

National Quality Council Policy for the Training Package Development and Endorsement Process 2008

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Key Principles for Training Package Development and Endorsement

Training Packages specify the skills and knowledge required to perform effectively in the workplace. They do not prescribe how an individual should be trained. Trainers and supervisors develop learning strategies - the "how" - depending on learners' needs, abilities and circumstances. The development and endorsement process for Training Packages ensures the units of competency, qualifications and skills sets are developed to an agreed quality standard and are highly responsive to industry's existing and future demand for new skills. The following key principles underpin the model:

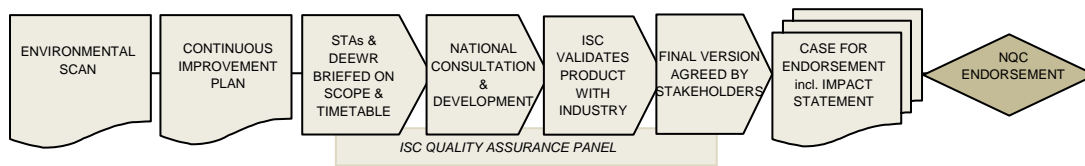
- Open and inclusive industry-driven maintenance, validation and endorsement of Training Packages.
- Strong and clear key stakeholder roles with critical points of intervention and consultation.
- Continuous improvement, with full Training Package reviews where required.
- Highly responsive process capable of meeting industry's needs and priorities for new skills.
- Industry Skills Councils' responsibility and accountability for the quality and relevance of Training Packages.

Stakeholder roles

The Model involves key stakeholders with roles and accountabilities reflective of their broader role within industry and the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system. These stakeholders are:

- **Industry** - Drives continuous improvement through setting the scope and timing of work. Provides Australia wide expert advice throughout the development, validation and final sign off stages.
- **National Quality Council (NQC)** - National policy leadership, conversations based on new information (Environmental Scans), endorsement of Training Packages, and a more strategic quality role.
- **Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations** (the Department) - Policy management and implementation. Industry Skills Council funding agreements.
- **State and Territory Training Authorities (STAs)** - Structured input from the outset of activity through to sign off as a key stakeholder.
- **National Quality Council Secretariat** – Distribute *ISC Case for Endorsement* to NQC members and collate responses. Notify Ministers of NQC decision. Notify NQC and Ministers' decision to ISCs, the Department, STAs and National Training Information System.
- **Industry Skills Councils (ISCs)** - Responsibility and accountability for quality of product including industry relevance, technical and editorial quality to publication standard. Distribution of one copy of the newly endorsed Training Package to STAs, ISCs and the Department.

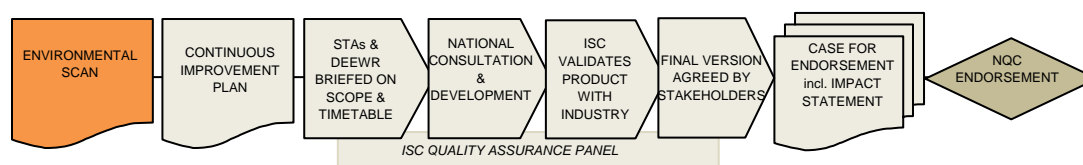
The process



The process for the development and endorsement of Training Packages was agreed by the NQC in July 2007 for implementation from January 2008 onwards.

This document provides an explanation of the key steps involved in the process. It gives stakeholders a greater understanding of the purpose of each stage, their specific role and the required outcomes. Templates to facilitate the process have also been developed for use by ISCs.

Environmental Scan



What is it?

The *Environmental Scan* (the Scan) is a formative document which captures and analyses the most recent grass-roots industry intelligence gathered by the ISC that identifies existing and emerging skill shortages and training requirements. It is expected that this intelligence would largely be collected as part of an ISC's on-going activities throughout the preceding period. In addition to providing the NQC with this intelligence, the Scan will also provide Skills Australia¹ with up-to-date industry information to assist in its analysis of Australia's workforce development needs. The Scan also provides the context and driving force behind the continuous improvement of Training Packages for the forthcoming year and is developed by each ISC on an annual basis.

Purpose

The Scan operates as an early warning system by alerting the NQC and Skills Australia to potentially significant issues at a product, operational and systemic level. The value of the Scan, and what sets it apart from other reports in the VET system, is that it reflects the immediacy and breadth of industry feedback gained by ISCs. The Scan encompasses real-time industry views and evidence captured from across Australia on current and emerging skill shortages and skill needs. The Scan analyses how well the VET system and Training Packages are responding to those needs and provides advice on opportunities to boost skill levels to meet identified workforce development needs. These contemporary insights are translated into an analysis of what changes are required to Training Packages in order for them to respond to this emerging environment.

Audience

The primary audience of the Scan is the NQC and Skills Australia. The Scan provides valuable industry information on which to base 'new conversations'. Its level of insight and predictive capabilities may also inform ISC Board deliberations on future direction setting and broader promotional activities.

Key characteristics

- The Scan involves a broad analysis of recent intelligence and the external environment to identify skill shortages and needs, changes and trends through a point in time snapshot. There are three primary environments within which this occurs: market, industry and the macro-environment:
 - Market ... the VET environment, VET stakeholders and peak organisations
 - Industry ... enterprises, professional and industry associations and other key stakeholders, and may include issues such as regional needs and specific occupational shortages

¹ Skills Australia is a new independent statutory authority with responsibility for providing the Government with advice on current and future skills needs and investment of public funds in training.

