

Response to Senate Inquiry into Industry Skills Councils: Supplementary Submission

About this supplementary submission

This submission provides clarification on issues raised by Senate Committee members at the inquiry hearing on 16 February 2011 relating to the National Quality Council (NQC) policy on the vocational competency of assessors.

The submission from Restaurant and Catering Australia states that the NQC ‘stopped the [hospitality] training package and the associated products from being what industry wanted [by denying] the opportunity to state that trainers should have industry experience, which has undermined the quality of the training package from the industry perspective.’¹

We ask that the Inquiry note that the National Quality Council changed its policy in December 2009 to allow Training Package developers to specify the vocational competence and experience for assessors, within the guidelines outlined in the Training Package Development Handbook.

NQC policy on vocational competence of assessors

Training Package developers must provide advice within the Assessment Guidelines mandatory text about industry’s clear directions on the vocational competence and experience for assessors, to ensure that they meet the needs of industry and their obligations under the AQTF. Advice should include:

- relevant industry advice related to the vocational competencies of assessors, including relevant industry qualifications and/or competencies and relevant industry experience for assessing against the Training Package or for specific qualifications within the package and
- advice outlining what industry sees as acceptable and relevant forms of evidence to demonstrate the maintenance of currency of vocational competency.²

A number of Training Packages now have the vocational competence of assessors specified within. One example is the Hairdressing Training Package which states that RTOs must ‘ensure trainers and assessors have relevant and current industry experience, that is actual relevant, recent workplace experience in the competency area being delivered’ and that ‘the hairdressing industry has determined that:

- relevant experience is defined as work in a commercially operating hairdressing salon
- recent is defined as within the past year, of a minimum of one week's duration’³.

¹ Restaurant & Catering Australia, Submission 62 to the Senate Inquiry into Industry Skills Councils, p3

² Policy on Assessment Guidelines, NQC Training Package Development Handbook

It is likely that more industries will adopt this approach as they update their Training Packages through the normal course of the continuous improvement process, including the Tourism, Hospitality and Events Training Package which is currently under review by Service Skills Australia.

Further NQC work to strengthen assessment requirements in Training Packages

The NQC's newly endorsed design model for Training Packages, (outlined in its December 2010 report *Design Model for Streamlined Training Package Material*) places even greater emphasis on industry requirements for assessment. A separate section in Training Packages is now dedicated to assessment. This gives industry a vehicle for clearly specifying their requirements, including necessary trainer and assessor competencies.

The NQC has agreed to a transition period until the end of 2012 for Industry Skills Councils to update all Training Packages to the new design model. In the first half of 2011 a small number of Training Packages will be developed as demonstration models for streamlining to help the transition to the new design. Most of the redevelopment work is expected to occur during 2011, with a majority of new-look Training Packages likely to become available throughout or in the later part of 2012.

Contact

David Symonds
Director, National Quality Council
TVET Australia
Phone: 03 9832 8112
Fax: 03 9832 8199
david.symonds@tvetaustralia.com.au

³ Assessment Guidelines, WRH06 Hairdressing Training Package