

Companion Volume User Guide: AHC21226 Certificate II in Primary Industries and Rural Operations

AHC Agriculture, Horticulture and
Conservation and Land
Management Training Package
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**Skills
Insight**

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Introduction

About this Guide

This user guide is designed to assist Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in effectively delivering training for AHC21226 Certificate II in Primary Industries and Rural Operations. The guide covers several important aspects, addressing specific challenges and recommendations for enhancing training quality. The guide should be read in conjunction with the Companion Volume: Implementation Guide. Please refer to <https://training.gov.au/training/details/AHC/summary>

Structure of this Guide

This qualification has been revised under the new requirements for the Training Package Organising Framework (TPOF) and Qualification Reform.

The guide outlines the key changes which have occurred following the extensive review and subsequent report from 2025 titled “[Research Summary and Product Development Proposal](#)” into the current AHC21016 Certificate II in Rural Operations.

- Section 1 includes the rationale for the qualification purpose and how that information has been included in the qualification description. It also discusses the need for a qualification name change and why and how it was determined.
- Section 2 outlines the packaging rules and changes made following the review of the qualification.
- Section 3 outlines suggested training delivery for the qualification and ways in which to choose electives.

Section 1: Qualification Purpose

In 2025/2026 the Technical Committee for the AFP_ANN_2324_002 Rural Operations Project completed a survey to determine the Qualification Purpose statement to be included in the revised qualification.

The purpose is determined by considering how learners will use it, how employers will use it, and how RTOs will deliver it.

The outcome of the Qualification Purpose survey is outlined in the following matrix with the darker green shading the most representative of agreed statements:

Qualification Purpose matrix					
	SPECIFIC Occupation-focused		RELATED Industry-focused		BROAD Pathways / foundational
Occupational Outcomes	Prepares learners for one clearly defined regulated job role	Strong alignment with one job role, but applicable to a small number of closely related roles	Prepares learners for multiple, related job roles across a single industry	Outcomes span multiple industries or sectors with similar functional roles	Not tied to specific job roles—supports further study, career exploration, or foundational capabilities
Knowledge and Skill Breadth	Focused on highly technical, task-specific skills and knowledge with limited application beyond a single job role	Less emphasis on broad skills and knowledge and a stronger focus on technical and task specific skills and knowledge	Balanced mix of job-specific and broader skills relevant across an industry	Skills and knowledge remain broad; however, some task specific skills are introduced	Emphasis on foundational, cognitive, interpersonal, or cross-sectoral skills applicable across multiple industries or further study pathways
Learner Mobility – Transferability of Skills & Knowledge	Skills and knowledge apply only to one specific job role	Some overlap with related roles in the same workplace or narrow industry area	Transferable across multiple job roles within the same industry or industry cluster	Transferable across similar roles in different industries or sectors	Broad, transferable skills used across multiple industries, or not tied to specific occupations
Licensing / Regulatory Requirements	Completion of the qualification is required to obtain a licence, accreditation or registration	Includes units or components required for licensing or regulatory compliance, but the qualification itself is not mandatory	Aligns with industry standards or expectations, but no formal licensing requirements apply	May include units relevant to regulated activities, but licensing is not a key driver	No licensing, regulatory or accreditation requirements apply
Delivery Pathways & Context	Delivered primarily through structured, regulated models such as apprenticeships or traineeships	Suitable for delivery by an Enterprise RTO and can be aligned to employee awards with union collaboration	Provides intentional pathways to further skills and knowledge in specific industries	Suited to VET in Schools programs as a career pathway	Delivered through diverse, flexible models (including in classroom or simulated settings) and commonly supports entry-level learners or broad foundational development

Following the results of the survey it has been determined that the Qualification Purpose for this qualification falls in under a broad, pathways focused area which may be suitable as an entry point for school leavers, those still at school and wanting to undertake a VET program or individuals who may want a change of career or have not yet decided on a career pathway.

The revised description states “*Graduates with this qualification perform a defined range of skilled operations, usually within a variety of broader related activities involving known routines, methods and procedures. They will have skills and knowledge that are transferable across a range of job roles. They apply some discretion and judgement when selecting equipment, services or contingency measures.*”

Historically, this qualification has been utilised in many different LGAs and for a variety of purposes and it is for this reason, the revised qualification has been designed to be flexible so a number of pathways may be considered. The diversity and flexibility of this qualification has also led to a change in the name of the qualification title.