- Macro-environment ... broad factors and emerging trends across and between industries, and global trends or changes which impact directly or indirectly on the need and nature of skills.
- The Scan is not a re-creation or compilation of existing data or economic analyses found elsewhere. Nor is it a strategic plan. Such reports are typically premised on future change being a continuation of past trends, which can be an unreliable approach for predicting skill needs due to the speed with which new factors impact and shape the economy.
- The Scan illustrates the impact and use of existing Training Packages within industry and across training providers, and identifies trends and statistics which fall outside of the national data collections. It will also report on the uptake of Training Packages across the delivery system, the increased flexibility being built into Training Packages, and their alignment with licensing and regulation.
- The Scan provides a 'stocktake' of physical changes made to the endorsed components of Training Packages over the preceding 12 months to reflect industry's emerging needs and address identified skill shortages and gaps. It identifies the new sectors and units of competency included and any refinements to existing content. The stocktake is presented as a simple matrix and is submitted twice a year, once as an attachment to the Scan and six months later as a standalone document.
- The following stakeholders would typically be engaged with the development of the Scan:
 - enterprises
 - employer and employee representatives
 - licensing and regulatory bodies
 - STAs
 - the Department
 - RTOs.

Content

The Scan is a concise document with an indicative length of 20 pages (excluding appendices). It will include:

- contemporary intelligence on industry skill needs, trends, barriers and implications which provides a shared understanding of what industry wants and why
- broad analysis of current and emerging skill gaps
- other issues impacting on workforce development that may require attention, such as specific skill shortages, skills needs, and regional requirements
- impact and usage of existing Training Packages
- future directions and short to medium term priorities for endorsed components of Training Packages
- continuous improvement that has occurred to Training Packages over the preceding 12 months.

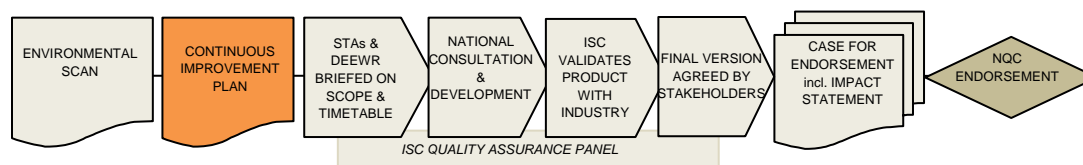
Broader applicability

The Scan will:

- inform development of an ISC's *Continuous Improvement Plan* and its focus of activity for the next 12 months
- have broader applicability as one source of information for Skills Australia on workforce development needs, and as an ISC's annual report to the Department
- have relevance as part of an ISC's promotional documentation and its communication and engagement strategies.

The Scan enables the NQC and Skills Australia to gain a more strategic understanding of existing and emerging skills shortages and the priorities for Training Packages.

Continuous Improvement Plan



What is it?

The *Continuous Improvement Plan* (the Plan) sets out the changes that need to be made to the endorsed components of Training Packages to enable them to meet the existing and emerging skill needs of industry. The analysis undertaken for the *Environmental Scan* informs the Plan and is updated annually by an ISC as a rolling three-year plan.

Purpose

- The Plan provides an open and transparent approach to the continuous improvement of Training Packages and serves as the guiding document for ISC work on the endorsed components of Training Packages. It operates as a living document and is posted on the ISC's website.
- The Plan enables those involved in the delivery of Training Packages to commence formative planning. For example, in promoting the scope of work and its timelines for completion well ahead of endorsement, jurisdictions will be able to plan profile delivery with individual Institutes. Course Accrediting Bodies will be able to better gauge the need for the continuation of State based courses with a clear picture of what work is underway as part of Training Package continuous improvement.

Audience

The Plan will inform:

- the negotiation of ISCs' funding agreements with the Department and provide sufficient information for the Department to monitor activities
- STAs and RTOs of timelines and scope of activities which impact on the existing delivery of Training Packages/accredited courses.

Key Characteristics

- The Plan identifies the activities for the immediate year and, as far as practicable, states the intended outcome(s) of the work and anticipated timelines for endorsement. As a three-year plan, activities for years two and three may be less well defined and subject to refinement over time as industries react to external pressures and re-prioritise their skill needs. The Plan will provide realistic goals for the resources available and prioritise competing industry demands.
- From time to time, changes to policy and regulatory environments may require ISCs to modify the Plan. The Plan must be sufficiently flexible to incorporate responses within the scope of an ISC's current resources.

- The following stakeholders would typically be engaged with the development of the Plan:
 - enterprises
 - employer and employee representatives
 - licensing and regulatory bodies
 - STAs
 - the Department
 - RTOs.

Content

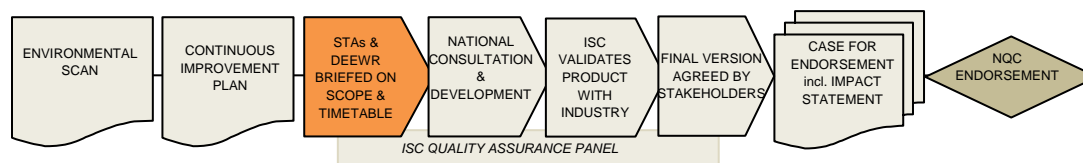
The Plan will include:

- brief title of the activity
- industry imperatives for the work and the proposed outcome
- industry, sector and occupations/skills involved
- likely qualification levels
- timelines for start and submission to the NQC.

Broader applicability

The Plan makes clear to stakeholders the work to be undertaken by an ISC through its funding agreement with the Department.

Briefing on Scope and Timetable



What is it?

This part of the process is where the ISC briefs the Department and each STA on the scope, industry imperatives and timelines for pieces of work identified in the ISC's *Continuous Improvement Plan*. The briefing also requires STAs to identify specific stakeholders in their jurisdictions who should be part of targeted consultations and for STAs to specify their further engagement in the process.

