High Level Review of Training Packages

It's happened... what now?
The High Level Review of Training Packages has resoundingly confirmed that:

- industry must have a pre-eminent role in defining work outcomes
- the Training Package model has widespread support
- the model has the flexibility to serve a range of broader purposes.

However, the review also identified the need for improvements to Training Package products and processes and to strengthen teaching and learning in response to the challenges faced by clients and stakeholders in implementing Training Packages. In June 2004, the Australian minister and state and territory ministers for vocational education and training considered the review findings and agreed to major areas for action.

This document summarises how the work will be taken forward. It is a supplement to Moving On, the report of the review.

The review showed that the time is right and that we have sufficient maturity and goodwill in the system to improve Training Packages and their implementation to benefit enterprises, industries, individuals and communities.

>> How did we get here?

The 18 month review involved three highly integrated stages of national research and consultation with many VET stakeholders.

- Phase One researched issues affecting Training Packages now and into the future and confirmed that Training Packages need to respond to new challenges—new skills, new knowledge, new approaches to teaching and learning.
- Phase Two investigated the current realities of Training Packages—exploring the experience of Training Package implementation from a wide range of users.
- Phase Three involved national consultation with more than 1000 stakeholders and analysis of more than 130 written submissions on the future responses needed to enhance the Training Package model and to support teaching, learning, and assessment. Finally, this phase drew together the key learnings from the review into the report Moving On available at www.anta.gov.au/highlevel.asp

>> The way ahead?

The National Training Quality Council (NTQC) has committed to a comprehensive Training Package Work Plan that prioritises work under six areas for action in short, medium and longer timelines over the coming three years.

ANTA will work with industry skills councils, other key national industry stakeholders, Australian Government, state and territory governments, registered training organisations (RTOs) and other interest groups to complete the work. This commitment will make sure that Training Packages are a cornerstone of a vocational education and training system that adapts and responds to the fluid nature of society and the labour market to create a truly globally competitive workforce and pathways for all learners.
Summary of the six major areas for action

Here is a summary of the work for the next three years to address the six major areas for action from the review.

Action 1: A new ‘settlement’

The review found that all stakeholders had under-estimated the massive changes that Training Packages represented to providers and systems. Under a new ‘settlement’ ANTA will provide the necessary leadership to instil confidence in Training Packages and to develop more supportive and adaptive systems and processes. A shared understanding of the role and importance of Training Packages will be fostered so that Training Packages meet the workforce skill needs of Australian industry now and in the future.

- A key component of this action is a three-year project to provide more rigorous processes for the development, review and endorsement of Training Packages. This will progressively improve Training Package quality and consistency by:
  > minimising overlap and inconsistency between Training Packages
  > providing for pre-vocational pathways and school to work transition
  > streamlining the endorsement process
  > ensuring consistent alignment of VET qualifications to the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
  > capturing advice from the full range of stakeholders
  > maximising cross-industry commonalities.

- Stakeholders will be kept up-to-date with progress on implementation of the Work Plan, for example with forums for information sharing and regular updates on the ANTA website.

- New quality assurance mechanisms will be developed.

- Collaborative, cooperative and innovative approaches will be fostered.

Action 2: Better Training Package design

Training Package design will be improved through wider VET stakeholder input into development and review processes. This will ensure the emphasis is on good design rather than rules and that units of competency clearly specify appropriate work performance, knowledge, skills and abilities. To achieve this the following work will be completed.

- Clearer, more consistent guidance will be provided and shared among developers and reviewers of Training Packages.

- Industry stakeholders and regulators will continue to provide input into Training Package content. Provider input, including that of equity and qualification design specialists, will be strengthened in developing evidence guides where they link to teaching and learning.
• Better guidance will be provided to practitioners and assessors, for example through improved evidence guides and range statements; specifying workplace simulation and participation more clearly and explicitly; and providing guidance on the clustering of skills sets.

• A national approach to explicitly incorporating generic and employability skills in Training Packages will be implemented.

• Supplementary reporting systems will be investigated.

**Action 3: Rigorous and inclusive development and review processes**

Training Packages must be of high quality and fit for their multiple purposes including providing for entry level training, higher level qualifications and shorter skills sets. To this end, processes will be enhanced in the following ways.

• Tighter quality assurance will apply to Training Package development and review processes.

• Broad based market intelligence on current and future skills needs, including the input of equity and educational expertise, will inform Training Package development and review through the work of the newly formed industry skills councils.

• The key performance indicators for the councils will ensure a high degree of accountability consistent with their national industry leadership role.

• Global and international drivers will be fully considered in Training Package development and review processes, while ensuring Training Packages continue to meet the needs of the Australian market.

**Action 4: An effective qualifications framework**

The AQF must be clearly understood and interpreted by developers of Training Packages to ensure qualifications and Statements of Attainment meet industry and individual requirements. The following work will be done to progress this and to provide more comprehensive information to users of Training Packages.

• The need for clearer AQF descriptors in the VET sector will be explored with the Australian Qualifications Framework Advisory Board (AQFAB) to ensure consistent interpretation when determining Training Package qualifications.

• The potential for use of Training Package content for short training programs will be promoted.

• Strategies will be developed to raise awareness and recognition of Statements of Attainment.

• The potential for providers to customise national qualification titles for marketing purposes without affecting the integrity of nationally portable training will be investigated.
**Action 5: Supporting teaching, learning and assessment**

Mechanisms will be provided to support high quality delivery and assessment under Training Packages and to enhance VET professionalism.

- A range of collaborative and nationally agreed strategies will be implemented to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.
- Current mechanisms for storing and accessing Training Package related material will be examined, with some form of rationalisation if warranted.
- Greater connections will be made between research findings, national priorities, market intelligence and Training Package development and review processes.

**Action 6: Improving pathways**

Valid pathways will be available into and through Training Packages and into higher education to meet the needs of the full range of potential learners.

- Industry skills councils will develop pre-vocational pathways into Training Package qualifications and relevant entry level cross-industry qualifications to ensure valid pathways are available.
- Opportunities for cross-sectoral competencies will be maximised.
- Strategies will be developed to promote and improve articulation arrangements.
- Options will be explored for improving recognition of prior learning pathways.

**How will the VET sector benefit?**

There will be:

- more rigorous development, review and endorsement processes and better Training Package design leading to direct improvements in Training Package quality over a three year cycle
- greater skills transfer across industry and improved industry relevant pre-vocational pathways and enhanced school to work transition
- access to the generic and employability skills that industry and individuals require
- improved AQF descriptors for VET, increased value placed on VET qualifications, more status ascribed to Statements of Attainment
- better guidance to VET practitioners, trainers and assessors through improved evidence guides and range statements in Training Packages
- a greater system understanding of the roles and multiple purposes of Training Packages, clearer roles and responsibilities for key stakeholders, and national dialogue on approaches to teaching, learning and assessment
- enhanced RTO capabilities for Training Package implementation.

The six major areas for action build on existing achievements and position the Training Package model to serve the vocational education and training sector and industry's broader workforce and organisational development needs for the next decade.
What are the immediate priorities?

The NTQC Work Plan has identified five immediate priorities that will be completed by the end of 2004. These are:

- establishing more rigorous Training Package development, review and endorsement processes for roll out in 2005
- reaching a nationally agreed approach for accelerating the incorporation of generic and employability skills in Training Packages
- generating strategies in consultation with industry bodies to promote the value of Statements of Attainment
- evaluating current national programs and projects to develop a coherent, integrated strategy to better support flexible teaching, learning and assessment
- moving on—bringing about and supporting the necessary changes in the system.

For ongoing information visit