

FOUNDATION SKILLS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Scoping a foundation skills professional standards framework – Consultation Kit

August 2013

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This kit should be filled out after participants have read the *Scoping a foundation skills professional standards framework* consultation paper.

Group Feedback Form

Workshop session date:	Monday 22 September
Organisation:	NT Council for Adult Literacy
Number of participants:	4
Location:	NT Library, Parliament House, Darwin
Facilitator:	Lorraine Sushames / Alison Reedy
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Please select the most accurate description of the way in which this feedback represents the views of your workshop participants.

This feedback represents:

☐ the consensus view of participating individuals

☐ the majority view of the workshop participants

☒ **a compilation of the range of views expressed by workshop participants**

☐ other:.....
.....

Diagram 1: Possible extent of the foundation skills workforce



Diagram 1 is a rough sketch of the possible extent of the foundation skills workforce. It is created as a starting point for talking about the diverse environments for foundation skills delivery in Discussion Point 1.

Discussion questions	Summary/key points
Discussion point 1: <i>scoping the foundation skills field</i>	<p>Boundaries should be as broad as possible to encompass people working in the field. Three levels of practitioners in the diagram reflect a fair representation of the levels of professional practice, though the nomenclature may change to what is shown in the diagram.</p> <p>The field includes a wide range of job roles that may intersect and includes foundation skills.</p> <p>Programs missing: State based programs.</p> <p>Yes – a wide definition is required to cover the breadth of roles that a practitioner may be involved in.</p>
Where are the boundaries of the foundation skills field?	
Does the field include only occupations that are solely focussed on foundation skills development, or should it include the notion of ‘associated’ job roles that have some responsibility for, or interest in, foundation skills development?	
Are there domains, programs or occupations that are missing from diagram 1 (above) – or some that should be excluded?	
Is there a need to define and agree upon what is meant by a foundation skills practitioner?	

Discussion questions	Summary/key points
Discussion point 2: <i>considering the purpose of a professional standards framework</i>	
Should a professional standards framework focus only on foundation skills education specialists or should it also include related occupations where a level of knowledge and skills in foundation skills is an addition to the required core skills and capabilities?	Framework should include the range of occupations in which foundation skills is a part.
How might the establishment of a professional standards framework strengthen the identity of the foundation skills field and support foundation skills practitioners in their professional practice?	A framework would define the standards required for professional practice in a similar way in which other professional associations and networks, such as ESL and Career Development related associations, define qualifications standards.
How can the diversity of the foundation skills field be accommodated in a professional standards framework?	A professional standards framework could include a range of professional standards that are graduated depending on the role of the practitioner. Alternatively curriculum developers could mandate qualifications and the level of on the job or other experience required for those teaching foundation skills courses.

Discussion questions	Summary/key points
Discussion point 2: <i>considering the purpose of a professional standards framework (cont...)</i>	PD and career pathways should be an integral component of the framework. There needs to be clear links between PD and

What components of a professional standards framework will be critical for ensuring that it is useful and sustainable?	<p>professional pathways. This is problematic given employment is often project or sessional work. There are funding implications of having an overarching body/ professional organisation. Federal government would need to fund.</p> <p>Management mechanisms – if there is a professional body there needs to be funding and a communications/dissemination strategy as the body becomes a de facto regulator. Mechanisms required include a PD log which stipulates a minimum amount of PD to be undertaken each year to maintain currency. Input into this is required from all stakeholders.</p> <p>Having a Foundation Skills overarching body could end up splintering an already small field. Many people are working across many fields and there is not space to have another professional organisation that might splinter the membership of organisations further. An option may be for one of the existing membership bodies (e.g. ACAL) to take on foundation skills at the national level.</p>
What management mechanisms would need to be put in place to implement and maintain a professional standards framework for the foundation skills field?	
What role could existing membership organisations play in the implementation and maintenance of a professional standards framework?	

Discussion questions	Summary/key points
Discussion point 3: <i>identifying knowledge and</i>	

<i>skills for the foundation skills field</i>	
Could a matrix or framework of knowledge and skills be developed to describe the range of capabilities needed in the foundation skills field?	Yes, the matrix described at back of the consultation report is useful. Yes Yes Probably could but not sure
Are some areas of knowledge and skills essential for everyone in the field?	
Are there identifiable specialisations that could usefully be described in a matrix or framework?	
Could any or all of these skills be encapsulated within an existing framework such as the VET Capability Framework? (see Appendix C of the consultation paper)	