Purpose

The briefing provides a shared understanding between the Department, STAs and ISCs of the work and underpins the structured approach for consulting and updating STAs throughout the development and validation process. It will:

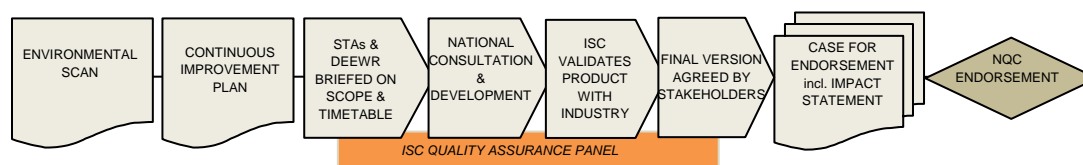
- enable STAs and the Department to be aware of the scope of imminent work, the breadth of consultation and any complexities and/or sensitivities involved
- require each STA to formally identify or confirm any specific stakeholders from its jurisdiction that need to be consulted. This advice will clearly differentiate between those to be consulted as part of the development process and those who are critical to final validation
- require each STA to confirm with an ISC the nature and extent of their engagement. It is expected that STAs will participate in the validation stage and again at final sign off as a key stakeholder. If the scope of work is of particular significance to a jurisdiction, the STA may negotiate further points of consultation
- enable the Department to monitor an ISC's progress against the *Continuous Improvement Plan*; put forward any stakeholder it wishes the ISC to consult and, depending upon the nature of the work, how or if the Department is to be engaged during the process.

Key characteristics

- The briefing must ensure:
 - a high level of personal engagement and interaction to enable meaningful dialogue between the STAs/the Department and the ISC
 - that the mode of briefing is agreeable to all parties
 - that it occurs prior to the commencement of public consultations and before planning for the activity is completed.
- Advice from STAs and the Department on their engagement throughout the work and stakeholders to be consulted must be provided within 14 calendar days of the briefing to ensure the timely commencement of work.
- From time to time, changes to policy and regulatory environments or industry priorities may require ISCs to modify the scope of timelines of the work underway. The ISC formally notifies the STAs and the Department as soon as practicable if this occurs.

- The following stakeholders are involved in the formative briefing:
 - the Department
 - STAs
 - the ISC.

Industry Skills Council Quality Assurance Panel



What is it?

The *Industry Skills Council Quality Assurance Panel* (the Panel) is an expert resource for ISCs on matters relating to equity, editing and holistic quality assurance. It enables ISCs access to objective expertise to grow internal capability and for the final external quality assurance of the Training Package. ISCs may use Panel members on a rotational basis so that they gain different perspectives from the range of expertise.

Purpose

The purpose of the Panel is to provide quality assurance expertise for two separate but complementary aspects of Training Package development. These are:

1. *Mandatory quality assurance*

Prior to forwarding the submission to the NQC Secretariat, the ISC selects an Holistic quality assurance Panel member to complete a mandatory *Quality Report* on the new or revised units of competency, skill sets², qualifications or Training Package. The Panel member undertaking the *Quality Report* must be independent of development and/or validation activities associated with the *Case for Endorsement*, and must not have undertaken the *Equity and/or Editorial Report*.

Prior to the Report being commissioned, an *Equity Report* and an *Editorial Report* will be completed by an Equity and/or Editorial Panel member, or other ISC specified person, and the ISC will provide copies to the Panel member undertaking the *Quality Report*.

ISCs are responsible for managing the timing and sequence of the equity and editorial engagement and reporting. ISCs may chose to synchronise the equity and editorial involvement throughout the development process to avoid conflicting report outcomes.

The *Quality Report* and the ISC's commentary on how it has responded to the Report's recommendations form part of the *Case for Endorsement*. Finalisation of the *Quality Report* can be an iterative process based on discussions between the Holistic quality assurance Panel member undertaking the report and the ISC.

² Skill sets using existing units of competency are an *ISC Upgrade* and do not require NQC endorsement. Further information on *Categories of Change* is at page 25.

2. *General quality assurance and capability building*

Assisting and/or building ISCs' internal capability and understanding across three areas of quality (equity, editing and holistic quality assurance) that are key to achieving consistently high quality Training Packages. ISCs will draw on panel members of their choice to provide on-going advice from the outset of development through to validation. ISCs are expected to develop their own expertise and improve their processes through working with Panel members. Where an ISC decides to use non-Panel expertise to complete the *Equity* and/or *Editorial Reports*, this capability must be equivalent to the skills required of Panel members.

Panel Operations

The Panel is managed by the Department. Panel members meet selection criteria reflective of the skills and knowledge needed to meet the Training Package Quality Principles. The selection criteria have been developed by the Department in consultation with the ISCs and the NQC Training Package Standing Committee, and involve equity advice from the Advisory Alliance.

The Panel has a broad range of expertise commensurate with the diversity of Training Package coverage and the services required by the different ISCs. Panel members are usually appointed for a two year period with new members added to the Panel as necessary. Panel members are required to comply with a Code of Practice. Failure to do so may result in removal from the Panel.

Consistency of Advice

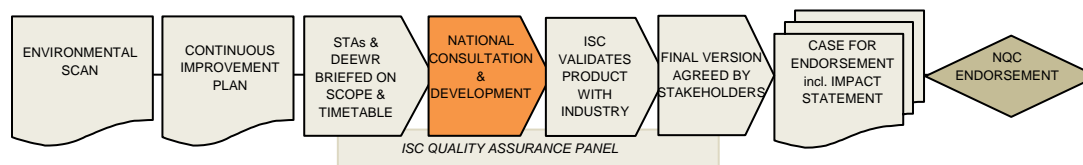
While meeting eligibility requirements, the Panel includes members with differing experience and approaches to the development of a Training Package, editing and equity. For the Panel to operate with a common understanding of 'quality' and as a coherent service, some professional development and moderation is required. Management of the Panel requires members to participate in professional development and regular moderation meetings. The meetings consider ISC feedback on the advice being provided and feedback from Panel members on the Panel's operation.

Quality Principles

Training Package Quality Principles are described in the table below. The policy for the development of Training Packages is contained in the Training Package Development Handbook. The Training Package Quality Principles are applied by the Panel and the ISCs in guiding the development of Training Packages and for making judgements on the quality of the completed Training Package. Panel members will use these principles in their analysis for the *Equity Report*, *Editorial Report* and *Quality Report*.

