

PROPOSED SKILLS FOR SUSTAINABILITY EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK – CONSULTATION PAPER FOR USERS OF THE TRAINING SYSTEM

BACKGROUND

In response to the growing importance of sustainability and the demand for appropriate skills to support it, the former Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education has directed the National Quality Council to develop a framework of standards to recognise high quality training provision in skills for sustainability. The standards will be included as a voluntary component of the AQTF certification of RTOs.

This paper outlines a proposed framework and implementation process. Implementation of the Framework will be subject to its formal adoption by the Ministerial Council on Tertiary Education and Employment.

Feedback on the draft framework is being sought from users of the training system in response to the key questions found at the end of this paper.

WHAT IS THE SKILLS FOR SUSTAINABILITY EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK?

The proposed Skills for Sustainability Excellence Framework is a set of criteria against which providers of skills for sustainability can be voluntarily evaluated. The Framework will form part of the Australian Quality Training Framework, complementing the existing AQTF Excellence Criteria.

The Framework will provide an opportunity for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) to evaluate the quality of their training and assessment in skills for sustainability against best practice and to apply for formal recognition of high quality provision.

The Framework uses the same five headings as the AQTF Excellence Criteria –

- ∂ Leadership
- ∂ Learning and Assessment
- ∂ People Development
- ∂ Relationship Management
- ∂ Integrated Information Management

Research and consultation on best practice identified a number of key elements for high quality provision of skill for sustainability and these have been arranged under the five headings. Although the criteria and elements of the Framework differ from those in the AQTF Excellence Criteria, there are links between the two that can provide a pathway for RTOs that wish to be evaluated under both schemes.

Full details of the Skills for Sustainability Excellence Framework criteria and elements can be found in Attachment A.

WHAT WILL BE EVALUATED UNDER THE FRAMEWORK?

RTOs will be evaluated on their overall approach and commitment to the development of skills for sustainability, as well as their practices in specific areas in which their training and assessment delivery incorporates a focus on skills for sustainability. The Framework does not encompass the sustainability of an organisation's operating procedures.

WHO CAN APPLY FOR FORMAL RECOGNITION?

Any RTO delivering training that incorporates skills for sustainability can apply to be evaluated against the standards.

In the application, an RTO will list the industry areas, faculties, qualifications, skill sets or units of competency that they wish to have included within the scope of their skills for sustainability evaluation. For example, one RTO may wish to include the whole of its Construction and Hospitality departments in its scope, another may wish to include only a single accredited course in carbon accounting, or a number of specific units of competency for up-skilling builders in 'green building'. All RTOs will be expected to demonstrate institutional commitment to the development of skills for sustainability, regardless of the scope of their application.

HOW WILL THEY BE EVALUATED?

The proposed evaluation process will commence with a self-evaluation conducted by the RTO. Those that wish to apply (at cost) for formal recognition can then submit their self-evaluation for review by an external evaluation panel.

Trials of the AQTF Excellence Criteria have shown the self-evaluation stage to be a valuable process for the RTO to undertake, regardless of whether they continue to the external evaluation stage.

WHAT WILL BE THE OUTCOME OF A FORMAL EVALUATION?

RTOs that are deemed through the external review to have successfully met the standards against all five criteria will receive a 'Green Tick'. This Green Tick will be accompanied by a list of those industry areas, faculties, qualifications, skill sets or units of competency that are included in the scope of the Green Tick.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. Does the framework adequately describe an RTO that is committed to, and delivers, high quality outcomes in skills for sustainability?
2. What information would be needed to explain to users of the training system (e.g. employers, students) what a 'Green Tick' stands for? How could this information be communicated to make the most sense to users of the training system?
3. Is the term 'skills for sustainability' the most appropriate way to describe the focus of this framework?
4. What might be the value of the framework to users of the training system?