Discussion questions	Summary/key points
Discussion point 4: using qualifications to describe professional requirements	Currently there are not a sufficient number of adult teaching qualifications that credential people into the field with Adult LLN specialisation. Many that existed have been discontinued.
How do historic and currently available qualifications in LLN relate to the needs of foundation skills specialists?	Need to review if AQF Level 8 Diploma of Adult Language Literacy Numeracy Practice is at a suitable level for Foundation Skills specialists.
Do any qualifications fully capture the knowledge and skills required by foundation skills specialists?	Need much more than a Cert IV TAE to teach foundation skills. Those working with the lowest level students need the highest level of qualifications. Professional development needs to be funded – eg

<p>Are there any critical skills and capabilities required by the foundation skills workforce that are not covered by any existing formal qualifications?</p>	<p>scholarships for people to undertake Grad Cert level qualifications, but there is only a limited amount of funding available.</p> <p>We don't know about all the qualifications – only know about some of them. Experience is a critical capability that needs to be captured. Other capabilities required are currency of practice, experience in a range of delivery contexts and with clients with a range of needs, and evidence of a repertoire of skills for working in different contexts eg adaptability, flexibility, negotiation skills. These are required as Foundation Skills work can look very different depending on where and when you are doing it.</p>
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Discussion questions	Summary/key points
Discussion point 5: <i>defining on the job requirements</i>	Levels could be used to describe skills expertise and experience.
Could levels be used to describe developmental stages of foundation skills expertise and experience?	<p>On the job experience is important in the foundations skills area. Capturing experience on the job is currently not done in any structured way. There needs to be an RPL process. This may include a PD activity log that practitioners can use to document practice and use to achieve RPL. Evidence of PD is not enough on its own – there needs to be evidence of implementation of PD into practice and reflective practice. This may be achieved through mentoring and peer review processes.</p>
How much on-the-job experience is needed by foundation skills practitioners working in various roles or contexts?	
Are there, or should there be, established mechanisms for gaining the necessary on-the-job experience?	
Should formal or consistent methods for documenting on-the-job experience be developed?	

Discussion questions	Summary/key points
Discussion point 6: <i>creating a system for continuing professional development</i>	<p>CPD could be set up with a national PD register to remind people of the need to stay current in the field.</p> <p>Such a register needs to be linked to a framework. See Career Industry Council of Australia PD framework/ requirements for an example. http://www.cica.org.au/practitioners/continuing-professional-development</p> <p>Due to highly casualised workforce funding for the PD should be provided by the federal Government and consistently applied nationally. A number of models to do this – Fee Help/HECS staff won't fund it themselves.</p> <p>A national body funded by the Commonwealth is required to manage the CPD system, perhaps based on the Training Advisory Council model. There needs to be one system with National Standards so there is quality and consistency across the board.</p> <p>Diversity in the field – lack of knowledge of needs of remote Indigenous clients due to lack of data.</p>
Could a system for continuing professional development (CPD) be created that will meet the needs of the foundation skills field?	
How can a highly casualised workforce be accommodated in a CPD system?	
Who would take responsibility for managing a CPD system?	
Should there be one system, or many, to accommodate the diversity of the field?	
Discussion questions	Summary/key points

Discussion point 7: <i>establishing requirements for specialist areas</i>	<p>Specialisations can be clearly identified. Areas of specialisation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy Numeracy and mathematics Speaking and listening Technology <p>The unique knowledge and work in specialist areas is already described: for example TESOL; LLN</p> <p>People working in different contexts may need different qualifications. Work based learning is most important for foundation skills practitioners – e.g. working in workplaces or in VET, may have trade skills and gain a qualification to teach Foundation skills; also, those people delivering Skills Sets training or working in fields where they are not teaching accredited programs in the community.</p>
Can areas of specialisation be clearly identified within the foundation skills field?	
What is the best way to describe the unique knowledge and skills requirements of specialist areas?	
Does there need to be a distinction between specialists who operate across delivery contexts (e.g. numeracy specialists, NESB specialists) and those who specialise in a particular delivery context (e.g. WELL practitioners)?	

Discussion questions	Summary/key points
Discussion point 8: <i>determining the need</i>	We support a code of ethics to guide people working in the Foundation Skills area. Specific

<i>for a code of practice</i>	issues in the field should be addressed, for example, privacy issues around assessment. Programs such as LLNP have a provider code of conduct and many providers also have codes of conduct. Refer to the National VET Equity Advisory Council Equity Blue Print http://www.nveac.natese.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/56351/NVEAC_Equity_Blueprint.pdf for elements that could be included in a Code of Conduct.
Are there any ethical operating principles for the foundation skills field that are not already established in the broader education and training system?	A code of ethics is relevant for people working in all contexts, including outside of accredited programs.
What does this mean for practitioners operating outside of accredited VET delivery?	
Additional comments/issues?	This is a huge job! NT Council for Adult Literacy supports national standards and frameworks for practitioners. The NT has a casualised LLN workforce, thin training markets, very low unemployment and the highest employment participation rate in Australia, which makes it difficult to get traction with practitioners with respect to professional qualifications and training requirements.