QUALITY PRINCIPLES	KEY FEATURES <i>The endorsed components of a Training Package must ...</i>	EVIDENCE <i>How do the endorsed components of a Training Package achieve this?</i>
<p><i>Ensures ...</i></p> <p>RESPONSIVENESS</p> <p><i>... to the needs of contemporary industry and its workforce</i></p>	<p>1. Reflect contemporary work organisation and job profiles incorporating a futures orientation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and inclusive consultation and validation commensurate with scope and impact is conducted • Other national and international standards for skills are considered
	<p>2. Be driven by industry's needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clever, sustainable approaches to incorporate feedback from stakeholders
	<p>3. Respond to government broad policy initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative responses to government policy initiatives
<p><i>Enables ...</i></p> <p>RECOGNITION</p> <p><i>... of an individual's competence across industries and occupations</i></p>	<p>4. Recognise convergence and connectivity of skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporation of cross industry units and qualifications
	<p>5. Support movement of skills within and across organisations and sectors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and consistent packaging rules for qualifications • Qualification framework and pathways are effectively designed • Incorporation of skill sets
	<p>6. Promote national and international portability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualification outcomes are aligned with the Australian Qualifications Framework • Other national and international standards for skills are considered
	<p>7. Reflect licensing and regulatory requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solutions to incorporate licensing and regulatory requirements are brokered
<p><i>Provides ...</i></p> <p>FLEXIBILITY</p> <p><i>... to meet individual enterprise and learner needs</i></p>	<p>8. Meet the diversity of individual and enterprise needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and consistent packaging rules for qualifications • Provide flexible qualifications that enable application in different contexts
	<p>9. Support equitable access and progression of learners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide multiple entry and exit points • Pre and co-requisite units of competency are minimised • Units of competency are clearly written and have consistent breadth and depth
	<p>10. Support learner transition between education sectors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice is provided on implementation/pathways
<p><i>Ensures ...</i></p> <p>FUNCTIONALITY</p> <p><i>... through ease of understanding, clever design and consistency with policy and publication requirements</i></p>	<p>11. Support implementation across a range of settings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice is provided on implementation/pathways
	<p>12. Support sound assessment practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Units of competency are clearly written and have consistent breadth and depth
	<p>13. Not impose structural barriers to implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and consistent packaging rules for qualifications • Compliance with the National Training Information System (NTIS)/National Register standard for loading and publication • Compliance with Training Package policy

National Consultation and Development



What is it?

Training Packages must be based on quality national consultations to ensure industry relevance of, and stakeholder support for, the final product. These national consultations inform the technical development of new or revised units of competency, skill sets and qualifications for the Training Package.

Purpose

The purpose of national consultation and development is to ensure that the Training Package Quality Principles are applied to the work from the commencement of the development processes. An ISC will integrate its in-house expertise with that of the *Industry Skills Council Quality Assurance Panel* so that development processes ensure the quality of product.

Key characteristics

The consultation and development process includes:

- ISC consultation commensurate with the scope of work, industry's timelines for access to new skills and the ISC's resources for the work. ISCs are required to clearly specify the rationale for the breadth of consultations. Consultation must go beyond ISC sectoral advisory committees and working groups.
- ISC analysis of stakeholder views with consideration to the stakeholder status and impact of the views.
- Innovative use of the ISC website to receive and impart information to stakeholders. The website will possess a high level of functionality and currency which includes posting of the following documents:
 - key documents to support the consultation and development process, for example, discussion papers, draft units of competency and qualification structures
 - *Environmental Scan*
 - *Continuous Improvement Plan*
 - *Case for Endorsement* for each submission (for the duration of the endorsement process).
- The ISC website will also feature an *Issues Register* as a constant and formal mechanism for all stakeholders to provide feedback on a Training Package's suitability and industry relevance. The Issues Register must be intuitive and highly visible on the website to encourage feedback. Its functionality must enable users to provide comment on:
 - Training Packages, skill sets, qualifications and individual units of competency.

- delivery issues, flexibility, industry trends and other aspects impacting on the relevance and effectiveness of the Package.

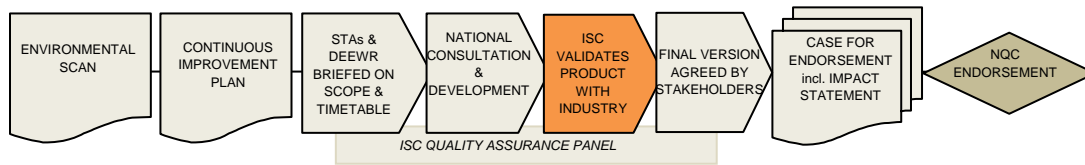
All issues are recorded and acknowledged. Feedback is progressively collected, analysed and validated by the ISC. An ISC may have one Issues Register for each Training Package under its coverage or one which spans all of its Training Packages. The National Training Information System (NTIS) will feature links to the Issues Registers.

- The use of a *Content Authoring Tool* to expedite the transfer of new or revised units, skill sets or qualifications onto the NTIS by replicating the NTIS data fields. ISCs must maintain close and regular contact with the NTIS throughout development and validation to ensure that the most current version of the off-line Content Authoring Tool is being used. The Content Authoring Tool must be used unless prior agreement has been reached between the ISC and the Department regarding an alternative method.
- The following stakeholders will typically be involved in national consultation and development processes:
 - key enterprises, subject matter experts, employer and employee representatives
 - STA and the Department identified stakeholders nominated to be part of the consultation and development process
 - licensing bodies and regulators
 - STAs and the Department in accordance with their request for engagement during the formative briefing.

Broader applicability

- National consultation provides a valuable, on-going source of industry intelligence and feedback on skill related issues broader than the immediate Training Package work. Such information is recorded and analysed for use in future *Environmental Scans*.

Industry Validation



What is it?

Validation is where the content and structure of the Training Package are confirmed as reflecting accepted industry or enterprise practice. All submissions seeking endorsement must be validated by the ISC with a representative sample of industry stakeholders.

Purpose

The primary purpose of validation is to ensure that the content and structure of new or revised units of competency, skill sets, qualifications or Training Package meet industry's identified needs.

