



Newcastle Light Rail School Opal cards

1. Will students be able to travel on Newcastle Light Rail with a School Opal card?

Yes. Eligible school or TAFE students will be able to travel on Newcastle Light Rail between their home and school or TAFE when services commence in early 2019, under the School Student Transport Scheme (SSTS).

Newcastle Light Rail, Newcastle Buses and the Stockton Ferry are all part of Newcastle Transport.

Students should only use light rail if it is required for their journey between home and school.

2. Will existing School Opal cards work on Newcastle Light Rail?

All School Opal card holders who currently have access to Newcastle Transport including Newcastle Buses or the Stockton Ferry will automatically receive access to Newcastle Light Rail in time for the start of services in 2019. This means they won't need to apply to have Newcastle Light Rail added to their School Opal cards for the 2019 school year.

However, if School Opal card holders' details are changing in 2019 they will need to update their details online.

Please note: School Opal cards that are School Term Bus Passes won't work on Newcastle Light Rail.

3. How do students or parents update existing School Opal cards that are not currently valid on Newcastle Transport?

Existing School Opal card holders can apply online at apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts for Newcastle Transport to be added to their School Opal card. Newcastle Transport includes Newcastle Buses/Newcastle Light Rail and the Stockton Ferry.

Students or parents can select 'Re-apply or update your details' to apply for Newcastle Transport (which includes Newcastle Light Rail) to be added to their School Opal cards (see screen capture 1).

School travel passes

About the School Student Transport Scheme

The School Student Transport Scheme

The School Student Transport Scheme (SSTS) provides eligible school students with free or subsidised travel from home to school.

The scheme includes:

- Free travel to and from home and school on approved train, bus, ferry and light rail services during school term.
- Discounted travel on buses between home and school with a School Term Bus Pass.
- Free travel on NSW TrainLink Regional services and long distance coach services for boarding school students.
- Subsidised travel to and from school in private vehicles in areas where there is no public transport available.

Students with a disability who are unable to travel to and from school under the School Student Transport Scheme may be eligible for assistance under the Department of Education Assisted School Travel Program.

Screen capture 1. 'Re-apply or update your details'.

Key steps include (see screen capture 2.) –

- Select 'Request a change of transport operator'
- On the 'Operator details' page select:
Mode: Newcastle Transport
Operator: Newcastle Bus/Newcastle Light Rail/Stockton Ferry
- Click 'Add this operator'.

Nominate transport operator(s) for the school journey

Based on the information you have provided for your home and school/TAFE address we have shortlisted operators in your area.

Please select the operator the student requires for travel.

Additional operators may be added if more are required to complete the journey.

If you're already approved for travel on Newcastle Buses or the Stockton Ferry, you'll automatically receive access to Newcastle Transport which means you can use Newcastle Light Rail, Newcastle Buses and the stockton Ferry. No further action is required.

If you're applying for Newcastle Transport, once approved you'll be able to use Newcastle Light Rail, Newcastle Buses and the Stockton Ferry. You won't need to select those operators individually.

Mode: Operator: Add this operator

Mode	Operator	Contact details
Newcastle Transport	Newcastle Bus/ Newcastle Light Rail/ Stockton Ferry	www.transportnsw.info

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Screen capture 2. 'Operator details'.

There will be no need for a new School Opal card to be issued as the existing Opal card will be updated with the new services.



4. How do students or parents apply for Newcastle Light Rail for next year if they are changing schools?

Students or parents should go to the SSTS online application form at **apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts**. Select 'Re-apply or update your details' then select 'Re-apply as the student is changing school, campus, home address, name or repeating a Year'.

Then please enter the student's new school and select Newcastle Transport as the mode and Newcastle Bus/Newcastle Light Rail/Stockton Ferry as the operator. The student's School Opal card will be updated for the start of services in early 2019.

5. How long does it take for Newcastle Light Rail to be added to existing School Opal cards?

If existing School Opal card holders have requested a change of operator they will receive the update within three days.

6. Which students are eligible?

Access to Newcastle Light Rail will be given to students who meet the SSTS eligibility criteria and need to use Newcastle Light Rail for their journey between home and school/TAFE. To check the eligibility criteria go to **apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts/**

As with usual processes, current School Opal card holders will be notified by Transport for NSW if their entitlement is due to expire.

7. How do students who don't currently have a School Opal card apply for Newcastle Transport services?

SSTS applications for the 2019 school year opened on **15 October 2018**.

Students can apply via the SSTS online form at **apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts** When nominating the operator, they will need to select Newcastle Transport as the mode and Newcastle Bus/Newcastle Light Rail/Stockton Ferry as the operator.

School Opal cards are sent to the student's nominated postal address.

8. What is the eligibility criteria for SSTS?

The SSTS eligibility requirements have not changed. A new SSTS application is needed if the student:

- has not had a School Opal card before
- is in a new shared parental responsibility situation (joint custody)



An updated application is required if the student:

- is moving from Year 2 to Year 3 (only applies if minimum distance requirements are not met)
- is moving from Year 6 to Year 7
- is changing schools
- is changing address.

To find out more go to apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts

