

30 January 2018

PSA supports members training for Certificate IV in Social Housing

When FACS announced its intention to partner with TAFE to provide all Housing Client Services Officers (CSOs) with a Certificate IV in Social Housing, the PSA expressed 'in principle' support and noted training is long overdue.

The PSA is aware of the staged rollout of this training and we support our members acquiring a formal qualification, funded by the Department.

At the same time, we seized the opportunity to convey concerns to the Deputy Secretary, Paul Vevers, regarding how the training will be implemented, noting that allocated time must be set aside for all CSOs to undertake the units in the context of the current high workloads.

The Deputy Secretary advised that he has directed all managers to provide CSOs with adequate release time from their normal workloads to undertake the training "as the priority" and that their compliance with this directive will be closely monitored. Also, if KPIs are not met as a direct result of staff allocation to training, it will be taken into account.

Mandatory learning roadmap

All current CSOs would by now have received notification of the mandatory requirement to undertake an initial 10 units of competency-based training in the first 12 months, then a further five units over another six months.

The completion of the required training modules called the *Learning Roadmap* will be recorded in individual Performance Development Plans (PDPs).

Performance Development Plans

Noting the Department's intention to record completed modules in individual PDPs, the PSA advised FACS management of the need to address the legacy of systemic inconsistency and poor application of the plans. Some CSOs indicate they have not completed or even seen a PDP in certain cases for years, due to restructures and changes in team leader.

We conveyed to the Deputy Secretary that an effective PDP should be a working document, travelling with the employee, irrespective of team leader changes, easily accessible and regularly reviewed. The PSA advised the Department of the need to revitalise and re-engage proper use of PDPs, as agreements between individual employees and their managers, not only to meet KPIs but to note training and professional development goals and to record employee achievements.

We encourage our members to utilise their PDP in this manner and if you have any questions about your PDP, to contact the PSA to clarify the proper process.

Recognition of prior learning

It is noted that many experienced CSOs will be able to demonstrate that they already possess a number of skills contained in the training modules. A skills audit will provide CSOs with the opportunity to supply evidence of their skills and competencies.



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If TAFE recognises the employee has demonstrated the relevant skill/competency, the individual may not be required to undertake particular training modules – it will be recognised prior learning.

Skills audit

We understand skills audits will be rolled out in cohorts. Each cohort is four weeks in duration, and should only take up to five days to complete, depending on your length of employment with FACS or recognised prior learning.

Staff will receive an email regarding their cohort allocation when their cohort reaches its turn to commence. Once you are assigned to a cohort for LEAP (Certificate IV Social Housing), you will remain in that cohort for the duration of LEAP.

All employees in cohort 1 have been notified already. Cohort 1 commenced the skills audit component of LEAP on Monday, 8 January 2018, where they were required to gather evidence of past work examples to satisfy capabilities of modules for Certificate IV Social Housing.

During this period, enquires can be directed to LEAP@facs.nsw.gov.au and each CSO will be assigned a TAFE teacher throughout the LEAP training and should be contacted by that person in due course. Team leaders have been directed to support CSOs throughout this process.

The onus will be on managers in each district to properly plan for the implementation ensuring adequate staffing to cover the workload.

If you are not being supported to complete the required RPL skills audit, please contact the PSA for assistance.

PSA staff

- » Siobhan Callinan Senior Organiser
- » Katy Ambler Industrial Officer

You can support the work of the PSA and your local delegates by asking your colleagues to [JOIN](#) their union.

If you have any questions about this bulletin please email: FACSOrganising@psa.asn.au.

Update and Connect with the PSA: If you have moved home or work location, or you have changed your contacts, please update your membership details [HERE](#).

