

Administrative Information

Industry Reference Committee (IRC) name: Community Sector and Development Industry Reference Committee (IRC)

Skills Service Organisation (SSO) name: SkillsIQ Limited

Training Package name examined: HLT Health Training Package

Change proposed: See *Attachment A*

Stakeholder consultation method and scale: See *Attachment B*

Background

The Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) commissions Training Package development work based on evidence of industries' need for change. SkillsIQ, under the direction of the Community Sector and Development IRC, has prepared this Case for Change to clearly set out the evidence on which the IRC's recommendation for change is based in relation to the review and update of the nationally recognised Indigenous Environmental Health Training Package Products currently packaged within the HLT Health Training Package.

The proposed update will seek to ensure that health workers within the Indigenous Environmental Health sector have access to appropriate skills and knowledge to meet the current and future environmental health needs of Indigenous communities.

Training Package Products Proposed for Update

This Case for Change proposes an update of the current *HLT26115 Certificate II in Indigenous Environmental Health Qualification*, including:

- 1 x Qualification
- 7 x Units of Competency.

The Training Package update will include:

- A change in the packaging rules
 - proposing 3 core Units of Competency and 6 electives or
 - 5 core Units of Competency and 5 electives.It is noted that this will be dependent on the outcome of consultation in the Training Package development phase.
- An update in the core Units of the Qualification
 - *CHCDIV002 Promote Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety* to be replaced with a new Unit of Competency that addressed the specific requirements of Indigenous and remote environmental health contexts
 - *HLTPOP008 Develop and implement disease prevention and control measures* to be replaced with an appropriate Unit of Competency that delivers the requirements of the job role at a Certificate II level
- Consideration of Skill Sets aligned to actions/processes associated with the prevention of diseases and promotion of health.

This update will ensure that the Qualification aligns to job roles in regional and remote Indigenous communities. Further, it will reduce barriers for people in these communities in regard to skills development and allow for the upskilling of current and future workers.

The following key areas will be considered during the Training Package update process.

- Environmental health requirements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

- Broader health needs within remote communities across a range of real and practical issues in respect to practices associated with rubbish, sewerage, pest control, dog health and germ theory
- The early detection of issues that can lead to significant health and hygiene risks
- The appropriate referral processes for such issues
- Processes to reduce incidences of community sickness.

See **Attachment A** for the full list of Training Package Products proposed for update.

Advice on New Training Package Products

This Case for Change is proposing to develop new Units of Competency covering the following key areas:

- **1 Core Unit** – *Specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals engaging in their own communities (to be determined as part of the consultation process)*
- **1 Skill Set** containing the following Units of Competency:
 - *HLTPOP001 Provide basic repairs and maintenance to health hardware and fixtures*
 - *HLTPOP002 Monitor and maintain sewerage systems*
 - *HLTPOP003 Monitor and maintain water supply.*

Further analysis and consultation will determine the actual number of new Units of Competency. These Units will be packaged with the existing Qualification when they are developed or updated.

The Case for Change

Skills that Meet the Current and Future Demand for Indigenous Environmental Health Workers

Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs) make up a workforce that targets environmental issues which affect health, particularly in Indigenous communities where mainstream services may not exist. They undertake a wide range of activities, from the level of individual households to community and regional levels, and make a genuine and highly valued contribution to improving Indigenous health.¹

Health authorities recognise that many diseases experienced by Indigenous people are directly linked to poor environmental health conditions in their communities. If the overall health levels of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are to improve, the environmental health and general living conditions that currently exist in many Indigenous communities must be maintained to a satisfactory standard. It is only by keeping people, homes and communities clean, hygienic and safe that the health of community members will be significantly improved.

Environmental health work receives a greatly improved response from the community if residents understand why the work is being done and how it is likely to improve their health. It is also important to teach people how to practise good environmental health, in order to ensure that they can participate and support better health outcomes for their communities.

¹ Environmental Health Practitioner Manual: a resource manual for Environmental Health Practitioners working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities ISBN: 987-1-74241-131-6 Online ISBN: 978-1-74241-132-3

In 2016, the Department of Training and Workforce Development WA identified issues raised around the *Certificate II in Indigenous Environmental Health* Qualification by the WA Department of Health and Empower Education (the only RTO currently delivering the Qualification to remote communities in WA).

