

# SCHOOL STUDENT BROADBAND INITIATIVE

## Frequently Asked Questions

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## General Overview

### What is the School Student Broadband Initiative?

The School Student Broadband Initiative is an Australian Government program to support students that do not have access to home internet (broadband).

To boost education opportunities and help narrow the digital divide the Australian Government has asked **nbn** to implement the School Student Broadband Initiative, providing up to 30,000 eligible families and carers across Australia with school age children with free **nbn**-powered broadband internet at home until 31 December 2025#.

Qualifying parents and carers have until 31 December 2024 to register for School Student Broadband Initiative and sign up with a participating internet provider.

*#Subject to continued involvement in School Student Broadband Initiative of participating internet providers beyond the previously announced deadlines and provided the cap of 30,000 School Student Broadband Initiative services has not yet been reached.*

## **What's included in the School Student Broadband Initiative offer?**

- Free **nbn** home internet via a participating School Student Broadband Initiative internet provider until 31 December 2025 – with no lock-in or rollover contract
- Free Wi-Fi router – (that does not have to be returned)
- Unlimited data
- 50/20 plan

## **What is a 50/20 plan?**

The goal is for all School Student Broadband Initiative households on Fibre to the Node (FTTN), Fibre to the Basement (FTTB) and Fibre to the Curb (FTTC) technology, to be provided with a broadband service based on **nbn's** 50/20 wholesale speed tier. This means that during peak usage periods, the wholesale download speed should be around 50 megabits per second (Mbps) and upload speeds ranging from 5 -20 Mbps. Note, these are wholesale speed tiers.

A customer's experience, including the speeds achieved over the **nbn** network, depends on the nbn access technology and configuration over which services are delivered to the customer's premises, whether the customer is using the internet during the busy period, and some factors outside of **nbn's** control (like the customer's equipment quality, software, chosen broadband plan or how their provider designs its network).

## **Who are the participating internet providers?**

As of 1 August 2024, the following internet providers are participating in the School Student Broadband Initiative offer:

- Activ8Me (APN - providing Fixed Line, Fixed Wireless and Satellite services)
- Aussie Broadband
- Belong (Telstra)
- Exetel
- Lemonade Broadband (Brisbane only)
- SkyMesh (providing Fixed Wireless and Satellite services)
- Superloop
- Vodafone (TPG)

The choice of internet provider will vary depending on where you live. Your voucher will list the internet providers available at your address.

## **Are devices included in the School Student Broadband Initiative offer?**

Devices such as phones, tablets or computers are **not included** as part of School Student Broadband Initiative.

## **When will I be able to take advantage of the free home internet through School Student Broadband Initiative?**

If you qualify, you can join the School Student Broadband Initiative now.

Your free **nbn** home internet service will begin as soon as you are connected by your chosen participating internet provider and remain connected until 31 December 2025. There are 30,000 places available on the School Student Broadband Initiative, and once these have been taken any unredeemed vouchers will not be able to be used.

Currently, nominations or applications for the School Student Broadband Initiative will close on 31 December 2024, however we recommend registering your interest and contacting the National Referral Centre as soon as possible.

The physical connection of a residential property (installation of nbn hardware), the delivery of the Wi-Fi router by the internet provider and setting up the service can take a few weeks for most areas in Australia and sometimes longer depending on location and technology type.

## **What happens at the end of 2025?**

When signing up for the School Student Broadband Initiative there are no lock-in or automatic rollover contracts. At the end of 2025, your School Student Broadband Initiative service will end. You will not be automatically rolled over to a paid plan. Closer to the end of 2025 your chosen internet provider will get in touch with you to provide further information.

# How to Qualify

## Do I qualify for the School Student Broadband Initiative?

To qualify you must:

- Have a school age student at home (full or part time) enrolled in an Australian school (up to year 12 including Prep in Qld/Vic/Tas, Kindergarten in NSW, Reception in SA, Transition in NT/ACT and Pre-Primary in WA).
- Not have an active **nbn**<sup>®</sup> network internet service at your current residential address now or in the past 14 days. (Having a mobile internet service does not affect eligibility).
- Live in a premise that can access the nbn network through a standard connection.

## What do I have to do to get free home internet until 31 December 2025?

Families and carers who think they may qualify for the School Student Broadband Initiative should follow these 3 simple steps:

- Contact the National Referral Centre on 1800 954 610 (Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm AEDT), [www.anglicarevic.org.au/student-internet](http://www.anglicarevic.org.au/student-internet). Callback, webchat and interpreting services are also available.
- Check if you qualify – the National Referral Centre team will check your residential address and ask you some basic questions to determine if you meet the Government’s eligibility criteria.
- If you qualify, you will be issued a voucher which can be redeemed with any of the participating internet providers. The National Referral Centre will also be available to assist with contacting your chosen internet provider or providing follow-up support.

