



HEALTH
PROFESSIONS
ACCREDITATION
COLLABORATIVE
FORUM

Australia's accreditation authorities
for regulated health professionals

Request for Proposal

Online Cultural Safety Training for Accreditation Teams



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1. Introduction

1.1 A commitment to culturally safe accreditation contributors and practices

The 15 members of the Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum (the Forum) are committed to better health outcomes and care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, to a culturally safe health workforce and to contributing to health services free of inequality and racism. We recognise accreditation standards and processes as a significant motivator for review and change in education programs and a mechanism for sharing good practice across programs. Accreditation authorities for the regulated health professions have developed accreditation standards to assess how education programs are preparing future health practitioners whose practice is culturally safe.

Accreditation authorities acknowledge the significant role of their accreditation teams in assessing education programs and providers against the standards. We are committed to ensuring teams have the knowledge, skills and professional attributes to support informed, professional and consistent assessments against standards, including standards that contribute to development of a culturally safe health workforce.

1.2 About the Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum

The Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum (the Forum) is a coalition of the 15 accreditation authorities which operate under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the Scheme). Accreditation authorities undertake the accreditation functions as defined in the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act (National Law) (as in force in each state and territory). The functions include the accreditation of health practitioner training and education programs which lead to a registerable profession under the NRAS.

The professions regulated under the National Scheme are:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice	Occupational Therapy
Chinese Medicine	Optometry
Chiropractic	Osteopathy
Dentistry	Paramedicine
Medical Radiation Practice	Pharmacy
Medicine	Physiotherapy
Midwifery	Podiatry
Nursing	Psychology

The purpose of the Forum is:

- to work together on issues of national and international importance to the regulated health professions;
- to identify areas of common interest and concern in relation to the regulated health professions;
- to work towards a position of consensus on identified issues and concerns;
- to take joint action in areas of importance to the regulated health professions;
- to develop joint position statements which provide recommended policy directions for governments and other relevant stakeholders.

The collective expertise of the Forum members is in:

- setting educational standards for health professionals to develop safe and competent practitioners able to adapt to changes in professional practice over time;
- encouraging improvements in the education and training of health professionals to respond to evolving health needs and practices;
- assessing and accrediting education programs;
- assessing overseas qualified practitioners;
- collaborating and consulting with a wide range of stakeholder bodies and actively engaging members of their profession in the regulation of professional practice;
- regional and international developments, capacity building and partnerships.

1.2 Cultural Safety in the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme

In 2017, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra), the agency responsible for the implementation of the National Scheme, established an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy Group (the Strategy Group) consisting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector leaders and representatives from accreditation authorities, National Boards and Ahpra. This group provides advice on how best to develop a National Scheme Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander strategy, and to better define its role, in ensuring patient safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia's health system. The group's agreed vision is: Patient safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia's health system is the norm, as defined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Cultural Safety Strategy – 2020 to 2025

The Strategy Group, led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members, developed the strategy which is endorsed by 43 organisations, academics and individuals, including accreditation authorities Ahpra and National Boards. The strategy focuses on achieving patient safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the norm and the inextricably linked elements of clinical and cultural safety.

The Strategy can be downloaded [here](#).

In endorsing the cultural safety strategy, accreditation authorities supported development of specific Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) related to their work. In addition, accreditation authorities have worked with national boards and Ahpra to embed

within their service agreement with Ahpra, KPI's related to the role of accreditation in developing a culturally safe workforce. The KPI's in the strategy and our service agreements are consolidated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Accreditation Authorities - Key Performance Indicators related to Cultural Safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

	KPIs		KPIs
<p>Ahpra service agreements</p>	<p>a. The accreditation authority has standards and processes that require all education providers to include in their programs the ability for their graduates to deliver culturally safe health care including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; and</p> <p>b. The accreditation authority personnel are trained in cultural safety including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p>	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Cultural Safety Strategy (current to 2025)</p>	<p>Cultural safety</p> <p>KPI 2 Ensure consistency for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and cultural safety in education and training standards and accreditation guidelines (Accreditation Authorities adopt)</p> <p>Increased participation</p> <p>KPI 8 Governance – Boards and Accrediting Authorities (Ensure two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives on each National Board and Accreditation Authority by end of 2025)</p> <p>KPI 12 Improve data quality (Develop and implement strategies to monitor and improve data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in the National Scheme)</p> <p>Influence</p> <p>KPI 17 Ensure alignment and consistency with other standards in services and employment (collaborate with stakeholders for consistency in standards)</p> <p>KPI 19 Convene a National Summit on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce (summit of educators, accreditation authorities etc.)</p>