The *Certificate II in Indigenous Environmental Health* aims to equip workers with the skills to identify and refer issues before they escalate, and to take initial measures to address some specific threats to health. The Qualification and subsequent job roles within communities can also then lead to an interest in broader trade Qualifications. The existing Certificate II Qualification does not reflect this role.

One of the core issues relates to the lack of flexibility in the packaging rules, which has had a negative impact on the ability of RTOs to deliver the Qualification in a way that has met industry needs.

Industry has identified that two of the core Units of Competency, namely *CHCDIV002 Promote Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety* and *HLTPOP008 Develop and implement disease prevention and control measures*, were irrelevant to the job role levels required from this Qualification. These Units of Competency are targeted towards other non-Indigenous Australians, permanent residents or individuals from other nationalities who lack and require knowledge of Indigenous culture. However, job roles pertaining to this Qualification specifically require people from Indigenous communities to be able to relate to the cultural needs of the community and to build relationships within the community. The Unit *HLTPOP008 Develop and implement disease prevention and control measures* is not suitable for the level of responsibility of a *Certificate II in Indigenous Environmental Health* job role. However, it is currently contained in the core of the Certificate II. Many individuals who complete the Certificate II have not had access to formal education and are therefore unable to meet the required levels of core skills to successfully complete this Unit. At the Certificate II level, the job roles are targeted at providing support and building relationships within the community. The Qualification needs to be flexible enough to therefore allow for delivery at the community level, be accessible to those who fulfil the role within remote Indigenous communities, and accommodate the cultural aspects associated with these communities.

Another key issue, particularly given the job outcomes relating to this Qualification and the stakeholder cohorts which would be impacted, is that one of the core Units of Competency, *CHCDIV002 Promote Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety*, was considered to be inappropriate for delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who make up a large proportion of the learner cohort for this Qualification.

The *Certificate II in Indigenous Environmental Health* may be used as a pathway for workforce entry into Indigenous environmental health work. At this level, work takes place under direct and regular supervision within clearly defined guidelines.

Indigenous Environmental Health Workers are employed to improve environmental health conditions in Indigenous communities. They assist communities to take responsibility for inspecting and maintaining their own water supplies, sewerage, drainage, rubbish disposal and pest control. They also educate Indigenous communities in personal and domestic hygiene and pet management.

A standard training program for the Indigenous Environmental Health Worker would cover the following key areas:

- Work in a population health context at the community level
- Provide information relating to disease prevention and control measures

- Provide information and support on environmental health issues
- Adhere to workplace health and safety
- Share health information
- Support group activities
- Provide basic repairs and maintenance to health hardware and fixtures and, where appropriate, provide referrals to skilled individuals such as plumbers to fix more complex problems
- Monitor sewerage systems.

Recommendations

The proposed update of this Qualification will seek to incorporate the required changes to ensure that industry has access to skilled Indigenous Environmental Health Workers, to meet the current and future environmental health needs of Indigenous communities.

Industry has identified that the current structure and packaging of the Qualification, *Certificate II in Indigenous Environmental Health*, is not meeting industry needs. It is creating a barrier to access for potential students within communities. The current cultural Unit of Competency is inappropriate for delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This is a significant issue, because trust underpins the overall credibility of this Qualification. Pivotal to this is that trusted members of the community will be able to become qualified to fulfil the role of the Indigenous Environmental Health Worker.

This issue will be addressed through updating the existing Units, where applicable, included in the core, subject to the packaging rules. Specifically, the Qualification will be updated to ensure that the following issues are addressed:

- Provision of access to potential students from Indigenous communities
- Flexible delivery of knowledge and skills by RTOs within communities
- Appropriate Units of Competency to cater for entry-level job roles
- Culturally appropriate and safe context for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Distinct pathway for people to complete the full Qualification and gain expertise in a range of duties in community job roles
- Clear demarcation and limits of functions between the community role and more specialised expertise, such as plumbers, carpenters or pest controllers/housing maintenance workers
- Skills consistent with broader government health policies, including initiatives and data-based evidence relating to the early recognition and treatment of scabies and trachoma, together with other identified diseases.