## Can I get the School Student Broadband Initiative if I live in a remote or isolated part of Australia?

A small number of premises located in Limited Access Areas (any area within the footprint of the Satellite Network that cannot reasonably be accessed by road and would require some element of air or water transportation) are ineligible to access the School Student Broadband Initiative program.

**nbn** is working with our delivery partners and internet providers and aims to get new satellite connections on remote islands (including Torres Strait and Palm Island), delivered as soon as possible.

## **Can a family struggling to pay the cost of their existing home internet be involved?**

To qualify for the School Student Broadband Initiative, families and carers must not have had an active **nbn** home internet connection in the previous 14 days at their current residential address. If you access the internet via another form of internet connectivity, such as 4G or 5G wireless services over mobile devices, you may still qualify (if you meet the other eligibility criteria).

## **What if my child doesn't live with me permanently?**

To qualify for the School Student Broadband Initiative a family, parent, carer or guardian must be caring for a child within their home – full or part-time, who is enrolled in an Australian school. This includes:

- Temporary care or non-permanent living arrangements.
- Shared household arrangements (e.g. separated parents or living with grandparents).
- Kinship care arrangements.

## **What about students who may not live at home?**

The School Student Broadband Initiative is for school age children in year levels K-12.

Students under the age of 18 living independently may qualify, however, an adult is required to engage in the application and connection process. This means being present on a call with the National Referral Centre for the qualifying checks, when signing up with a chosen internet provider, and for any equipment installation at their residence.

# Contacting the National Referral Centre

## What to expect when you contact the National Referral Centre?

The call will take about 20 minutes.

Firstly, a member of the National Referral Centre team will confirm if you qualify and issue your free home internet voucher. Then your call will be transferred to your chosen internet provider who will help to get your internet connected.

To help get you online as quickly as possible, please have your contact details ready – both your mobile number and an email address. If you are moving house, we will need to know the date you are moving and your new address.

Wait and calls times can vary.

## What questions will the National Referral Centre ask me?

- Do you have child/ren at school?
- How many children do you have at school?
- What type of school do they attend – Public, Catholic or Independent? (The answer to this question does not affect if you qualify).
- Check your residential address and whether it is connected to an nbn service and within an area covered by the nbn network (service area).
- In the past 12 months have you had difficulty meeting your necessary cost of living expenses like loans, power bills, health care, food or clothing?

This is an Australian Government program that offers free home internet to families and carers who look after school age children and are struggling to pay the bills.

## What if I move home – is my voucher still valid?

If you have used your voucher and are receiving an internet service, please contact your current School Student Broadband Initiative internet provider and let them know you are moving home. They will be able to transfer your **nbn** home internet to your new home (provided your new home is in a location that **nbn** can service via a standard connection, and your current internet provider provides nbn services at that new location). You can continue with your free service until 31 December 2025.

If nbn can service your new home via a standard connection, but your School Student Broadband Initiative internet provider does not service that location, you should contact the National Referral Centre who will be able to help you with next steps.

If you have a School Student Broadband Initiative voucher for your old home that you have not used, you cannot use that voucher for your new home as vouchers are linked to a specific residential address. You will need a new voucher. To receive a new voucher, you will need to contact the National Referral Centre.

## **Other Useful Information**

### **Where can I find out more about eSafety and parental controls?**

Families and carers are encouraged to get information and resources to help use their home internet connection safely from the eSafety Commission site website:

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents>

You can also speak to your chosen internet provider about what controls you can use to keep your household safe online.

### **What advice is provided regarding scams?**

Scammers may try using the School Student Broadband Initiative to impersonate a participating entity, such as NBN Co, to get your money.

It's important to know that you will never be contacted and asked to provide bank details or to pay money to participate in the School Student Broadband Initiative by NBN Co. If you receive a suspicious phone call, report it immediately to the ACCC's Scamwatch website

<https://scamwatch.gov.au>

### **I need translation support – how can I get this?**

For people from non-English speaking backgrounds, or people with accessibility needs, the National Referral Centre can offer translation services through TIS and some of their own bi-lingual staff; and their website is equipped with ReciteMe technology: [www.anglicarevic.org.au/student-internet](http://www.anglicarevic.org.au/student-internet)

### **Where can I find out more information about the School Student Broadband Initiative?**

You can find out more information by contacting the National Referral Centre on 1800 954 610 or by visiting [www.anglicarevic.org.au/student-internet](http://www.anglicarevic.org.au/student-internet)

Or by visiting [www.nbn.com.au/ssbi](http://www.nbn.com.au/ssbi) and/or <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/ssbi>