Contextualisation and packaging of training packages

Contextualisation means tailoring units of competency, or packaging certain units into a qualification, to suit specific needs. It is about flexibility, and this is inherent in the way training packages are constructed and delivered.

In practice, contextualisation means that registered training organisations may:

- Modify units of competency to reflect the local outcome required by an individual and/or enterprise. This may involve the provision of additional information to suit particular learner profiles, specific enterprise equipment requirements or other local needs
- Package units of competency into a qualification, using the elective options available, to suit a particular outcome.

In all cases of contextualisation, the integrity of the outcome of the endorsed unit(s) of competency must be maintained.

When contextualising units of competency registered training organisations may add to the range statement or the evidence guide. They must not:

- Remove the content of any of the elements and performance criteria
- Distort or narrow the competency outcomes and limit its use
- Diminish the breadth of application of the competency and reduce its portability

How to contextualise units of competency?

Contextualisation is achieved by including, modifying or substituting text within units of competency and usually within the range statement or evidence guide. It is about providing training and assessment that is specific to an enterprise or individual learner.

Any modifications to a unit of competency must maintain the integrity of the industry skill and portability requirements, including all legislative licensing and any other regulatory requirements.

The following are some suggestions for contextualising units of competency to make them more relevant for specific industries or workplaces:

- Refer to the guidelines in the relevant training package. Usually, it will be possible to replace generic terms and general descriptions of equipment or processes and procedures with specific examples.
These are often identified by the **bold italics** in the performance criteria, and the replacement would occur in the range statement.

- Identify the kinds of evidence that candidates may be able to provide in their job roles to satisfy the requirements of a particular unit of competency and add this information to the evidence guide.
- Prepare evidence plans for the candidates, showing how they might collect the identified kinds of evidence.
- Identify any specific knowledge that would be required to meet a specific industry or enterprise need, and add this information to the required knowledge and skill in the evidence guide.
- Modifying the delivery and assessment strategy to suit learners with special needs is also a form of contextualisation.

### How to contextualise a qualification

#### What is meant by packaging and packaging rules?

Packaging means selecting units of competency within the qualification packaging rules to suit local clients and/or conditions. Most qualifications have a common ‘core’ set of units of competency, and then allow a choice of ‘electives’. The choice of electives will enable a registered training organisation to select units that are particularly relevant to the client (student or enterprise). These qualification rules are an endorsed part of the training package and changes to the rules can only be made through full training package review or continuous review processes.

#### How to package a qualification?

Advice is provided in training packages (in the qualification packaging rules section) about what units *must* be in a particular qualification and what units *could* be included in the qualification.

The advice may include:

- Suggested elective units for particular job roles
- Suggested units for importing from other training packages
- Allowable substitutions within elective units
- Suggested sequencing of particular units for work functions

Some training packages – for example, the Business Services Training Package (BSB07) – have excellent generic guidelines for training and assessment of people with special needs and within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contexts.

#### What if existing qualifications do not suit and identified need?
If an identified need cannot be met by contextualising or packaging a training package unit of competency or qualification, it may be necessary to explore the option of developing a course for accreditation – but only if the qualifications or skill sets needed are not duplicated within an existing training package.

More information

Key resources

- Contextualising Teaching and Learning: A Guide for VET Teachers
- Training Package Assessment Materials Kit
- Training Package Development Handbook

Key contacts

- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations,
- state and territory training authorities

Related articles

- Implementation and use of training packages
- Training packages,
- Industry skills councils

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Address: LMB 527, Brisbane QLD 4001
Email: info@tpatwork.com
Phone: 07 3225 2450
Fax: 07 3237 0356