2. Background

2.1 Accreditation of health practitioner education and training in Australia

Accreditation of health practitioner education and training is, "...the process of formal evaluation of an educational program, institution, or system against defined standards by an external body for the purposes of quality assurance and continuous enhancement."¹

Accreditation functions are defined in the National Law including:

- develop accreditation standards and recommend them to the relevant National Board for approval
- accredit and monitor education providers and programs of study to ensure that graduates are provided with the knowledge, skills and professional attributes to safely practise the profession in Australia.
- provide advice to National Boards about issues relating to their accreditation functions
- assess overseas qualified practitioners
- assess overseas accrediting authorities.

All accreditation authorities undertake the first three functions, with some authorities also undertaking one or both of the remaining two functions.

Accreditation standards outline the program expectations to ensure only suitably trained and qualified practitioners can register to practise in Australia in order to assure public safety. The application of the accreditation standards is underpinned by peer review by which an 'accreditation team', comprising health practitioners and in some cases students and consumers or lay persons, will assess a program of study against the approved accreditation standard for that profession to make an accreditation decision. The assessment of the program is undertaken using a combination of accreditation tools, including a self-assessment against the standards and in most cases a site visit. During the site visit (which during the COVID-19 pandemic have increasingly been undertaken online) the accreditation team interview groups or individuals to triangulate the information and evidence provided in the self-assessment. These interviews can include interviews with academic staff, students and patients who may identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Accreditation authorities recognise the accreditation standards are a regulatory lever that can influence education providers to modify curricula to better address specific health outcomes, including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. All accreditation authorities have, or are in the process of, reviewing their accreditation standards to reflect the need to have greater regard for the health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples. Accreditation authorities also recognise that individually, and collectively, we need to provide training to our accreditation teams to ensure they are appropriately skilled to assess a program to determine whether it is preparing graduates for culturally safe care for that profession. This training is likely to be applicable to all accreditation teams regardless of the profession, and accreditation authorities are seeking to work collaboratively to develop this training to be consistent

¹ Taber, S., Akdemir, N., Gorman, L., van Zanten., M and Frank., J R (2020), A "fit for purpose" framework for medical education accreditation system design, BMC Medical Education 2020, 20(Suppl 1):306, 4

across the professions for the benefit of education providers, but with the expectation that we can share learnings of what excellence should look like in health practitioner education in preparing the future workforce to be culturally safe.

Accreditation authorities further acknowledge the need for this training to be led and developed by Indigenous Australians to ensure it is culturally safe and fit for purpose.

2.2 Current training for accreditation teams

All accreditation authorities provide training for their accreditation teams. The content of this training is varied and will include an element of profession specific information to orient accreditation teams to the accreditation process expected for that accreditation authority. The delivery method of this training is also varied across the accreditation authorities with some delivering training online, face to face or a combination of face to face and online training.

Each accreditation authority is also working to deliver cultural safety training within their authority. The implementation of this will be varied across each accreditation authority.

3. Scope of the Proposal

3.1 Content

The Forum is seeking to work with a vendor to develop and design training materials for accreditation team members (including professional, consumer and administrative members of the team) to:

- Question and assess health practitioner education programs against the approved accreditation standard in a culturally safe way;
- Understand how to determine if the program is preparing students to be culturally safe practitioners and, if necessary, apply appropriate conditions to ensure the program meets the standards; and

Demonstrate conduct and behaviours that support accreditation authorities' commitment to cultural safety.

Ideally, training should include the ability to credential a learner as having completed the training through embedded progress checks throughout the module(s) that can be tracked through a Learning Management System (LMS) or other verification methodology.

3.2 Delivering content

Content is to be delivered online, with the option for the vendor to host the content and track user completions although this is not essential and respondents may advise in their response the format of the file output of the training materials. Forum members are committed to the content over the format and will work with the vendor regarding file compatibility.

The estimated number of learners is indicated in the table below.

Accreditation Authority*	Potential number of learners
Australian Pharmacy Council	60
Australian Dental Council	143
Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand	12
Australian Psychology Accreditation Council	29
Council on Chiropractic Education Australasia	20
Australian Physiotherapy Council	40
Australian Nursing & Midwifery Accreditation Council	0
Australasian Osteopathic Accreditation Council	0
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health Practice	15
Chinese Medicine	20
Podiatry	20
Paramedicine	21
Medical Radiation Practice	25
Committees staff	7
Australian Medical Council	100
Occupational therapy	15

**Please note the professions of nursing, midwifery and osteopathy are out of scope for this project*

3.3 Timeline

The Forum is intending to commence rolling out this training in 2022. Vendors are asked to provide an indicative timeline for development and availability of the training.

