



## ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug (ATOD) Qualification Strategy

### Policy Review and Consultation with the ACT ATOD Sector

This document provides information for the specialist ACT ATOD sector regarding the review of the ACT ATOD Qualification Strategy (QS) policy. The document includes the following:

- Section 1: Background
- Section 2: Process to Inform the Review
- Section 3: Draft Revised QS Policy
- Section 4: A summary of policy amendments
- Section 5: Proposed calendar for training delivery

Feedback is due by **Wednesday 16 November 2016** to Amanda Bode, ATODA on [amanda@atoda.org.au](mailto:amanda@atoda.org.au) or (02) 6249 6358.

### Section 1: Background

The QS aims to ensure the development and maintenance of a competent and professional ATOD workforce in the ACT. Since its inception in 2006, the proportion of the ACT ATOD workforce attaining the minimum qualification has increased dramatically (approximately 43% in 2009 to 75.4% in 2014)<sup>1</sup>.

Throughout this period, various iterations of the QS policy have been implemented, with the current policy being in place since 2012.

An evaluation of the AOD training provided through the QS was undertaken in 2014, and found that participants consistently reported satisfaction with the content and relevance of the training and the training provider. This was complemented by a significant increase in skills, confidence and competence of participants to work with people experiencing ATOD issues<sup>2</sup>.

Changes to the national landscape for the provision of VET training and subsequent changes to the Certificate IV in AOD by the Department of Education and Training, along with feedback provided by participants and the specialist ACT ATOD services have culminated in the need for a review of the QS.

It is important to note that the ACT sector is not alone in needing to review its QS and that similar processes are occurring across the country. This review has ensured the ACT approach remains consistent with strategies pursued in other jurisdictions and

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<sup>1</sup> Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Association ACT (2015). 'ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Workforce Qualification and Remuneration Profile 2014'. ATODA Monograph Series, No.2. Canberra: Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Association ACT (ATODA).

<sup>2</sup> UnitingCare ReGen (2014). 'ACT ATOD Qualification Strategy Training: Pre and Post Test Report for the 4 Core Competencies. Victoria: Unpublished.

reflects current industry approaches to delivery of the Certificate IV in AOD.

## **Section 2: Process to inform the Review**

To undertake the QS policy review and produce the revised QS policy (included in this document), ATODA has undertaken the following:

- Engagement with ACT Health to confirm expectations and approach
- Collation of feedback from the ACT ATOD sector and QS participants (from 2012 – 2016).
- Review of Australian Department of Education and Training changes to the training package for the CHC43215 Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs
- Audit of QS approaches across Australia
- Consultation with technical experts regarding the delivery of the Certificate IV
- Production of a revised QS Policy (included in this document) for consultation with the ACT ATOD sector. Feedback due Wednesday 16 November 2016.
- Following this the proposed policy will be submitted to ACT Health and included on the Drug Services Forum Agenda on Thursday 24 November 2016.

The implementation elements of the QS were outside of the scope for the policy review and will be dealt with operationally within the information packages to be disseminated each semester once the QS Policy is confirmed. These issues include:

- Dates for training delivery
- Clarity of communication regarding responsibilities and requirements (workers, services, training providers and ATODA)
- Hours of class contact
- Training places available
- Assessment processes, timeframes and quantity by unit
- Application processes.

## Section 3: Draft Revised QS Policy

[Insert ACT Health Logo]

### **ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug (ATOD) Qualification Strategy**

#### **Policy Between ACT Health & Specialist ACT ATOD Services**

*Draft for consultation with specialist ACT ATOD Services*

Effective from 1 January 2017

This policy was developed with input from [content to be inserted following consultation process]

### **1. Background and Introduction**

The ACT ATOD Qualification Strategy (previously the Minimum Qualification Strategy) was introduced in 2006 and aims to ensure the development and maintenance of a competent and professional ATOD workforce in the ACT. It also aims to ensure that all ATOD workers in the ACT have a shared minimum knowledge and skill base.

While it is acknowledged that there is an extensive depth of expertise and skills within the ACT ATOD workforce, the Qualification Strategy supports workers to have accredited credentials specific to their field. The Qualification Strategy is based on nationally recognised standards through the provision of industry endorsed and delivered training.

