



HumanAbility

**CHC Mental Health and
Alcohol and Other Drugs
Qualification Review**

Consultation Strategy

October 2024

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Summary of Document Changes

Version	Date	Author	Reason
1.0	6 September 2024	Rosalie Staggard	
V1.1	20 March 2026	Jane Mancini	Amended timelines, Consultation Manager

1. Introduction

1.1 Project details

Project full name and code:	25-005 CHC Mental Health and Alcohol and other Drugs: Qualification Review
Project shortform name:	Mental Health and AOD
Project Manager:	Eleanor Ravenarki
Consultation Manager	Lauren Palmer

1.2 Purpose of the Consultation Strategy

The purpose of the Consultation Strategy is to support the review of Mental Health and Alcohol and other Drugs (AOD) qualifications including five qualifications, forty-one units of competency and five skill sets. The strategy includes identification and mapping of key stakeholder groups, and outlines consultation objectives, methods and timing of consultation activities. It also includes communication objectives, methods and an action plan for each stage of the project.

The strategy is underpinned by the HumanAbility Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Engagement Principles.

1.3 Audience

The audience for this strategy is the Project Manager, Technical Committee, Consultation Manager, Project Team, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and key stakeholder groups.

2. Background

2.1 Project overview

The aim of this project is to review and update five qualifications, seventeen units of competency and five skill sets to ensure they are aligned with current industry needs, regulatory requirements, safety and wellbeing outcomes for clients. The project will also identify how common core skills, micro-credentials, and specialisations can support the skills development requirements of this workforce. The outcome would provide a framework for graduates to build the skills to enter the sector's workforce and to move across a range of occupations through their career.

The review of the qualifications is urgently needed to address several challenges. National strategies have been developed since 2015 which incorporate mental health and/or alcohol and other drugs. In addition, many States and Territories have developed strategies for their jurisdictions which address mental health and alcohol and other drugs.

The review of training products for the Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs workforces is an opportunity to contribute to the implementation of these strategies. Further research will be undertaken in the early stages of the project to identify the most relevant strategies and determine how to incorporate and support the strategic interventions and recommendations.

2.2 Importance of stakeholder engagement for project success

Successful stakeholder engagement is critical to the project. It is important to hear from a diverse range of voices, including training providers, employers, industry bodies, unions, government agencies, people working in the Mental Health and AOD sector, and students.

HumanAbility will engage with key stakeholders through consultation activities to gather insights and feedback that will play an important role in shaping the project and inform changes to the CHC Mental Health and AOD qualifications.

3. Stakeholder engagement objectives and scope

3.1 Stakeholder engagement objectives

- Establish and coordinate a Technical Committee with representatives from key stakeholder groups, including training providers, mental health and AoD employers, unions, industry bodies, and government agencies.
- Foster collaboration and dialogue among stakeholders from diverse sectors including training providers, mental health and AoD sector employers and workers, unions, industry bodies, government agencies and students.
- Gather diverse perspectives and insights to inform changes to the mental health and AoD qualifications.
- Provide effective, timely and transparent communication with stakeholders about consultation opportunities, progress and outcomes of the project.
- Ensure stakeholders feel valued, included and heard throughout the project.
- Monitor and review the impact of the project.

3.2 Scope of stakeholder engagement activities

In Scope

- Consultation with key stakeholders across the mental health and AOD sector to review and update five qualifications, seventeen units of competency and five skill sets to reflect current skills, knowledge and practice requirements as well as job roles and units of competency.

- Engagement methods and schedule of activities as outlined in Section 5. **Out of Scope**

- Engagement methods and activities outside of the project lifecycle and/or not listed under Section 5.

4. Stakeholder identification and analysis

4.1 Stakeholder identification

Stakeholder groups have been identified and mapped in accordance with the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) principles and practices of engagement.

The table below outlines the key stakeholders, and the benefits of their involvement informed by the level of interest/influence or expertise they hold, and level of participation they may have in the decision-making process.

The mapping exercise identifies how we will engage with each stakeholder group and what methods will be applied - as outlined in Section 5.

Further stakeholder analysis, in consultation with the Technical Committee, will identify key stakeholder organisations and individuals to consult throughout the project lifecycle, including the methods of engagement.

A consultation log will be developed and made available at the end of the project.

