; and
- › is not:
 - › enrolled as a full-time student at a TEO; or enrolled as a full-time secondary learner; or
 - › accessing TEC-funded literacy, numeracy, or both, provision at another TEO or workplace; or
 - › enrolled in a programme or credential identified as being delivered in the provider-based, extramural, or work-based: pathway to work modes of delivery; or
 - › enrolled in a programme or credential at Level 4 or above on the NZQCF; or
 - › enrolled in a New Zealand Apprenticeship.

Learners who are not eligible may still participate in the proposed programme but will not be funded through the EWLN.

2.4 Tutor eligibility

Tutors on your programme must 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 an Aotearoa New Zealand context.
- › be skilled at using our educational resources (such as the Learning Progressions for the LNAAT).
- › be able to effectively meet the needs of all adult learners, particularly Māori and Pacific learners, and
- › participate in professional development where possible and show evidence of practice change as a result.

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

¹ A “Domestic Student” means a New Zealand citizen, the holder of a residence class visa granted under the Immigration Act 2009, and the persons to be treated as if they are not international students under the Tertiary Education (Domestic Students) Notice 2022.

Training your own tutors

Although EWLN funding cannot be used to train staff to deliver literacy and numeracy programmes, an in-house programme might still be your best option. For more on the benefits of this, see 3.1 below.

What qualifications should a tutor hold?

Tutors should hold:

- › [New Zealand Certificate in Adult Literacy and Numeracy Education \(Vocational/Workplace\) \(Level 5\)](#) [Ref: 2754]

However, depending on their design, other qualifications (or equivalent) that may provide the needed skills are:

- › [New Zealand Certificate in Adult and Tertiary Teaching \(Level 5\)](#) [Ref: 2993]
- › [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].

Can qualifications to train tutors be funded?

If you are interested in training staff to deliver your programme, the TEC offers Literacy Educator grants to help offset the financial costs of those completing Level 5 adult literacy and numeracy qualifications.

For more information, see [Adult Literacy Educator Fund](#).

3. Your proposed programme

3.1 Method of delivery

You should consider the needs of your employees and business when determining the type of trainer, you will use. There will be different benefits and requirements depending on whether you deliver a programme through in-house trainers or third-party trainers.

In-house trainers

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

Third-party providers

Third-party trainers may have more expertise and knowledge about workplace literacy and numeracy. 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.

If you are using a third-party provider, we want to know how you will maintain oversight of them, and we need a copy of any contract.

We also want to know how the third-party will support your organisation to ensure sustainability of literacy and numeracy skills development in the workplace.

3.2 Workplace issues and learner need

Identifying learner need

The LNAAT is an online adaptive tool that provides robust and reliable information on the reading, writing and numeracy skills of adults. We recommend you use the LNAAT at the beginning of the programme to identify employees' literacy and numeracy skill levels. The results from using the LNAAT are a keyway of establishing learner eligibility for the Fund. See the [LNAAT Guidelines](#).

Workplace issues

In your application, you need to report the difficulties your organisation suffers due to employees having low literacy and/or numeracy skills and/or English as a foreign language. You must explain how these issues impact your productivity, including the way the organisation measures this impact.

Productivity increases when employees can read, write, speak, listen, add numbers, and 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.

In your proposed programme, you should detail how this programme will address workplace issues, identify your target changes, and detail how you will measure the changes made by the programme. You must also describe how your proposed programme will complement any current training system within your organisation. This may include examples of how it will be linked to inductions, compliance training, or be a prerequisite to other specific training programmes or qualifications.

3.3 Programme details

EWLN supports the provision of customised literacy and numeracy programmes where the tuition is delivered at the intensity of 40 hours over a 10-to-40-week period. The total number of hours of tuition is generally expected to be between 25 and 80 hours per employee.