The Qualification Strategy is an agreement between ACT Health and all specialist ACT ATOD services (funded or delivered by ACT Health) and has been updated in line with sector and policy developments. Participation in the Qualification Strategy is documented in Service Funding Agreements with ACT Health. The services in scope of the QS policy are are:

- Alcohol and Drug Services, ACT Health
- Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy
- Canberra Recovery Services, The Salvation Army
- Directions Health Services
- Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation
- Karralika Programs
- Sobering Up Shelter, CatholicCare
- Ted Noffs Foundation
- Toora Women Inc AOD Programs
- Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Services AOD Programs

ACT Health provides funding to support the development and implementation of the Qualification Strategy through the Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Association ACT (ATODA) including the provision of subsidised training places to eligible workers.

This policy document outlines the Qualification Strategy policy with reference to key training components, eligibility criteria, priority allocation and roles.

## 2. About the Qualification Strategy

In order to meet the Qualification Strategy requirements all specialist ACT ATOD services (funded or delivered by ACT Health) will require relevant staff to successfully complete:

1. A qualification in ATOD or addiction studies which is equivalent to, or above, the Australian Qualifications Framework Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs (CHC43215).

**OR**

2. A health, social, or behavioural science related tertiary (university) qualification plus the 'Alcohol and Other Drug Skill Set':

CHCAOD001	Work in an alcohol and other drugs context
CHCAOD004	Assess needs of clients with AOD issues
CHCAOD006	Provide interventions for people with AOD issues
CHCAOD009	Develop and review individual AOD treatment plans

**AND**

3. A First Aid qualification equivalent to the following units:
  - HLTAID001: Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation
  - HLTAID002: Provide basic emergency life support
  - HLTAID003: Provide first aid

## 3. Application

The Qualification Strategy is mandatory for all workers employed by specialist ACT ATOD services (funded or delivered by ACT Health) who directly provide AOD services to clients (e.g. assessment, counselling, group work, case work).<sup>3</sup>

## 4. Timeline

Workers should either:

- Meet the minimum Qualification Strategy requirements; or
- Have an agreed plan and timeline with their agency to engage with the Qualification Strategy within 12 months of employment and completed within 3 years.

## 5. The Qualification Strategy is not an entry requirement

The Qualification Strategy is not an entry requirement for employment.

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<sup>3</sup> If a service identifies a worker who is not involved in the direct provision of AOD services, but wishes to undertake the training through the Qualification Strategy, they must contact ATODA to discuss additional requirements (e.g. a service will need to make sure that the worker can fulfil the service delivery focused assessments).

## **6. Subsidies and Support**

ACT Health provides funding to support the development and implementation of the Qualification Strategy through ATODA including the provision of subsidised training places to eligible workers.

## **7. Prioritisation of Training Places**

Access to subsidised training places will be provided in line with the following priorities:

1. New workers who directly provide AOD services to clients (who are yet to meet the Qualification Strategy requirements)
2. Existing workers who directly provide AOD services to clients who have previously undertaken the required training but would like to refresh their skills
3. Other workers (on a case by case basis)<sup>4</sup>

## **8. Services role in supporting the implementation of the Qualification Strategy**

### Worker payment to participate in the Qualification Strategy and backfill

As part of the services' commitment to a continuous learning culture, ACT Health expects:

- That subsidies for training and assessment places through the Qualification Strategy will be available to services who pay their workers to participate; and
- Backfill costs where incurred by services for workers participating in the Qualification Strategy to be met from within the services operational budgets.

### Contributing to Qualification Strategy planning activities

Services will need to report on their participation in the Qualification Strategy to ACT Health through their reporting requirements as outlined in Service Funding Agreements.

Additionally, each service will be asked to contribute information to ATODA on expected demand from their workers for Qualification Strategy training (i.e. the anticipated number of workers that will need to undertake First Aid, the AOD Skill Set and / or the remaining units from the Certificate IV in AOD within a 12-month period).

## **9. Training Providers**

Industry providers with specialist expertise in ATOD training will be sourced for the ATOD specific components of the Qualification Strategy. Given the lack of industry providers in the ACT, this training may continue to be sourced from an interstate provider.

## **10. Governance and Implementation**

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<sup>4</sup> If a service identifies a worker who is not involved in the direct provision of AOD services, but wishes to undertake the training through the Qualification Strategy, they must contact ATODA to discuss additional requirements (e.g. a service will need to make sure that the worker can fulfil the service delivery focused assessments).