4.2 Stakeholder categories and analysis

Stakeholder group	Organisations	Benefits of involvement
Consultation with Human (Community) Services Industry Advisory Committee		<p>Direct experience and understanding of the Mental Health and AOD qualifications</p> <p>Provide advice to HumanAbility via expert representatives across the sector</p>
Technical Committee with expert representatives from across the sector	<i>Note: See Terms of Reference for full Technical Committee list</i>	<p>Direct experience and understanding of the Mental Health and AOD qualifications and related occupations</p> <p>Provide advice to HumanAbility as expert representatives from across the sector</p>

Training providers, including public and private providers – TAFEs, private RTOs, and employers/organisations that provide on-the-job training or traineeships	Including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charles Darwin University TAFE • Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors • TasTAFE • EMHprac • Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council AH&MRC • Insight: Centre for AOD Training and Workforce Development 	Direct experience and understanding of the qualifications/needs of the industry
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Stakeholder group	Organisations	Benefits of involvement
Assurance and regulatory bodies for mental health and AoD sectors	Including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission (VIC) 	Have direct influence on the mental health and AoD sector and training systems
Industry peak bodies:	Including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council AH&MRC • LGBTIQ+ Health Australia • The Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies (NADA) • SA Network of Drug and Alcohol Services (SANDAS) • QLD Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies (QNADA) • Mental Health Carers Australia • Mental Health Australia 	Advocate for improved training and pathway opportunities for mental health and AoD roles
Unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Community Services Union (HACSU) 	Advocate for improved training and pathway opportunities for mental health and AoD roles
Government agencies state	Including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission (VIC) • Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission (WA) • Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission (QLD) 	Develop state-based mental health and AoD strategies, have high impact through funding models and place-based initiatives
Government agencies - national		Develop national mental health and AoD strategies

Employers across the Mental Health and AoD Sector	Employers including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council AH&MRC • Odyssey House • Anglicare • Uniting • Life without Barriers • Relationships Australia • PeakCare • Baptist Care • Headspace • DASSA Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia • Open Arms 	Direct experience in attracting, recruiting, and retaining the workforce
Subject matter experts (SMEs)	SMEs from across the mental health and AoD Sector	Direct experience in attracting, recruiting, and retaining the workforce. May have direct influence on the mental health and AoD sector and training systems
Stakeholder group	Organisations	Benefits of involvement
Priority cohort - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council AH&MRC 	Provides First Nations people with the opportunity to actively contribute to project outcomes. Consultation designed in partnership with National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)
Jobs and Skills Councils (JSC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Skills Australia • Skills Insight (Agriculture, Horticulture and Conservation and Land Management) 	This review will impact the following Training Packages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Skills Australia (CSC Correctional Services) • Skills Insight (Agriculture, Horticulture and Conservation and Land Management)
Industry Training Advisory Boards		Understanding of the qualification. Strong links to industry and the training system. Understand unique workforce challenges at local level.

5. Strategic approach

5.1 Engagement methods

Method	Purpose	Who	Timing
Consultation with the Health Industry Advisory Committee (IAC)	To provide advice on the establishment of Technical Committee, suggestions for engagement and feedback on project deliverables	HumanAbility Health Industry Advisory Committee	At scheduled IAC meetings (during the lifecycle of the project)
Consultation with the Technical Committee	To support development and provide advice on project deliverables. The Committee will include subject matter experts from key stakeholder groups and national coverage.	As listed in section 4.2	As needed throughout the project lifecycle
Expert panel/focus group discussions	To provide sector insights and advice as required	SMEs as listed in section 4.2	As needed throughout the project lifecycle
1:1 focussed interviews	This will include interviews with employers to discuss settings, current roles,	Employers as listed in section 4.2	November - December 2024

Method	Purpose	Who	Timing
	functions and tasks for the industry, ensuring that nuances between different jurisdictions and regulatory requirements are identified	<i>Note: some of the listed stakeholders provide services nationally - SMEs from state-based services will be interviewed to ensure national coverage.</i>	

Consultation workshops – in person	To facilitate group discussions to understand challenges and workshop possible solutions 16 face-to-face workshops – including 1-2 workshops in each state/territory, metro and regional area	All interested stakeholders	7 April 2025 – 13 May 2025 <i>In each capital city and regional locations (to be determined in consultation with IACs, Technical Committee and ITABs)</i>
Online portal (consultation tool) on the HumanAbility website	To engage all participants. This is a two-way channel that enables project documents, including a consultation paper to be publicly available and capture stakeholder feedback, comments, and submissions	All stakeholders	Open throughout consultation period
External meetings and events	To leverage opportunities to promote the project, gain buy-in and encourage participation	All stakeholders	As required
Cross Jobs and Skills Council (JSC) Consultation	To undertake information session/s with JSCs that have carriage of programs that intersect with this qualification review. The relevant Jobs and Skills Councils will be kept informed of the progress of review and provided with opportunities to provide feedback.	Jobs and Skills Councils	Throughout the consultation period
Professional development workshops	3 virtual sessions to conduct professional development workshops on the new qualification and	Targeting trainers and assessors	June 2027 - March 2027
Method	Purpose	Who	Timing

	good practice for delivery and assessment.		
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5.2 Timing