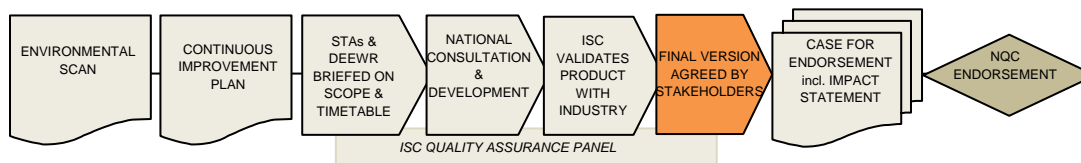
As part of validation the ISC will:

- confirm final Content Authoring Tool/NTIS requirements to ensure compatibility for loading endorsed components onto the National Register
- undertake a final equity review to ensure inclusiveness
- undertake a final editorial review to ensure format and content compliance
- develop mapping information to clearly depict the relationship between old and new units of competency, skill sets and qualifications
- validate the findings of the draft *Impact Statement* with key stakeholders.

Key characteristics

- The following stakeholders will be involved in the industry validation:
 - key enterprises, employer and employee representatives
 - STA and the Department industry stakeholders nominated to be part of the validation process
 - licensing bodies and regulators.

Stakeholder Agreement



What is it?

Stakeholder agreement is the culmination of the consultation, development and validation processes. It ensures that the new or revised units of competency, skill sets, qualifications or Training Package being submitted for endorsement have met industry's identified needs and all Training Package Quality Principles.

Purpose

The purpose of stakeholder agreement is for the ISC to draw together the outcomes of the development and endorsement processes to determine final stakeholder views. It provides the evidence base for a shared understanding of the *Case for Endorsement*, Training Package quality and key implications for its implementation. The outcomes of this stage are reflected in the *Case for Endorsement*.

Key characteristics

To obtain stakeholder agreement the ISC will:

- Engage a member of the *Industry Skills Council Quality Assurance Panel* to complete the *Quality Report* on the new or revised units of competency, skill sets, qualifications or Training Package.
- Make any final amendments to the submission following completion of the *Quality Report*.
- Complete the 'report by exception' on stakeholder consensus. The 'report by exception' is provided to the NQC as part of the *Case for Endorsement* and flags where a stakeholder or individual holds a significantly differing viewpoint³ from the majority. It gives NQC members an objective view of the issue and steps taken by the ISC to resolve the matter or that reasonable measures have been taken to respond to stakeholder concerns.
- Confirm the draft *Impact Statement* with STAs and clarify the extent of change required to enable successful implementation by the public delivery system.
- Brief the Department and each STA on the *Case for Endorsement*. The brief will include:
 - Overview of the draft endorsed components and the skill/job outcomes
 - *Quality Report* (and evidence that identified issues have been resolved)
 - Demonstrable evidence of broad stakeholder involvement and support, representative of the industry/sector concerned.

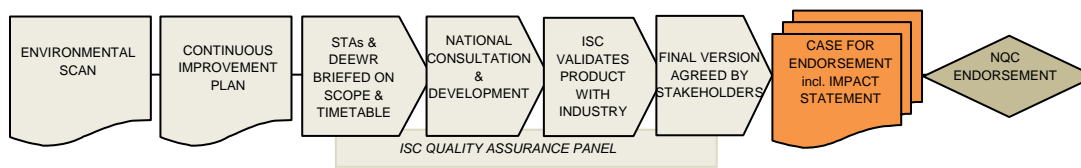
As a key stakeholder in the process, it is expected that all STAs will be supportive of the draft endorsed components being submitted to the NQC for endorsement. In consultation with the

³ 'Significant' is where the issue is of such an importance that it will impact on the product's ability to be implemented. The 'viewpoint' relates directly to the *content* and/or *structure* of the draft endorsed components.

STAs, the ISC will determine the need for an STA teleconference to resolve any outstanding issue(s) prior to a *Case for Endorsement* being finalised. Where an STA holds a 'significantly differing viewpoint' and resolution is unable to be achieved, the issue is to form part of the Department/STA briefing and be included in the 'report by exception' section of the *Case for Endorsement*.

- The following stakeholders would typically be involved in achieving agreement:
 - key industry stakeholders
 - STAs
 - the Department.

Case for Endorsement



What is it?

The *Case for Endorsement* is a comprehensive evidence-based document compiled by the ISC which NQC members use to base their Training Package endorsement decisions. The *Case for Endorsement* is forwarded to the NQC via the NQC Secretariat.

Purpose

The *Case for Endorsement* provides the NQC with evidence that the Training Package meets the Training Package Quality Principles; that industry involvement has been commensurate with the impact and need for the new units of competency, skill sets, qualifications or Training Package; and that there is a direct link back to the ISC *Continuous Improvement Plan*.

Audience

The primary audience for *Case for Endorsement* is the NQC. Stakeholders can view the *Case for Endorsement* on the ISC's website for the period of NQC/Ministerial consideration.

Key Characteristics

- The *Case for Endorsement* is a document that evidences the Training Package meeting both industry's needs and the Training Package Quality Principles. Objective, factual and 'to the point', the *Case for Endorsement* must be written as a compelling, coherent and plain English document.
- Only when industry and the ISC is satisfied that the Training Package is fit for purpose, from both a content and quality perspective, is it forwarded to the NQC Secretariat for distribution to the NQC. To manage the flow of work to the NQC, the ISC advises the NQC Secretariat of the pending submission a minimum of 14 calendar days prior to forwarding.
- The following stakeholders would typically be consulted prior to completion of the *Case for Endorsement*:
 - enterprises
 - employer and employee representatives
 - the Department
 - STAs.

Content

- The *Case for Endorsement* includes:
 - the unit titles and codes (the content of units of competency may be viewed on the ISC website and will already have been agreed by industry in the validation stage, and considered by STAs)
 - qualification titles and packaging rules
 - advice on occupational and licensing requirements or assessment specific to the units of competency, skill sets and qualifications being submitted for endorsement
 - mapping information between old and replacement units of competency and qualifications
 - training Package modification history
 - ‘report by exception’ on stakeholder consensus (only if required).