The Qualification Strategy is an ACT Health Policy.

ACT Health funds ATODA to develop and implement the Qualification Strategy with the ATOD sector. ATODA will utilise the following advisory structures to inform the Qualification Strategy implementation:

- Workers Group
- Drug Services Forum

#### Communication

ATODA will maintain communication mechanisms for the Qualification Strategy including via the ATODA website and eBulletin. An information package will also be developed six monthly to describe funded training opportunities and application processes.

#### Monitoring and evaluation

ATODA will monitor and evaluate the Qualification Strategy through a range of mechanisms including:

- Implementation data (e.g. enrolment and completion rates)
- Undertaking evaluative activities as required. In the past this has included survey's following each training session and external evaluations.

The ACT ATOD workforce will be surveyed regarding the Qualification Strategy once in a three year period through the ACT ATOD Workforce Qualification and Remuneration Profile (as described in Service Funding Agreements).

## Section 4: Policy Amendments Summary

The following table outlines the amendments made to the QS policy document (see section 3). The table deals with the substantive changes; however, some additional minor editorial changes were made regarding the ordering of the document to provide the current context.

	<b>Previous wording or content in the ACT ATOD MQS Policy (July 2011)</b>	<b>Wording or content in revised ACT ATOD QS Policy (2016)</b>	<b>Nature of the change</b>	<b>Rationale and context</b>
1.	A qualification in ATOD or addiction studies which is equivalent to, or above, the Australian Qualifications Framework Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs (CHC40408)	.... Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs (CHC43215)	Updated Course Code	Effective from January 2016 the Australian Department of Education and Training has made changes to the training package for the CHC43215 Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs (previously CHC40412 Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs).
2.	A health, social, or behavioural science related tertiary qualification plus four “4 Core Competencies”:  CHCAOD402A Work effectively in the AOD sector  CHCAOD406D Work with clients who are intoxicated	A health, social, or behavioural science related tertiary (university) qualification plus the ‘Alcohol and Other Drug Skill Set’:  CHCAOD001 Work in the AOD context  CHCAOD004 Assess needs of clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarifies tertiary as university level</li> <li>• Changes from 4 Core Competencies to AOD Skill Set.</li> <li>• Removes unit ‘work with clients who are</li> </ul>	Responds to feedback from the sector regarding the need to define tertiary.  Changes from 4 Core Competencies to AOD Skill Set (and to units

	<p>CHCAOD406D Assess the needs of clients with AOD issues</p> <p>CHCAOD411A Provide interventions for clients with AOD issues</p>	<p>with AOD issues</p> <p>CGCAOD006 Provides interventions for people with AOD issues</p> <p>CHCAOD009 Develop and review individual AOD treatment plans</p>	<p>intoxicated' and adds unit 'develop and review individual AOD treatment plans'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates course codes</li> </ul>	<p>contained) reflects changes to the national training package and is consistent with the approach of other Qualification Strategies around Australia.</p>
3.	<p>A First Aid qualification to a level 2 standard.</p>	<p>A First Aid qualification equivalent to the following units:</p> <p>HLTAID001: Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation</p> <p>HLTAID002: Provide basic emergency life support</p> <p>HLTAID003: Provide first aid</p>	<p>Clarifies the competencies required in First Aid</p>	<p>Reflects national changes to the First Aid training packages. The units are equivalent to what was previously known as Senior First Aid.</p>
4.	<p>The MQS applies to all workers employed by ATOD services operated by either the Health Directorate or community organisations funded by the Health Directorate to provide ATOD services who have contact with ATOD clients. Managers, supervisors, team leaders and coordinators will be required to attain the MQS if their work involves contact with ATOD clients.</p>	<p>The Qualification Strategy is mandatory for all workers employed by specialist ACT ATOD services (funded or delivered by ACT Health) who directly provide AOD services to clients (e.g. assessment, counselling, group work, case work).</p>	<p>Reduces the scope of the application of the QS as mandatory to those who work in AOD service delivery roles (rather than more broadly to those who may have client contact e.g. administrators, maintenance staff etc).</p>	<p>Reflects national changes to the Certificate IV that require access to at least two clients for workplace based assessments (i.e. role play based assessments are no longer sufficient).</p> <p>Clarifies the mandatory application of the QS. Better defines the nature</p>

