HumanAbility

CHC Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Qualification Review

Consultation Strategy

November 2024

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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	Lisa Lawton

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, forty-one 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, forty-one 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		Direct experience and understanding of the Mental Health and AOD qualifications Provide advice to HumanAbility via expert representatives across the sector
Technical Committee with expert representatives from across the sector	*Note: See Terms of Reference for full Technical Committee list*	Direct experience and understanding of the Mental Health and AOD qualifications and related occupations Provide advice to HumanAbility as expert representatives from across the sector
RTOs and educational experts	Training providers that deliver the qualifications can be found on Training.gov.au. All RTOs will be invited to participate in the consultation.	Direct experience and understanding of the qualifications/needs of the industry
Assurance and regulatory bodies for mental health and AoD sectors	Including, but not limited to: • Relevant regulatory bodies	Have direct influence on the mental health and AoD sector and training systems
Industry peak bodies:	Including, but not limited to: • Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council AH&MRC • LGBTIQ+ Health Australia • The Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies (NADA)	Advocate for improved training and pathway opportunities for mental health and AoD roles

Stakeholder group	Organisations	Benefits of involvement
	• SA Network of Drug and Alcohol Services (SANDAS) • QLD Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies (QNADA) • Mental Health Carers Australia • Mental Health Australia	
Unions	Including, but not limited to: • Health and Community Services Union (HACSU) • Australian Services Union	Advocate for improved training and pathway opportunities for mental health and AoD roles
Relevant commonwealth, state and territory government departments and agencies, along with the skills and training departments	Including, but not limited to: • Mental Health and Wellbeing Commissions • Department of Employment and Workplace Relations • Department of Health and Aged Care • Department of Social Services • State Training Authorities	Develop state-based mental health and AoD strategies, have high impact through funding models and place-based initiatives
Employers	Employers/service providers across the Mental Health and AoD sector will be given the opportunity to engage in this project.	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
Priority cohort - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders	Including but not limited to: • National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) • 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)	• Public Skills Australia • Skills Insight	This review will impact the following Training Packages: • 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

Stakeholder group	Organisations	Benefits of involvement
		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, functions and tasks for the industry, ensuring that nuances between different jurisdictions and regulatory requirements are identified	Employers as listed in section 4.2 *Note: some of the listed stakeholders provide services nationally - SMEs from state-based services will be interviewed to ensure national coverage.*	November - December 2024
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 *In each capital city and regional locations (to be determined in consultation with IACs, Technical Committee and ITABs)*

Method	Purpose	Who	Timing
Online feedback mechanism (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 good practice for delivery and assessment.	Targeting trainers and assessors	Nov 2025 - Feb 2026

5.2 Timing

Project stage	Scheduled Start Date	Scheduled End Date	Key Deliverables
Stage 1 Project set up (8 weeks)	19/9/2024	14/11/2024	• Establish project team • Develop draft Project Plan and Consultation Strategy • Establish Technical Committee (TC) • Hold TC meeting, seeking feedback on draft Consultation Strategy **(Meeting 1)** • Formal notification of project to SROs and Key Stakeholders • Submit Project Plan and draft Consultation Strategy to DEWR **(Milestone 1)**

			• Create a project page on website, publishing the Consultation Strategy and timelines and TC membership and ToRs.
Stage 2 Initial development (20 weeks)	15/11/2024	04/4/2025	• 16 x virtual interviews held with employers • 1 x virtual functional analysis workshop held • Functional analysis report finalised and consultation paper developed • Develop draft qualifications, skill sets and units of competency • Hold TC meeting seeking feedback on consultation paper and draft qualifications, skill sets and units of competency (**Meeting 2**)

Stage 3 Public and government consultation (8 weeks)	7/4/2025	31/5/2025	• Upload to HumanAbility's website draft qualification and units of competency (**Milestone 2**)
			• Send communique to all key public and government stakeholders including RTOs currently delivering the qualification that consultation is open and details on how feedback can be submitted.
			• Conduct:
			   o 16 face-to-face workshops
			   o 3 virtual workshops
			• Consultation log made visible on HumanAbility's website with the log regularly updated with feedback.

Stage 4 Incorporating feedback (8 weeks)	2/6/2025	25/7/2025	• Review all feedback received • Meet with the technical committee, seeking advice on conflicting stakeholder feedback and proposed treatments (**Meeting 3**) • Update the consultation register and actions taken including justification where required • Summary of consultation feedback and actions taken published on HumanAbility's website • Draft qualifications, skill sets and units of competency finalised.
Stage 5 Senior Official's Check (4 weeks)	28/7/2025	22/8/2025	• Consultation held with Commonwealth and state/territory Senior Responsible Officers Feedback incorporated into final documentation
Stage 6 Finalisation and Submission to Assurance Body (4 weeks)	25/8/2025	19/9/2025	• Internal QA of materials conducted • Qualifications, skill sets and units of competency uploaded onto the VET National Training Register in draft format

			• Companion volume updated to reflect changes to the Training Package, identified pathways information and mapping information • Draft submission finalised and submitted to the Assurance Body for consideration
Stage 7 Assurance Body and Skills Ministers' Endorsement (8 weeks)	22/9/2025	14/11/2025	• Provision of any additional information the Assurance Body may require • Submission presented to Skills Ministers for endorsement (**Milestone 3)**
Stage 8 Release and post endorsement (12 weeks)	17/11/2025	9/2/2026	• Endorsed training products and associated companion volume released on the VET National Training Register • Website updated with final outcomes of the project • Communique sent to all RTOs delivering the qualifications and ASQA advising that the new training package components have been released. • 3 virtual professional development workshops held on the features of the new qualifications, skill sets and units of competency.

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. 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	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. Identify and connect with communications departments of industry stakeholders to encourage promotion of consultation activities

Communications channel / tool	Purpose / Details
	• 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.   Feedback and Consultation Log

Stakeholder feedback will be gathered during the consultation via workshops and interviews/surveys. Stakeholders may also submit feedback via the Training Product Advice Service (web form) and the training product project email address trainingproducts@humanability.com.au, which appears on the project page.

Surveys will be the primary mechanism for structured, individual feedback during public consultation. This ensures that feedback can be quantified, analysed qualitatively (thematic analysis) and that the outcomes/response can be tracked as required by the Training Package Organising Framework.

Individual feedback will be captured in the Consultation Log. This also captures the organisation name, stakeholder type, State and the method of communication/consultation. Stakeholder names and contact details will also be collected to enable HumanAbility to clarify and follow up on the feedback if needed. However, these are not included in the published version of the Consultation Log and are not submitted to the funding body.

As the feedback is reviewed, the action taken in response to the feedback will be documented in the Consultation Log. Where feedback is not incorporated, the rationale for this will also be documented.

Where feasible, the themes identified from consultation workshops will be added to the Consultation Log.

The Consultation log will be published to the project page after consultations and incorporation of feedback is complete.

8.   Evaluation

The effectiveness of the Consultation Strategy will be evaluated using the following measures:

• Analysis of stakeholder type and location
• Number of interviews achieved in pre-draft and functional analysis work

- Attendance at consultation workshops
- 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 be asked to provide advice relating to the effectiveness of the Consultation Strategy in driving project outcomes.