Industry Support for Change

Method and Scale of Stakeholder Consultation

Based on the information provided by the Department of Training and Workforce Development WA, a meeting of key stakeholders from WA was convened to inform the development of this Case for Change. SkillsIQ also conducted desktop research from industry publications and information provided by stakeholders to further inform the Case for Change, and the document itself will undergo a public feedback period to gain further input and stakeholder comment. It is envisaged that the health aspects will be of interest in other states.

See **Attachment B** for the full list of stakeholders who took part in the consultation process.

Unresolved Issues and Sensitivities

At this stage the Qualification sees very low use, other than in WA. There are only two RTOs with the Qualification on scope and only one of these is currently delivering the Qualification.

It is anticipated that the update to the Qualification will allow for greater engagement with the Qualification by both industry and RTOs and greater uptake and enrolments. The national consultation process will also raise awareness of this community role and identify broader relevance and application of the Qualification.

People from outside the community can be perceived as threatening and, as a result, are often unable to achieve the desired outcomes of the Indigenous Environmental Health Worker job role. This means that health and hygiene issues are often undetected as individuals aren't aware of the early signs and don't have access to a trusted referral process.

Impact of Change

Impact Analysis

The impacts of the proposed changes on stakeholders can be summarised as follows:

Industry and Employers

Access to a skilled workforce and Qualifications that support the delivery of the skills and knowledge as defined by industry is critical. Further, industry and employers would significantly benefit from clearer training pathways and strengthened Qualifications to address current gaps.

The risk of **not** implementing the changes is that workers will not possess the relevant skills for the sector to provide a range of assistance within Indigenous community health settings, resulting in risks to the Indigenous population. The lack of skilled workers is particularly exacerbated by the remote locations that are encountered by many workers in this field.

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)

Increased relevance of the Training Products will improve opportunities for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) to partner with industry in order to provide programs better aligned to job outcomes. Although changes to Units of Competency and Qualifications create flow-on impacts and costs for RTOs in relation to administrative systems, training resources and assessment materials, a positive impact for all RTOs will be improved clarity around training outcomes and assessment expectations.

The risk of **no** change is that the training offered may not match industry needs, and the quality and reputation of the course delivery may be compromised.

Learners

Learners will benefit from improved clarity and updated Training Products that industry confirms reflect the current skills and knowledge required for job roles in the sector.

The risk of **no** change is that learners may graduate with insufficient skills to support the sector and therefore their employability may be compromised.

General Public

The enhancement of skills for the Indigenous Environmental Health workforce will result in better health benefits for the community through early detection and referral. There will be less sickness and a greater ability to self-manage aspects of the community such as pest control, good water supply and sewerage systems, as well as maintaining personal hygiene.

The risks of **not** implementing the proposed changes will have an impact on the community and there won't be progress on environmental health management that adheres to cultural protocols within communities. Data on various public health issues has highlighted the benefits of early detection in managing hygiene-related issues. Data in the future could be used to gauge the impact of increased community awareness of more common diseases.

Estimated Timeframes

Central to the update process is the ongoing involvement of industry and national stakeholder engagement. It is estimated that development will take approximately three months from approval of this Case for Change. This work will be conducted under the guidance of the Community Sector and Development IRC.

Broad consultation with employers, industry professionals, graduates and training providers across Australia, including those in metropolitan, regional and rural areas, will be conducted in relation to draft Training Package Products, ensuring that the resulting Products are strongly aligned to the current skills needs of the Indigenous Environmental Health workforce.

Implementing the COAG Industry and Skills Council Reforms for Training Packages

The recommended work in this Case for Change is consistent with the COAG Industry and Skills Council (CISC) reforms for Training Packages by:

- Identifying and removing obsolete Training Package Products from the system, where possible. In this instance, the 2015 *HLT Health Training Package* update saw significant rationalisation, so there may be no obsolete Units
- Documenting industry expectations for training delivery and assessment through the Companion Volume Implementation Guide
- Enhancing portability of skills between occupations
- Removing unnecessary duplication within the Training Package, although industry notes the specific nature of this job
- Identifying where Skill Sets can enhance the flexibility of the Training Package.