3.4 Other

A working group has been established to progress this work, comprising representatives from five different accreditation authorities. This working group will act as the reference group for the project, however the Forum will provide final sign off of the training module(s). Vendors are asked to advise the project management arrangements preferred to achieve the project outcomes.

4. Information Required in the Proposal

4.1 Service Provider's Ability and Approach

- 4.1.1 A description of your organisation's proposed approach and a statement summarising the benefits to the Forum of selecting your organisation.
- 4.1.2 Details of the program and file type the training would be delivered through.
- 4.1.3 Details of the educational approach your organisation will take to development of the training module(s).
- 4.1.4 Include details of your organisation's ability to meet the requirements outlined in section 3 of this RFP above.
- 4.1.5 Include details of where your organisation does not meet the requirements outlined in section 3 of the RFP above.
- 4.1.6 Include details to demonstrate your understanding of the Forum's needs and risks.
- 4.1.7 Should your organisation propose to utilise any other organisation or person to assist with the provision of any of the services required, please provide full details of the organisation or person, reflective of the information sought within Section 4.2 of this RFP within your response.

4.2 Service Provider's Proposed Team

- 4.2.1 Details of the personnel who would be assigned to complete the work, including project management support.
- 4.2.2 A brief summary of their experience and qualifications.
- 4.2.3 Please also comment on your organisation's succession planning and steps to ensure continuity in respect of providing ongoing support to the Forum should key personnel leave the organisation.

4.3 Service Provider's Relevant Expertise and Experience

Details of your organisation's experience in providing similar services.

4.4 Cost of Services

Detail your fee proposal for the services required including:

1. Cost of development of the training module(s); and
2. If providing an option to host and track learners completion of the training, please indicate the cost for the first two years (2022 – 2024 calendar years).

4.5 Development Timeline

Outline your organisation's availability and proposed implementation timeline to meet the timeline outlined in 3.3.

5. Evaluation Criteria

The Forum will objectively consider all responses to this RFP on a qualitative and quantitative basis, considering the information provided as detailed within Section 4 of this RFP.

The Forum may request and receive clarification from any tenderer when evaluating a proposal and may invite some or all of the tenderers to appear before an evaluation panel in order to clarify their proposals. In such event, the evaluation panel may consider such clarifications in evaluating proposals.

The Forum will assess proposals to the extent to which they meet or exceed the following indicative criteria:

- Indigenous-led
- The proposal demonstrates understanding of the role of the Forum and Accreditation Teams.
- The proposal demonstrates understanding of the training required.
- The proposal adequately addresses the described scope of work.
- The proposal demonstrates that the organisation has proven experience and expertise in fields relevant to the proposal.
- The proposal demonstrates a clear commitment and ability to deliver the solution on time to an appropriately high standard.
- The proposal represents value for money.

Vendors are also invited to comment on the following:

- Intellectual property including the ability for accreditation authorities to modify/enhance the content in the future once the initial training has been rolled out. Forum members are open to a license model or other similar access arrangements.

The Forum will decide on whether to commence this project based on the evaluation of the proposed cost and deliverables.

6. Response

The Forum requests that responses to this RFP be submitted via email by 26 November 2021 to:

Ms Narelle Mills
Chair, Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum
Email: info@hpacf.org.au

7. Requests for Information

To assist your organisation in considering your response to this RFP, the Forum will provide further information on request and depending on the information being sought may require the signing of a confidentiality agreement.

Should your organisation require further information to assist in responding to this RFP, please contact:

Ms Narelle Mills
Chair, Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum
Email: info@hpacf.org.au

8. Confidentiality

The Forum has invited interested parties to enter into a tender process with a view to selecting a vendor that can meet the business' needs.

In the course of discussions and negotiations, each party may disclose to the other information relating to its business including information concerning its corporate and business structure, intellectual property, existing and proposed business contracts, services information, technical information, managerial, financial and other information that is commercial in confidence, which is not available in the public domain ("Confidential Information").

The Forum requires all interested parties at all times throughout the discussions and negotiations and thereafter to maintain the confidentiality of the Confidential Information.