				<p>of the client contact required.</p> <p>There will still be some scope to provide training to those outside of service delivery roles (e.g. administrators, maintenance staff) but this would be considered on a case by case basis and would require more intensive support from the service (e.g. specific supervision requirements).</p>
5.	<p>Workers should either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possess the specified minimum qualification; or</li> <li>• Have an agreed plan and timeline with their agency to meet the minimum qualification by July 2013 or 3 years from commencement of employment.</li> </ul>	<p>Workers should either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the minimum Qualification Strategy requirements; or</li> <li>• Have an agreed plan and timeline with their agency to engage with the Qualification Strategy within 12 months of employment and complete within 3 years.</li> </ul>	Requires relevant workers to engage with the Qualification Strategy within 12 months of employment.	Reflects the increased likelihood that those engaging with the QS are new to the sector and will benefit from engagement in the training within 12 months of employment (most of the current workforce have already attained the QS).
6.	Processes to undertake recognition of prior learning will be articulated in each	Content removed		RPL has now been embedded within the approach to training

	ACT ATOD MQS package.			delivery (streamlined for workers). For example, a Certificate IV in AOD through mainstream approaches would take 12 months full time. Within the QS, acknowledgement of participants current employment in the sector reduces the workload for a full Certificate IV significantly.
7.	<p>Priority allocation:</p> <p>One: Workers from community organisations funded by Health Directorate to provide ATOD services</p> <p>Two: Workers from the Alcohol and Drug Program, Health Directorate</p> <p>Three Non-government and government workers from allied sectors (such as mental health, youth, corrections, etc) are encouraged to engage in the opportunities provided through the MQS</p>	<p>Access to subsidised training places will be provided in line with the following priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New workers who directly provide AOD services to clients (who are yet to meet the Qualification Strategy requirements)</li> <li>2. Existing workers who directly provide AOD services to clients who have previously undertaken the required training but would like to refresh their skills</li> <li>3. Other workers (on a case by</li> </ol>	<p>Reflects a reprioritisation of resources to new workers who may benefit most from training opportunities.</p> <p>Removes a distinction between NGO and government workers.</p>	<p>Provides more equitable access to the QS for all workers in the specialist sector (irrespective of NGO or government employment).</p> <p>Removes description of priority access for people in non service delivery roles (now handled on a case by case basis).</p> <p>Now prioritises training resources to those with the least AOD accredited training exposure.</p>

		case basis)		
8.	<p><u>Plans</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>New workers:</i> All agencies will be required to develop an agreed plan with each new worker to attain the minimum qualification within 3 years of commencement.</li> <li><i>Existing workers:</i> All agencies will be required to develop an agreed plan with each existing worker to attain the minimum qualification by 30 June 2013 or 3 years from employment. Existing workers may choose not to develop and agreed plan with their agency to attain the minimum qualification. However; the decision not to do so would make them ineligible to apply for a transfer to a more senior ATOD workers role in their organisation.</li> </ul> <p>These plans should to be in writing and signed by the worker and their employer and incorporated, where</p>	<p>Specialist ACT ATOD services will need to report on their participation in the Qualification Strategy to ACT Health through their reporting requirements as outlined in Service Funding Agreements.</p> <p>Additionally, each specialist ACT ATOD service will be asked to contribute information to ATODA on expected demand from their service for Qualification Strategy training (i.e. the anticipated number of workers that will need to undertake First Aid, the AOD Skill Set and / or the remaining units from the Certificate IV in AOD within a 12-month period).</p>	<p>Aligns reporting requirements with existing activities.</p> <p>Information will be used to anticipate future training demand.</p>	<p>Reduces reporting burden on participating services.</p> <p>Supports ATODA to plan sufficient training to meet demand.</p>

