

NSW Training Awards 2026

Vocational Student of the Year

Eligibility and Selection Criteria

Nominations close 2 February 2026



The NSW Vocational Student of the Year Award is presented to a vocational learner who has been outstanding in all aspects of their course of study leading to a nationally recognised qualification and demonstrates the relevance of life-long learning.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for this award you must:

- be an Australian citizen or permanent resident of Australia and undertaking training in New South Wales;
- be a full-time or part-time learner who is not undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship;
- have completed or be due to complete your training (ie: training end date) between 1 June 2025 – 31 May 2026 in a training course that leads to a nationally recognised outcome or qualification;
- not be enrolled in school; and
- have an appropriate Endorser specified. Your Endorser must provide their endorsement comments to your submitted nomination in order for it to be eligible.

Individuals who have won at the state level may nominate again, provided there is a grace period of 1 year.

Preparing your nomination

How do I nominate?

In 2026, the NSW Training Awards have changed to self-nominations. This means that you will lodge your own nomination and must specify an Endorser as part of it. Any nominations without an endorser will be deemed ineligible.

Please collate your supporting documentation as outlined on Page 2.

What is an Endorser?

An Endorser is someone who validates your nomination. This endorsement supports your nomination.

An Endorser can be:

- Employer
- Teacher/trainer from your Registered Training Organisation (RTO)

Once you have submitted your nomination, your Endorser will receive an email requesting them to endorse your nomination. This is an essential requirement for all nominations.

Endorser Comments

Endorsers are required to submit a response that outlines why you should be recognised for your achievements.

They may want to cover:

- your job skills
- your training
- your industry knowledge
- your personal skills

Section A: Overview (300 word limit)

Provide a short overview covering a description of the qualification you enrolled in, your RTO and employer (if applicable) as well as, your reason for choosing this industry and training pathway.

Note: This information will not be considered or used for judging purposes, but it may be your summary throughout the Awards process.

Section B: Entry Criteria

You are required to address each criterion. Your responses are used to assess your nomination and shortlist nominees for interviews.

Please ensure your responses clearly address each criterion, using examples and evidence to support your statements. Judging panels will be looking for evidence of how your training has contributed to your career and study plans, the development of your skills and achievements to date, as well as any way in which your training may have helped you to in honing other skills or undertaking other pursuits.

In developing your nomination, please consider the suggestions below. These suggestions are examples of relevant experiences that can be considered evidence of achievements, skills, and personal qualities.

Criterion 1: Career and study achievements (400 word limit)

Consider things such as:

- Why did you choose your course?
- How has it changed or impacted you?
- What have you gained from it?
- What have you been able to bring to your workplace?

Criterion 2: Team and communication skills (400 word limit)

Consider any skills you have developed through your training, such as:

- What have you been able to tell others, work mates, employers etc about your training?
- What do you like about working in a team setting?
- What traits do you think are important to positively influence others?

Criterion 3: Ability to be an Ambassador*

(representative) for training in Australia (400 word limit) *Ambassadors are representatives for Vocational Education and Training in NSW and Australia.

Tell us about:

- Provide examples where you have taken a leadership role inside or outside of training/work.
- What other activities have you been involved in where you have been a representative?
- How would you describe the quality of your training?

Criterion 4: Other qualities and pursuits (400 word limit)

You may wish to include information about:

- Have you had to address any challenges that have impacted on your training?
- When have you been required to use initiative either in your training, your personal life or your workplace?
- What other qualities or activities do you feel would be useful in your role as Vocational Student of the Year?
- What other community or industry involvement have you had?

Supporting Attachments

The Award criteria should be the focus of your nomination. Relevant evidence can be provided to support your nomination. Any supporting attachment should be referenced in your nomination. **Minimum of 2 and maximum of 5 attachments.**

- » **Evidence of completion date**
This is an essential attachment.
Example: RTO Certificate or a letter endorsed by your RTO confirming your qualification and expected completion date.
- » **Awards and prizes**
Copies of any certificates or prizes you may have received such as a sporting award, community service award or special recognition by your employer.
- » **Resume**
- » **Reference or letter of support**
A reference or letter of support from either your employer, trainer or teacher.
- » **Workplace/training action photos**
Action photos of you in your workplace or in training.