You must only use EWLN for a workplace training programme that:

- › provides literacy, numeracy, or literacy and numeracy training that is specific, rather than embedded within the programme.
- › is high quality and represents value for money.
- › is effective and innovative.
- › is tailored to meet the needs of individual learners.
- › has adequate processes for reporting on learner progress.
- › is provided by a tutor who holds an appropriate qualification as determined by us.
- › is tailored to the needs of the workplace.
- › contributes to the development of sustainable employee literacy and numeracy practices within the workplace.
- › has targeted literacy, numeracy, or literacy and numeracy outcomes that reflect the priorities and needs of the workplace, and
- › has the support of the employer's senior management.

Small learner groups are best, to encourage interactive engagement and support from peers. Some learners will need additional one-to-one tuition or support. There are also likely to be opportunities to continue the learning on the job.

The flexibility of total hours is to allow for different levels of need among learners and make it possible to offer different strands within a programme. This flexibility enables you to:

- › consider the level of skills each learner needs to gain to perform well in their job, and
- › provide support to learners who may aspire to move into higher-skilled roles.

Examples of possible programmes

Example 1:

An employer identifies three strands of learners with literacy and numeracy needs and customises the response to these 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 and safety.
- › Strand 3: 20 production workers who are new residents and need to do the Strand 2 programme but also need an ESOL module to better understand the New Zealand English in the literacy and numeracy of quality management and health and safety.

In this example, Strand 1 and Strand 2 employees do two hours of learning each week. Strand 3 employees do the Strand 2 programme, plus an extra hour a week of ESOL, as well as two extra hours a week for two weeks before and after the Strand 2 programme. The Programme looks like this:

Programme	Employees	Hours	Weeks	Start	Finish
Strand 1 “Supervisors”	10	26	13	27 February 2023	29 May 2023
Strand 2 “Production”	40	40	20	27 February 2023	17 July 2023
Strand 3 “Production Plus”	20	68	24	13 February 2023	31 July 2023
Total	70	3,220	N/A	N/A	N/A

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. There are no strands, and the programme looks like this:

Programme	Employees	Hours	Weeks	Start	Finish
“Expanding Opportunities”	50	40	20	February 2023	July 2023
Total	50	2,000	N/A	N/A	N/A

4. Sustainability and future organisational capability

We expect employers to use EWLN funding to develop their 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 application.

You must explain how the proposed programme will help your organisation to ensure that the literacy and numeracy needs of your employees **will continue to be addressed beyond the end of the programme**, and how your organisation will build the infrastructure (culture, systems, and processes) required for sustainability. If you have applied for and delivered workplace literacy and numeracy previously, you will need to explain why you are applying again.

Tell us:

- › what processes you will establish to verify employees’ literacy and/or numeracy skills?
- › what systems you will have in place to provide a structured programme to address low literacy and/or numeracy skills (via skilled and/or qualified in-house personnel or a contracted third party)

- › how you will document and monitor the literacy and numeracy programme for employees and identify other training opportunities or qualifications they may be eligible for
- › how employees will progress to further learning (with external programmes or in-house)
- › what processes you will follow to embed literacy and numeracy into induction training (via skilled and/or qualified in-house personnel or a contracted third party)
- › what processes you will follow to embed literacy and numeracy (eg, in-house training materials, work orders, operating procedures)
- › how you will ensure that specialist training providers (eg, forklift, crane, first aid, etc.) embed literacy and numeracy into their programmes.
- › how you will ensure ongoing management support for the investment required once our funding ends
- › how you will engage with public libraries to support employee access to library facilities.

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.

5. Proposed funding

Funding for programmes is **up to** \$98.31 (GST exclusive), per hour of tuition. All costs are to be calculated exclusive of GST.

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

Note that:

- › The average price per hour of tuition in programmes for 2022 was significantly below \$95.68 (GST exclusive). The price is lower as we have more programmes with reduced costs because they are repeat programmes, single site, large scale, and/or programmes that were originally TEO led.
- › If a provider requests a rate lower than \$80.66 then we will pay at whatever rate they have applied for (consistent with educational quality).
- › An employer can dispute the pay rate suggested by the Panel. If this happens, we ask the employer to send more information on why they believe their programme should be funded at a higher rate.

