

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 (SSBI) 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's SSBI is providing up to 30,000 qualifying families and carers across Australia with school age children with free **nbn**-powered broadband internet at home until 30 June 2028#.

#Subject to continued involvement in School Student Broadband Initiative of participating internet providers.

What happens when 30,000 SSBI services have been connected?

Once the program reaches the SSBI cap of 30,000 SSBI services connected no further nominations will be accepted, and any unredeemed vouchers will become invalid. There remains a back stop date of the end of 2025 for qualifying families and carers to redeem their vouchers but nbn anticipates the SSBI cap of 30,000 SSBI services connected will be met well before the end of 2025.

nbn and the National Referral Centre (NRC) will share program updates as SSBI service numbers start to approach the 30,000 SSBI cap.

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

- Free **nbn** home internet via a participating School Student Broadband Initiative internet provider until 30 June 2028 – with no lock-in or rollover contract.
- Free Wi-Fi router – (that does not have to be returned).
- SSBI services:
 - Fixed line is on nbn Home Standard (~50/20 plans and unlimited data).
 - Fixed wireless is on nbn Fixed Wireless Plus.
 - Satellite is on **nbn**® Sky Muster® Plus Ordered Product (where your organisation has acquired the 50GB+ Plan Product Component without the Data Block Product Feature), or the 24x7 Uncapped Data Usage – 50 Plan.

What is a 50/20 plan?

The goal is for all SSBI 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).

Can I upgrade my SSBI connection? e.g. Upgrading to Fibre to the Premise (FTTP)

The SSBI offer is with a 50/20 speed plan and upgrading this service is not permissible. A household can choose to increase their speed tier but would have to cease their SSBI plan to do so.

These circumstances would be identified and managed via the NRC and nbn escalations process.

Who are the participating internet providers?

Below you'll find the most up-to-date list of participating internet providers.

- Activ8Me
- Aussie Broadband
- Belong (Telstra)
- Connected Australia (only available in Queensland)
- Exetel
- Optus
- SkyMesh
- Superloop
- Vodafone (TPG)

For more information on the current list of participating internet providers please visit our website:

<https://www.nbnco.com.au/campaigns/school-student-broadband-initiative>

The choice of internet provider will vary depending on where you live. Your voucher will list the participating 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 SSBI now.

Your free **nbn** home internet service will begin as soon as you are connected by your chosen participating internet provider, and you will receive a free SSBI service until 30 June 2028. There are

30,000 places available on the SSBI, and once these have been taken any unredeemed vouchers will not be able to be used. For families and carers with a currently unredeemed voucher we recommend contacting the NRC or your chosen participating internet provider to get connected 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 30 June 2028?

When signing up for the SSBI there are no lock-in or automatic rollover contracts. The current SSBI service is scheduled to run until 30 June 2028. You will not be automatically rolled over to a paid plan. Closer to the end of the program we expect that your chosen participating internet provider will get in touch with you to provide further information.

Families and carers on the program should contact their participating internet provider if they have any queries about their participating internet provider's broadband service over the nbn network and the extension to 30 June 2028.

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**® 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 sign up for School Student Broadband Initiative?

Families and carers who think they may qualify for the SSBI should follow these 3 simple steps:

- Contact the National Referral Centre (NRC) on 1800 954 610 (Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm AEDT), www.anglicarevic.org.au/student-internet. Callback, webchat and interpreting services are also available.
- Check if you qualify – the NRC 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 NRC will also be available to assist with contacting your chosen internet provider or providing follow-up support.

Families and carers can nominate for the program and redeem their vouchers until the limit of 30,000 SSBI services connected has been reached, or by the closing date for nominations of 31 December 2025 (whichever is sooner). Spaces are limited and we encourage those with vouchers or considering registering to do so as soon as practical.

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

To qualify for SSBI, 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?

At the time of applying, to qualify for the SSBI 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 SSBI 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 NRC 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 NRC 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 nbn 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 SSBI internet service, please contact your current SSBI 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 SSBI service until 30 June 2028.

If nbn can service your new home via a standard connection, but your SSBI internet provider does not service that location, you should contact the NRC who will be able to help you with next steps.

If you have a SSBI 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 NRC.

Once the program reaches the cap of 30,000 SSBI services connected or 31 December 2025, whichever is sooner, no further nominations will be accepted by participating internet providers, and any unredeemed vouchers will become invalid.

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 SSBI 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 SSBI 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 NRC 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

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

Or by visiting www.nbn.com.au/ssbi and/or <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/ssbi>