This Case for Change was agreed to by the Community Sector and Development IRC.

ATTACHMENT A - Training Package Components to Update or Develop

SkillsIQ Limited

Contact details: Melinda Brown, General Manager

Date submitted: September 2018

Material for update:

- Qualifications: 1
- Units of Competency: 8 (7 existing and 1 new)

Training Package Code	Training Package Name	Qualification Code	Qualification Name	Unit of Competency Code	Unit of Competency Name
Qualification					
HLT	Health	HLT26115	<i>Certificate II in Indigenous Environmental Health</i>		
Skill Sets					
HLT	Health	New Skill Set	Aligned to actions/processes associated with the prevention of diseases and the promotion of health		
Units of Competency					
HLT	Health			HLTPOP001	Provide basic repairs and maintenance to health hardware and fixtures
HLT	Health			HLTPOP002	Monitor and maintain sewerage systems

Training Package Code	Training Package Name	Qualification Code	Qualification Name	Unit of Competency Code	Unit of Competency Name
HLT	Health			HLTPOP003	Monitor and maintain water supply
HLT	Health			HLTPOP004	Monitor and maintain rubbish collection and disposal systems
HLT	Health			HLTPOP005	Work in a population health context
HLT	Health			HLTPOP008	Develop and implement disease prevention and control measures
HLT	Health			HLTPOP009	Provide information and support on environmental health issues
HLT	Health			New Unit	Specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals engaging in their own communities (to be determined as part of the consultation process)

Attachment B: Stakeholder Consultation Method and Scale

Stakeholder Consultation

Name of Stakeholder	Organisation	Detail Method(s) and Scale of Consultation
Community Sector and Development Industry Reference Committee (IRC)		
Sha Cordingley (Chair)	Australian Community Workers Association	IRC Member
Nigel Brand (Deputy Chair)	Victorian Department of Health and Human Services	IRC Member
Debra Bennett	Territory Families (NT Government)	IRC Member
Andrew Fleming	Community Services & Health Industry Training Board (Victoria)	IRC Member
Peter Heyworth	Northern Volunteering	IRC Member
Craig Hodges	Health and Community Services Workforce Inc.	IRC Member
Katina Jones	EQUALS Group/Australian Council For Private Education & Training (ACPET)	IRC Member
Tammy Oliver	NSW Department of Family and Community Services	IRC Member
Stuart Reid	WA Council of Social Service	IRC Member
Helen Westwood	Australian Services Union	IRC Member
WA Consultation Group		
Joe Grande	Nirrumbuk Indigenous Corporation	Attended consultation meeting
Ray Christophers	Nirrumbuk Indigenous Corporation	Attended consultation meeting
Chicky Clements	Nirrumbuk Indigenous Corporation	Attended consultation meeting
Warren Fryer	Nirrumbuk Indigenous Corporation	Attended consultation meeting
Aaron Bell	Nirrumbuk Indigenous Corporation	Attended consultation meeting
Ethan Corpus	Cooke & Dowsett Plumbing/ NUDJ Plumbing Services Pty Ltd	Attended consultation meeting
Scott Dowsett	Cooke & Dowsett Plumbing/ NUDJ Plumbing Services Pty Ltd	Attended consultation meeting
Jim Dodds	WA Department of Health	Attended consultation meeting
John Perrett	WA Department of Health	Attended consultation meeting
Robert Mullane	WA Department of Health	Attended consultation meeting

Greg McConkey	Empower Education	Attended consultation meeting
Jamie Mackaway	Community Services, Health and Education Industry Training Council	Attended consultation meeting
Bob Looten	Community Services, Health and Education Industry Training Council	Attended consultation meeting
Lisa Barron	Department of Training and Workforce Development	Attended consultation meeting
Lucinda Pita	Department of Training and Workforce Development	Attended consultation meeting
Peter 'Chook' Henson	Department of Training and Workforce Development	Attended consultation meeting

Additional stakeholders will be added following public consultation

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