HumanAbility

Optical Dispensing Qualification Review Project

Consultation Strategy

September 2024

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1. Introduction

1.1 Project details

Project full name and code:	24-005 HLT Optical Dispensing: Qualification Review
Project shortform name:	Optical Dispensing
Project Manager:	Evan Cooper
Consultation Manager:	Lisa Lawton

1.2 Purpose of the Consultation Strategy

The purpose of the Consultation Strategy is to support the review *HLT47815 Certificate IV in Optical Dispensing*. 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 the *HLT47815 Certificate IV in Optical Dispensing* qualification to ensure it is aligned with current industry needs, skills, practice, technologies, and safety and wellbeing outcomes for clients.

The qualification was last reviewed in 2015 and is now out of date. The core units and electives included in Certificate IV do not fully align with the needs of the industry or the diverse roles that optical dispensers are expected to perform.

Enhancing the qualification is essential to ensure that future optical dispensers possess the knowledge and skills needed to thrive in a dynamic marketplace and meet future needs.

Since the last review, the sector has experienced significant expansion and transformation driven by technological advancements across the industry from production to prescription, as well as changes in consumer expectations and increased demand for specialised eyecare services. The increasing complexity of client needs highlight the need for enhanced digital capabilities within the training. Practitioners must not only retain traditional skills but also acquire new competencies in digital measurement tools, online service delivery, and telehealth.

Skills and technology enhancements are also needed to address emerging health challenges like myopia, now recognised as a global epidemic particularly affecting children.

Enhancing the qualification will equip optical dispensers with the skills needed to meet significant growth and change in this industry. The review will also clarify the pathways for career progression, ensure the core units and electives are fit-for-purpose, and explore the feasibility of creating targeted skill sets. There is an opportunity to improve quality, standards, and consistency across the sector

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, government agencies, people working in Optical Dispensing roles across different settings and students.

HumanAbility will engage with key stakeholders through a range of consultation activities to gather insights and feedback that will play a key role in shaping the project and informing changes to the Optical Dispensing qualification.

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, optical sector employers, industry bodies, and government agencies.
- Foster collaboration and dialogue among stakeholders from diverse sectors including training providers, optical sector employers and workers, unions, industry bodies, government agencies, students, and direct beneficiaries of optical services and products.
- Gather diverse perspectives and insights to inform changes to the optical dispensing qualification.
- 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 optical sector to review and update the qualification *HLT47815 Certificate IV in Optical Dispensing* to reflect current and future skills, knowledge, and practice requirements.
- Consultation to review units of competency and explore the feasibility of creating targeted skill sets to meet industry needs.
- 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 stakeholder, the benefits of their involvement, the level of interest/influence or expertise they hold, and level of participation they 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 stakeholder register will be developed to capture intended and actual consultation outcomes.

4.2 Stakeholder categories and analysis

Stakeholder group	Organisation	Benefits of involvement
Consultation with Health Industry Advisory Committee		Direct experience and understanding of the Optical Dispensing qualification Provide advice to HumanAbility via expert representatives across the sector
Technical Committee with expert representatives from across the sector	*Note: See Terms of Reference on the website for full Technical Committee list*	Direct experience and understanding of the optical dispensing qualification and related occupations Provide advice to HumanAbility as expert representatives from across the sector
Training providers, including private/public RTOs and TAFE organisations	Including, but not limited to: • Australasian College of Optical Dispensing (ACOD) (NSW) • TAFE NSW (NSW) • A selection of TAFEs and RTOs nationally	Direct experience and understanding of the qualification / needs of the industry Note: *Australasian College of Optical Dispensing and TAFE NSW have the qualification on scope. Consultation will include a broader collection of training providers to understand delivery barriers and why it is not included on scope*
Assurance and regulatory bodies / Industry peak	• Product Safety Australia	Have influence on the optical systems, practice and products

Stakeholder group	Organisation	Benefits of involvement
		Advocate for improved training and pathway opportunities for optical workforce Improve quality, standards, and consistency across the sector
Employers across the optical dispensing sector:	Employers including, but not limited to: • Eyecare Plus • George and Matilda • Optical Superstore • Specsavers • ProVision • Bailey Nelson • Oscar Wylee • CR Surfacing • EssilorLuxottica • Rodenstock Australia • HOYA • Carl Zeiss • Bupa Optical • Teachers Health Fund • The Optical Company • 1001 Optometry	Direct experience in attracting, recruiting, and retaining the workforce
Subject matter experts (SME)	SMEs from across the optical dispensing sector	Extensive knowledge and experience across the optical dispensing sector
Jobs and Skills Councils (JSC)	• Future Skills Organisation • SACSA	For an activity that will impact other JSCs, consultation with impacted JSCs is required
Industry Training Advisory Boards		Understanding of the qualification
Unions		Advocate for improved training and pathway opportunities for optical roles
Government agencies - state		Develop state-based optical strategies, have high impact through funding models and place-based initiatives
Government agencies - national		Develop national optical sector strategies
Priority cohort - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders	• National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)	Provides First Nations people with the opportunity to actively contribute to project outcomes. Direct beneficiaries of improvements to the sector.