The *Case for Endorsement* does not include text which has been approved for insertion in all Training Packages, for example, Assessment Guidelines mandated text.

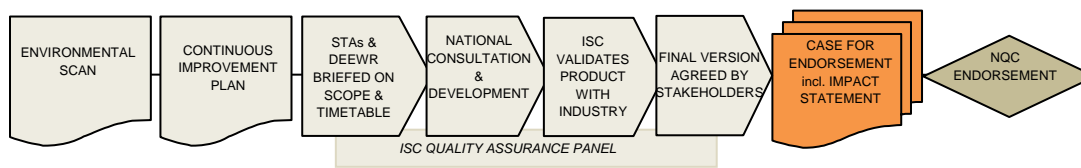
- The *Case for Endorsement* provides evidence that the units of competency, skill sets and qualifications meet the Training Package Quality Principles of:
 - Responsiveness
 - Recognition
 - Flexibility
 - Functionality.
- To support the *Case for Endorsement* from a quality perspective (which includes editorial and equity considerations), a *Quality Report* is attached to confirm that all Training Package Quality Principles have been met.

Where the *Quality Report* identifies areas of non-compliance, the ISC will confirm that it has responded to the recommendations. Where the ISC has not adopted a recommendation, it will provide commentary and full justification.

- The *Impact Statement* for the new units of competency, skill sets, qualifications or Training Package is provided as an attachment to the *Case for Endorsement*.

The *Case for Endorsement* is posted on the ISC’s website when submitted to the NQC Secretariat. In addition, the complete version of the draft endorsed components being put forward for endorsement (including unit content) will be posted on the website and until such time as endorsement is confirmed.

Impact Statement



What is it?

An *Impact Statement* sets out the implications of the new or revised units of competency, skill sets, qualifications or Training Package, and the extent of change required to enable successful implementation in various delivery environments. It is compiled by the ISC for each *Case for Endorsement* and based on information gathered throughout the consultation and validation process.

Purpose

The *Impact Statement* enables the relevant stakeholders to understand and undertake changes required to successfully implement the endorsed product. The *Impact Statement's* purpose is to provide:

- the rationale for the units of competency, skill sets, qualifications or Training Package being submitted for endorsement
- the extent of change the endorsed product will bring about and the key implications for the following environments/stakeholders:
 - Public and private training and assessment services
 - Enterprises
 - Licensing and regulatory environments
 - Policy environment.

Note: Key stakeholders responsible for implementation of the newly endorsed components are expected to use the *Impact Statement* as a primary source of guidance.

Audience

During the validation of the units of competency, skill sets, qualifications or Training Package, and prior to their submission to the NQC, the primary audience for the draft *Impact Statement* will be those critical to successful implementation, such as the STAs and RTOs.

The *Impact Statement* is provided to NQC members as an attachment to the *Case for Endorsement*.

Key Characteristics

- The *Impact Statement* is concise but scalable to ensure it contains the amount of information needed to convey the impact of the units of competency, skill sets, qualification or Training Package. For example, a small group of units with considerable impact on the delivery system may create a similar document, but with a greater level of detail, to one which deals with a complete Training Package.

- The draft *Impact Statement* is confirmed with STAs to clarify the extent of change required to enable successful implementation by the public delivery system.
- The information from the following stakeholders during the consultation and validation stages would typically be used in the development of the *Impact Statement*:
 - enterprises
 - licensing and regulatory bodies
 - RTOs
 - employer and employee representatives
 - the Department
 - STAs.

Content

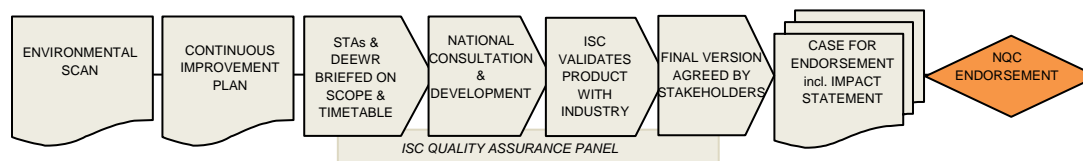
The *Impact Statement* includes:

- industry's need for the new or revised units, skill sets, qualifications or Training Package – including the new skills, occupations or licensing/regulatory requirements going forward for endorsement and why they are needed
- industry's priorities for implementation
- industry's expectations of delivery pathways/assessment
- systemic policy issues
- RTO/enterprise delivery issues of note, including resource implications.

Broader applicability

- The breadth and depth of information contained within an *Impact Statement* may inform a national implementation strategy for a given industry or sector, individual RTO or enterprise.
- The *Impact Statement* may also be useful in dialogue with regulators, licensing bodies and other government agencies in relation to skill shortages and other community needs.

NQC Endorsement and Publication



What is it?

The NQC is a Committee of the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE) and the authorising body for the endorsement of Training Packages. Once endorsed by the NQC, Ministers are responsible for agreeing to the endorsed Training Package being made public through its placement on the National Register.

Purpose

The NQC has 21 calendar days to consider the *Case for Endorsement*. A further 14 calendar days is provided for Ministerial agreement. The *Case for Endorsement* is usually dealt with out-of-session by NQC members. However, if critical issues are raised by the *Case for Endorsement*, the NQC may request an additional 10 calendar days or consider the *Case for Endorsement* at a face-to-face meeting.

The NQC will base its decision on:

- evidence of industry need and a direct link back to the *Continuous Improvement Plan*
- whether the Training Package meets the Training Package Quality Principles (based on the findings of the *Quality Report*)
- evidence that industry's involvement and that of key stakeholders has been commensurate with the scope and impact of the new units of competency, skill sets, qualifications or Training package
- evidence of stakeholder agreement.