	relevant, with individual worker's existing professional development plan.....			
9.	<u>N/A</u>	Industry providers with specialist expertise in ATOD training will be sourced for the ATOD specific components of the Qualification Strategy. Given the lack of industry providers in the ACT, this training may continue to be sourced from an interstate provider.	Requires AOD training to be delivered by an industry provider.	Reflects expectations of ACT Health that training will be provided by industry training organisations.  Through a pre and post evaluation of competency of participants in the AOD trainings of the QS in previous years, it was identified the industry based training was more relevant, current and of higher quality.
10.	The Health Directorate funds the ATODA to conduct the ACT ATOD MQS with the ATOD sector. The Health Directorate makes the final decisions relating to the operation of the ACT ATOD MQS. These decisions are based on advice from the ACT ATOD MQS Implementation and Development Committee	The Qualification Strategy is an ACT Health Policy.  ACT Health funds ATODA to develop and implement the Qualification Strategy with the ATOD Sector. ATODA will utilise the following advisory structures to inform the Qualification Strategy:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACT Drug Services Forum</li> </ul>	Clarifies the ownership of the policy.  Aligns the advisory structures for the policy with existing sector structures.	Reduces burden of governance by embedding within existing sector governance.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACT ATOD Workers Group</li> </ul>		
11.	<p>An information package regarding the ACT ATOD MQS will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed every six months by ATODA with support from the ACT ATOD MQS Implementation and Development Committee, which will describe what funded training and assessment opportunities are available; how workers and agencies can access the funds available;</li> <li>Provided to Health Directorate and Health Directorate funded ATOD services; and</li> <li>Then distributed to the ACT ATOD and allied sector.</li> </ul>	<p>ATODA will maintain communication mechanisms for the Qualification Strategy including via the ATODA website and the ATODA eBulletin. An information package will also be developed six monthly to describe funded training opportunities and application processes.</p>	<p>Clarifies ATODA's responsibilities related to QS communication activities.</p>	<p>Broadens scope of communication requirements beyond the 6 monthly information packages (to include eBulletin and websites).</p>
12.	<p>The MQS will be evaluated annually by ATODA with stakeholders by using a combination of quantitative data (e.g. number of successful completions) and qualitative data (e.g. seeking stakeholder perspectives both at the individual and agency level).</p>	<p>ATODA will monitor and evaluate the Qualification Strategy through a range of mechanisms including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation data (e.g. enrolment and completion rates)</li> <li>Undertaking evaluative</li> </ul>	<p>Clarifies evaluative opportunities.</p>	<p>Aligns evaluation with some existing sector activities including the Workforce Profile.</p>

		<p>activities as required. In the past this has included survey's following each training session and external evaluations.</p> <p>The ACT ATOD workforce will be surveyed regarding the Qualification Strategy once in a three year period through the ACT ATOD Workforce Profile (as described in Service Funding Agreements).</p>		
13.	<p>ATODA is funded by the Health Directorate to take leadership of, including developing, implementing and monitoring, the ACT ATOD MQS. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing leadership, support, coordination and monitoring;</li> <li>• Identifying and purchasing training and assessment opportunities (including recognition of prior learning) to support workers to attain the MQS;</li> <li>• Purchasing and providing up to two First Aid courses for the</li> </ul>	<p>Content removed from policy and covered through the 6 monthly information packages.</p>	<p>Relocates information on ATODA's role and budget allocation to 6 monthly information packages.</p>	<p>Allows training purchased to be more flexible to the needs of the sector (e.g. assessed through annual feedback surveys from participating services).</p>

	<p>sector per annum; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchasing and coordinating participating worker membership to the National Drug Sector Information Services at the Alcohol and other Drug Council of Australia (ADCA) (this is optional for participating workers).</li> </ul> <p>The Health Directorate will annually fund ATODA \$84,870 (GST exclusive) to conduct the ACT ATOD MQS with the sector. Of this, approximately \$64,000 of the available funding will be allocated annually to develop and implement the MQS and other workforce development opportunities for the sector. Commencing 1 July 2010 and indexed annually.</p>			
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## Section 5: Proposed Calendar for Delivery (2017 – 2019 Funding Cycle)

The following table outlines the proposed calendar of training delivery for the QS (to be purchased by ATODA) for the 2017 – 2019 period.

Semester 1, 2017	Semester 2, 2017	Semester 1, 2018	Semester 2, 2018	Semester 1, 2019
Unit 1 & 2 AOD Skill Set	Unit 3 & 4 AOD Skill Set	Based on demand:  2 units from AOD Skill Set  OR  Remaining units from the Certificate IV in AOD	2 units from AOD Skill Set	Based on demand:  2 units from AOD Skill Set  OR  Remaining units from the Certificate IV in AOD
	First Aid		First Aid	