Project stage	Timing	Engagement methods
Project set up and initial drafting	Sep-Nov 2024	<p>Consultation with Health IAC – to gather insights on Technical Committee membership and stakeholder identification</p> <p>Consultation with Technical Committee to gather advice on Consultation Strategy and initial draft products/deliverables</p> <p>Written communications/publications</p> <p>Functional analysis report finalised</p>
Public and government consultation and incorporating feedback	Jan – Sep 26	<p>All methods as above</p> <p>Technical Committee to gather advice on incorporating feedback</p> <p>Written communications/publications</p>
Final submissions and reporting	Sep - Nov 26	<p>Technical Committee to gather advice on final draft products/deliverables</p> <p>Consultation with IAC</p> <p>Written communications/publications</p>
Endorsement and release	Nov 2026 – Mar 2027	<p>Written communications/publications</p> <p>Professional development workshops</p>

5.3 Consultation questions

Consultation questions will be developed by the project team and refined by the Technical Committee.

Consultation with stakeholders will be structured to:

- Understand the current mental health and AOD industry changes and the skills, knowledge, practice and requirements needed for the mental health and AoD qualifications.
- Understand the current challenges, skills gaps, opportunities and potential solutions
- Identify and inform any changes for the qualification and units of competency and skill sets.
- Understand the different functions performed (e.g. metropolitan vs regional or remote settings)
- Provide advice on the development of resources, guidance on delivery and pathways information.

6. Communications

6.1 Communications objectives

- Raise awareness of the project and its objectives among mental health and alcohol and other drugs industry stakeholders.
- Promote consultation opportunities, key dates, project progress and outcomes to stakeholders through a variety of communications channels.
- Foster the involvement of a diverse range of stakeholders to gather rich and valuable industry insights, experience and expertise to inform the project.
- Build trust and credibility with stakeholders through effective, timely, transparent and accessible communications.

6.2 Communications methods

Communications channel / tool	Purpose / Details
Internal communication (meetings/email)	To keep internal stakeholders informed of project updates
Key messages	To outline the key details of the project, timelines, activities in preparation for consultation and communication across all channels
Frequently asked questions	To outline the potential questions and answers that might come up during consultation (preparation)
Information sheet or postcard	To outline the key details of the project, timelines, consultation activities and how to participate. Include QR Code or link to website/project page.
HumanAbility website	To provide a dedicated webpage where all project information and activities can be accessed easily. This webpage will include an engagement portal for stakeholders to register interest, provide submissions and feedback, and access project updates.
Email/email template or campaign/mail merge	To send emails/email template letters, information and updates to stakeholders to participate in consultation / share consultation opportunities.
News alerts	To provide project participants and other key stakeholders with branded news alerts via email when there is a project update.
HumanAbility newsletter articles	To provide project updates in HumanAbility's general newsletter.
Social media	To publish project consultation opportunities, updates, and other activities on HumanAbility's social media channels including LinkedIn, Facebook to reach as many and diverse stakeholders as possible. Social media posts will link to the HumanAbility webpage to encourage engagement on the project.

Communications channel / tool	Purpose / Details
	Stakeholders can increase HumanAbility’s social media reach by sharing content on their social media channels.
Industry news media	To leverage relationships with key stakeholder organisations with newsletters to share HumanAbility project consultation opportunities and other activities.
Connect and communicate with networks	<p>To contact and link in with industry networks, peak bodies, existing workforce committees/groups and IAC networks to promote the opportunity to participate in the project consultation.</p> <p>Identify and connect with communications departments of industry stakeholders to encourage promotion of consultation activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email key messages about the project, image/s, information sheet • Tag organisations in social media where relevant – link to website consultation page • Link in with industry events/meetings and hand out material (e.g. info sheet)
Events/speaking engagements	To host regular HumanAbility events/speaking engagements e.g. via webinar or in person – providing updates to industry and project stakeholders
Resources	To publish resources - the companion volume will be updated to reflect the new qualifications, skill sets and units of competency, along with guidance on delivery, pathways and mapping information.

7. Evaluation and feedback

Stakeholder feedback will be gathered during the consultation workshops, interviews and via the dedicated project page, for analysis and reporting.

Measures that can also be used to evaluate the consultation strategy and project, include:

- Attendance and participation in workshops and interviews
- Number of dedicated website page visits and submissions made in the portal
- Social media posts, engagement and reach (on HumanAbility social media pages and other social media pages)
- Newsletter articles / news items published by stakeholders
- Meetings held / attendance / topics
- An increase in enrolments and completions of the relevant qualifications.

The Technical Committee and Industry Advisory Committee will also provide advice relating the effectiveness of the consultation in driving project outcomes.