Key characteristics

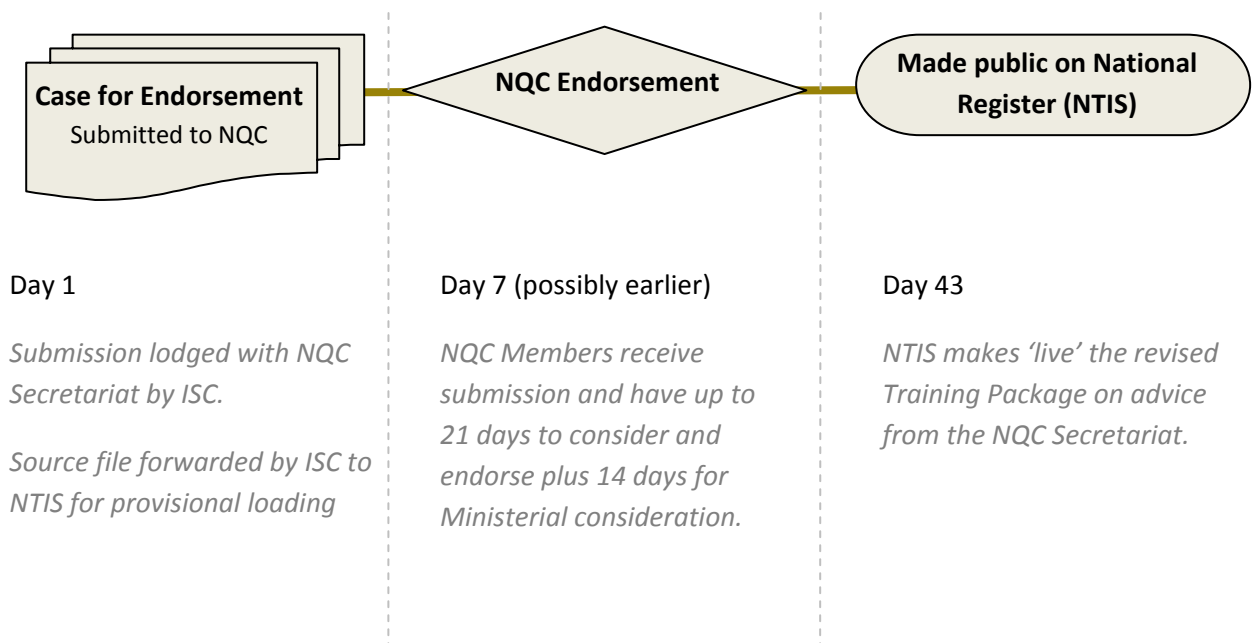
- The *Case for Endorsement* is forwarded by the ISC as an electronic file to the NQC Secretariat. The NQC Secretariat is responsible for reproducing and distributing the *Case for Endorsement* to NQC members and collating responses. The NQC Secretariat will also:
 - provide formal notification to Ministers of the NQC decision
 - provide formal notification to the ISC, the Department and STAs of the NQC and Ministerial decisions
 - provide formal notification and permission to the NTIS to make public the newly endorsed components on the National Register.
- On the same day as providing the submission to the NQC Secretariat, the ISC provides a compatible electronic source file containing the draft endorsed components to the NTIS for provisional loading. Loading is completed during the endorsement period. The NTIS is, however,

only authorised to make 'live' following notification of Ministerial agreement by the NQC Secretariat.

- Stakeholders will be able to view the *Case for Endorsement* on the ISC's website for the period of NQC/Ministerial consideration.
- The following stakeholders are involved in the endorsement process:
 - NQC
 - NQC Secretariat
 - NTIS
 - the ISC submitting the *Case for Endorsement*.
- Within seven calendar days of notification of Ministerial agreement by the NQC Secretariat, the ISCs will distribute one electronic disc copy of the newly endorsed Training Package to STAs and the Department. ⁴

Typical timeframe

From when the ISC submits the *Case for Endorsement* to the NQC Secretariat, a typical timeframe should see the new units of competency, skill sets, qualifications or Training Package being made 'live' on the National Register after 43 days.

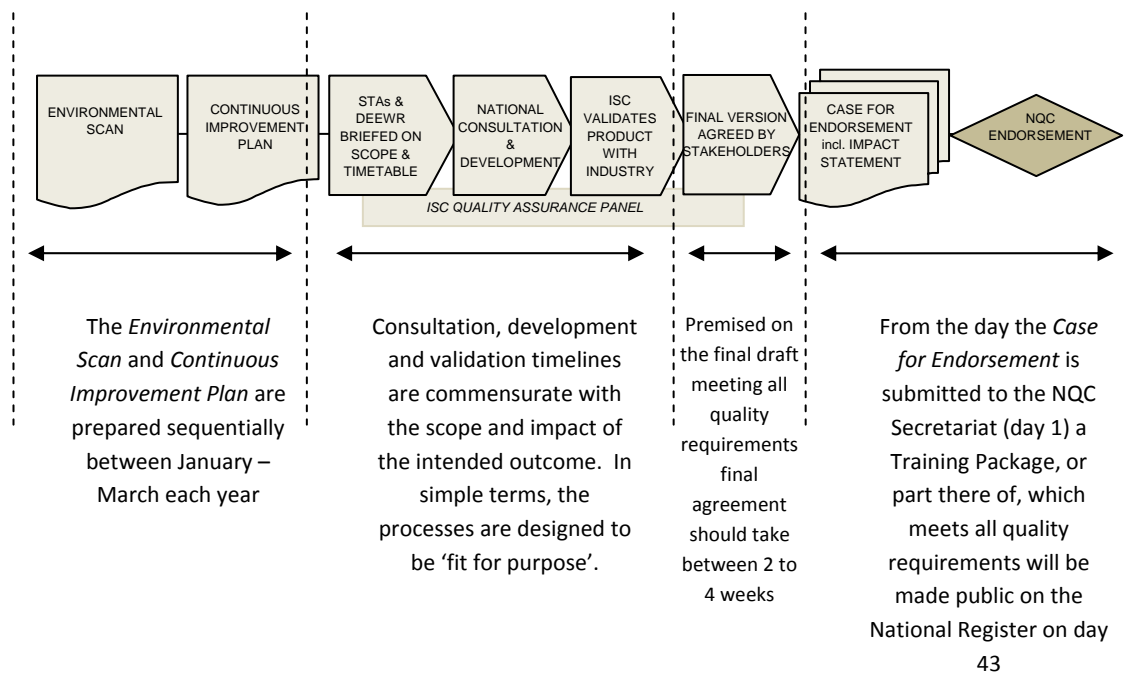


⁴ This includes *NQC Endorsement Required* changes. A disc copy of the Training Package is not distributed for *ISC Upgrade* changes. *ISC Upgrade* changes will be notified to the STAs, ISCs and the Department by the ISCs until the automatic notification function on the NTIS is operational.