Employers may apply for funding for multiple years and may also reapply for the Fund. Typically, first time employers commit to a small programme within a 12-month period. Please contact us at customerservice@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.

6. Use of funding

If you receive support through EWLN, you must use the funding responsibly, solely for the purposes of the activities contracted, 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 and software
- › 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).

6.1 Employer investment

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.

You should provide a breakdown of the estimated employer contribution, which can include:

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

7. Declaration and authorisation

We expect to see organisational commitment to ongoing improvement of literacy and numeracy skills of employees, including improvements to day-to-day, on-the-job practices. The application form, including the consortium forms, must be signed by a senior manager of each participating organisation.

8. Submitting the Application Form and the assessment process

You must apply by using our Employer-led Workplace Literacy and Numeracy Funding Application Form. It contains the criteria we will use to consider your application.

- Download the form here: [EVLN Application Form](#)

Email your completed application and any accompanying evidence, in Word and PDF format, to customerservice@tec.govt.nz. Give it the subject line: **[Your organisation] - Workplace Literacy and Numeracy Funding Application for Employers – [Date of application]**

8.1 Assessment process

An Assessment Panel assesses and makes funding recommendations about the applications every second month, except December. Applications are generally due two weeks before the panel date. Final decisions tend to take 25-30 working days from the closing date of application round.

We may also request further information from you – or a resubmission in the next round – if aspects of the programme are not clear or do not meet criteria and requirements. If we need you to submit more information, you'll need to do so within 10 business days of our request. If the information is not satisfactory, or not provided in time, we may ask you to resubmit the application.

Detailed reporting and monitoring requirements, as well as other terms and conditions, will be set out in a funding letter to be agreed between any successful applicant and us. For details of funding conditions, including rights and obligations, see our [Funding Conditions Catalogue](#).

9. High-quality applications

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

High-quality applications:

- › describe the workplace issues your organisation experiences because of employees having low literacy and/or numeracy skills and/or English as a foreign language.
- › describe how the workplace issues impact 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 online adaptive LNAAT to assess employee’s current literacy, numeracy, and comprehensive skills, or another appropriate assessment tool depending on the employer’s circumstances (see the [LNAAT Guidelines](#)).
- › 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.

9.1 Targeted measures of change

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

These measures may include:

- › quantitative measures, eg, wastage, absenteeism.
- › qualitative measures/practice changes, eg, management opinion that incident reports are filled in more accurately, evidence of greater staff contribution in safety briefing meetings.
- › broad measures of customer satisfaction that can reasonably be related to the programme intervention.
- › broad measures of personal outcomes for employees, eg, employee satisfaction, confidence in reading for personal use, more employee independence, 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 those that make the current business case to engage in training. They are also likely to support future business cases for training, whether it has some government funding or is fully supported by the organisation.

10. Applying for an EDUMIS number

All recipients of government tertiary education funds must have an EDUMIS number, including employers receiving Workplace Literacy and Numeracy funding. You can get an EDUMIS number by applying to the Ministry of Education at 0800 422 599 or service.desk@education.govt.nz.

Employers will also need to fill in the [Education Sector Logon \(ESL\) form](#).

11. Reporting requirements

If your application is successful, we will let you know your EWLN reporting periods and submission dates in the funding letter. A reporting template will be provided.

12. Monitoring requirements

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

We may also ask for other information, such as employee satisfaction and general results of the programme on individual business outcomes. If progress and final reports, or any other information we ask for, is submitted after the due date, that will impact the time of payment.

13. Funding recovery

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

14. Appendix: Resources to support programme development

These resources will help you set up a literacy and numeracy programme in your workplace.

[Ako Aotearoa](#) – resources to help tutors and those establishing programmes in their workplace

[LNAAT Guidelines](#) – the Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool

[Pathways Awarua](#) – free resources for learners to improve reading, writing, listening and numeracy skills

[Pathways Awarua](#) – resources for educators