Stakeholder group	Organisation	Benefits of involvement
		Consultation can be designed in partnership with National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO).
Not-for-profit organisations	• Fred Hollows Foundation • Vision Australia • Lions Eye Institute	Providing services to the sector

5. Strategic approach

5.1 Engagement methods

Method	Purpose	Who	Frequency
Consultation with Health Industry Advisory Committee (IAC)	To provide advice on the establishment of Technical Committee, suggestions for engagement and feedback on project deliverables	Key influencers	At scheduled IAC meetings (during the lifecycle of the project)
Consultation with Technical Committee	To support development, and provide advice The Committee will include representatives from key stakeholder groups and national coverage. The Committee will provide input and feedback on the project consultation strategy.	As listed in section 4.2	As needed throughout the project lifecycle
1:1 interviews	16 interviews in each state/territory, metro, regional and remote settings This will include interviews with employers to discuss settings, current roles, functions, and tasks for the industry ensuring that nuances between different jurisdictions and	Selection of employers and SMEs as listed in section 4.2	September – October 2024

Method	Purpose	Who	Frequency
	regulatory requirements are identified A selection of RTOs/TAFEs that do not currently have the qualification on scope to understand why it is not included.		
Functional Analysis workshop online	One virtual functional analysis workshop will be undertaken with participants being drawn from across all states and including metropolitan, regional and remote settings.	Employers and SMEs as listed in section 4.2	September 2024 – October 2024 *Note: see the website for details*
Consultation workshops – in person	To facilitate group discussions to understand challenges and workshop possible solutions 12 face-to-face workshops (up to two workshops in each state/territory, metro and regional)	All stakeholders	November – December 2024 **Proposed workshop locations/dates** Perth - 4/11/24 Adelaide - 6/11/24 Alice Springs - 8/11/24* Darwin - 11/11/24 Cairns - 13/11/24* Brisbane - 14/11/24 Newcastle – 25/11/24* Sydney - 26/11/24 Albury – 28/11/24* Melbourne - 2/12/24 Canberra - 4/12/24 Hobart - 10/12/24 ** Denotes a combined workshop with Audiometry and Pathology Collection Projects* *Note: dates and times subject to change – see website for full details*
Consultation workshops – online	To facilitate group discussions that will	All stakeholders	November – December 2024

Method	Purpose	Who	Frequency
	help to understand needs, challenges, gaps, solutions and improvements for the qualifications 3 virtual workshops will be offered for all stakeholders		**Proposed online workshop dates** 19/11/24 13/12/24 17/12/24 *Note: dates subject to change – see website for full details*
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.	Future Skills Organisation	Throughout consultation period
Professional development workshops	3 virtual workshops To conduct professional development workshops on the new training package	Trainers and assessors	July 2025

Method	Purpose	Who	Frequency
	components and good practice for delivery and assessment A recording of the virtual professional development workshops will be made available on the HumanAbility website.		

5.2 Timing

Project stage	Timing	Engagement methods
Project set up and initial drafting	July – August 2024	• Consultation with Health IAC – to gather insights on Technical Committee membership and stakeholder identification • Consultation with Technical Committee to gather advice on Consultation Strategy and initial draft products/deliverables • Written communications/publications
Public and government consultation and incorporating feedback	September - March 2025	• All methods as above • Technical Committee to gather advice on incorporating feedback • Written communications/publications
Final submissions and reporting	June 2025	• Technical Committee to gather advice on final draft products/deliverables • Consultation with IAC • Written communications/publications • Submissions / letters
Endorsement and release	June – July 2025	• Written communications/publications • Professional development workshops

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 optical dispensing industry changes and the skills, knowledge, practice and requirements needed for the *HLT47815 Certificate IV in Optical Dispensing* qualification.
- Understand the current challenges, gaps, opportunities, and potential solutions.
- Identify and inform changes for the qualification, units of competency and skill sets.

- Identify functions that are common across all settings/specific settings and pathways within the sector.
- Provide advice on the development of resources, guidance on delivery and pathways information.
- Understand why RTOs/TAFEs do not have the current qualification on scope and what prevents them from delivery of the future qualification on their jurisdiction.

6. Communications

6.1 Communications objectives

- Raise awareness of the project and its objectives among optical 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
Frequently asked questions	To outline the potential questions and answers that might come up during consultation (preparation)
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, and X (Twitter) 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.

Communications channel / tool	Purpose / Details
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 - 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

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