Overall timeframe

Timeframes for the overall process, and its capacity to respond to industry’s priorities for new skills, are dependent upon:

- key stakeholders undertaking their role in a timely manner and in accordance with the process
- consultation, development and validation processes being ‘fit for purpose’ and commensurate with the scope and impact of the new units of competency, skill sets, qualifications or Training Package
- new units of competency, skill sets, qualifications or Training Package being fully compliant with the Training Package Quality Standards
- the *Case for Endorsement* providing the NQC with all the evidence required to make its decision.



Categories of change

In many instances, industry now seeks refinement of qualifications and units of competency rather than wholesale change or the formal review of a complete Training Package.

Where changes to Training Packages have a minor impact on the outcome of a qualification or unit of competency, they are not required to go through the full development and endorsement process. This level of change, known as an '*ISC Upgrade*', is made direct to the National Register, but may only be made as a result of ISC analysis and consultation commensurate with the nature of change.

Other changes, such as those resulting from continuous improvement or a formal review, are known as '*NQC endorsed*' and must follow the full development and endorsement process.

All changes (ISC Upgrade and NQC Endorsed) must be detailed in the Training Package Modification History. Changes must also be recorded in the ISC's biannual 'stocktake' of changes made to the endorsed components of Training Packages (further detail on the stocktake may be found in the section on the *Environmental Scan*).

The categories of change are:

ISC Upgrade

- edits, deletions and enhancements to the content of existing units of competency where the structure and overall outcomes remain consistent with the original outcomes
- identification of skill sets using endorsed units of competency
- addition and updates of imported units of competency
- removal or addition of endorsed units of competency from or to elective bank with maximum of one per qualification at any one time
- addition of later versions of units of competency, for example 'A' to 'B'
- addition of employability skills

Note: *ISC Upgrades* can only be made to current endorsed components of Training Packages.

NQC Endorsement Required

NQC endorsement is required for changes not specified in *ISC Upgrade*. This includes, but is not limited to:

- addition of a new industry sector or stream
- addition of a new or imported qualification
- removal or replacement of an existing qualification
- addition of new units of competency not already on the National Register (NTIS)
- addition or deletion of a core unit in a qualification
- amendment to an element or performance criteria of a unit of competency
- modification to the Assessment Guidelines e.g. additional requirements for assessors related to legislative requirements for licensing purposes.
- changes to units of competency that have a significant impact on resources for delivery
- changes to pre-requisites for units of competency.
- changes to qualification packaging rules.

Training Packages will continue to be endorsed for a three year period. Where continuous improvement has been undertaken to maintain the currency and relevance of the Training Package during that period, the ISC will make a case for renewal of endorsement to the NQC. Only where, for example, there are major structural flaws or fundamental issues with the quality of a Training Package is it likely that stakeholders and the ISC will instigate a formal review of the whole Training Package.

Glossary

Case for Endorsement	Provides compelling evidence of the quality, industry relevance and stakeholder support for the new units of competency, skill sets (if applicable), qualifications or Training Package. The <i>Case for Endorsement</i> is compiled by the ISC for each submission and is the basis on which NQC members will make their endorsement decision.
Content Authoring Tool (CAT)	Expedites the transfer of new units, skill sets, qualifications or Training Package onto the National Register by replicating the NTIS data fields off-line. The ISC sends completed CAT files containing the draft endorsed components to the NTIS at the same time as submitting the <i>Case for Endorsement</i> to the NQC Secretariat.
Continuous Improvement Plan	Details the changes to be made to the endorsed components of Training Packages to enable them to meet the emerging skill needs of industry. The <i>Environmental Scan</i> informs the <i>Continuous Improvement Plan</i> . It is developed annually by each ISC as a rolling three-year plan.
Environmental Scan	Captures and analyses the most recent grass-roots industry intelligence gathered by the ISC identifying existing and emerging skill shortages and training requirements. It is the formative document in the new process enabling the NQC and Skills Australia to gain a more strategic understanding of existing and emerging skill shortages. The Scan also provides the context for the continuous improvement of Training Packages for the forthcoming year. It is developed by each ISC on an annual basis.
Impact Statement	Details the implications of the new or revised units of competency, skill sets, qualifications or Training Package, and the extent of change required to enable successful implementation in various delivery environments. It is compiled by the ISC for each <i>Case for Endorsement</i> based on information gathered throughout the consultation process.
Issues Register	Operates as a constant and formal mechanism for stakeholders to provide feedback on the suitability and industry relevance of a Training Package, qualification, skill sets or units of competency. Located on the ISC's website, feedback is progressively collected, analysed and validated. It forms a key input to the consultation and development process.
Quality Report	Details if the units and/or qualifications (and skill sets if applicable) being put forward for endorsement have met the Training Package Quality Principles. Undertaken by a holistic quality assurance member of the Industry Skills Council Quality Assurance Panel, the <i>Quality Report</i> is included in the <i>Case for Endorsement</i> .
Report by exception on	Details where a stakeholder or individual holds a significantly differing viewpoint from the majority during the consultation and validation process. Provided to the

**stakeholder
consensus**

NQC as part of the *Case for Endorsement*, it gives NQC members an open and impartial view of the issue and assures that all reasonable measures have been taken by the ISC to respond to stakeholder concerns.