Why 'Primary Industries and Rural Operations'?

The legacy term "Rural Operations" has been in use since the qualification's inception, historically serving a large and vital cohort across Australia. While traditionally associated with agricultural environments, data and delivery patterns show that the qualification is heavily utilised across a wide spectrum of regional, remote, metropolitan, and peri-urban contexts.

Comprehensive national analysis and stakeholder consultation highlighted that retaining the word "rural" in isolation created a false geographical barrier. This unintended restriction reduced the qualification's visibility for learners and employers in major growth sectors (such as coastal aquaculture, commercial forestry, and production horticulture) who do not operate in traditional farming landscapes but still rely on the skills within this qualification.

Conversely, consultations also demonstrated that moving to a completely generic capability title risked stripping the qualification of its primary sector identity. Stakeholders across Australia expressed a strong need to ensure that the qualification remains clearly identifiable to the primary production and land-management sectors it is built to serve.

To balance these strategic workforce needs, the amalgamated title **Certificate II in Primary Industries and Rural Operations** was established. This serves as an enduring "double signpost" that aligns directly with the qualification's extensive elective bank:

- **Primary Industries** modernises the qualification's scope, providing a recognised umbrella under government and economic frameworks for diverse sectors like aquaculture, forestry, and specialised horticulture. It opens entry pathways for metropolitan, peri-urban, and coastal learners.
- **Rural Operations** preserves decades of established market recognition, ensuring long-standing networks in regional, rural, and remote (RRR) communities, as well as First Nations land-management programs, retain clear occupational visibility and continuity.

Regulatory and Equitable Compliance

This combined title aligns with the Training Package Organising Framework (TPOF) requirements for purpose-led design. By explicitly removing location-based limitations, the qualification accommodates the true diversity of learner needs, delivery contexts, and regional workforce aspirations across Australia, ensuring equitable accessibility without sector or geographical exclusion.

Foundation Skills Matrix

Mapping the Foundation Skills Outcomes

The Foundation Skills in the qualification reflect the requirements of the TPOF and the qualification's alignment to the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF).

The two core units of competency have been mapped to the ACSF using the Performance Features Grids for Learning, Reading, Writing, Oral Communication and Numeracy. Both Units of Competency were analysed using the key words and terminology throughout. These were then related to the ACSF levels to benchmark the core skills requirements. For example, 'recognise and report' (Oral Communication and Reading) or 'contribute to' (Oral Communication).

In other instances, the core skills required may not be as transparent. For example, a requirement to recognise safety signs which are often shown as symbols relates to Numeracy.

Performance Features for ACSF Core Skills

The following are examples of performance features in a workplace and employment domain which relate to the different core skills areas for this qualification.

Please note they are examples only and not indicative of the various contexts for job roles which should be taken into account:

At Learning Level 3 activities may include:

- Independently searches the internet, using key words, simple questions and 'trial and error' approaches
- Identifies own and others' roles in a group or team and makes an active contribution
- Participates in online collaborations where appropriate, e.g. discussion boards
- Contributes to problem solving processes
- Participates in quality improvement processes in the workplace, considering the priorities and commitments of self and other members
- Develops and uses personal organisation systems such as files, notebooks, folders and checklists

At Reading Level 2, sample activities may include:

- Recognises own name and personal details, e.g. locates own name on a team list or OHS subcommittee
- Locates and matches pieces of information, e.g. the time and place of a team meeting on a notice board
- Follows simple written or pictorial instructions, e.g. simple signs and warnings, emergency stop procedures for machines, warnings such as 'prohibited area' and 'wash hands before entering' or safety symbols on chemical containers
- Recognises time, dates and months, e.g. a work roster, shifts, rostered day off or job interview details
- Follows simple, familiar work timetable or schedule of activities specific to own job
- Locates specific information from a short text, e.g. a memo about overtime

At Writing Level 2, sample activities may include:

- Accesses and uses a range of computer learning programs, e.g. Crossword Magic
- Enters a short recount in a diary/journal/log book
- Completes a range of forms requiring routine, factual data, e.g. OHS records, a job application, a reimbursement form for expenses such as use of a vehicle, or pickup and delivery dockets
- Contributes to a short report summarising a group response, e.g. a workplace problem solving group
- Creates a list or simple flyer on information to be discussed at a workplace meeting
- Writes a brief message for a fellow worker, e.g. a shift changeover note

At Oral Communication Level 2, sample activities may include:

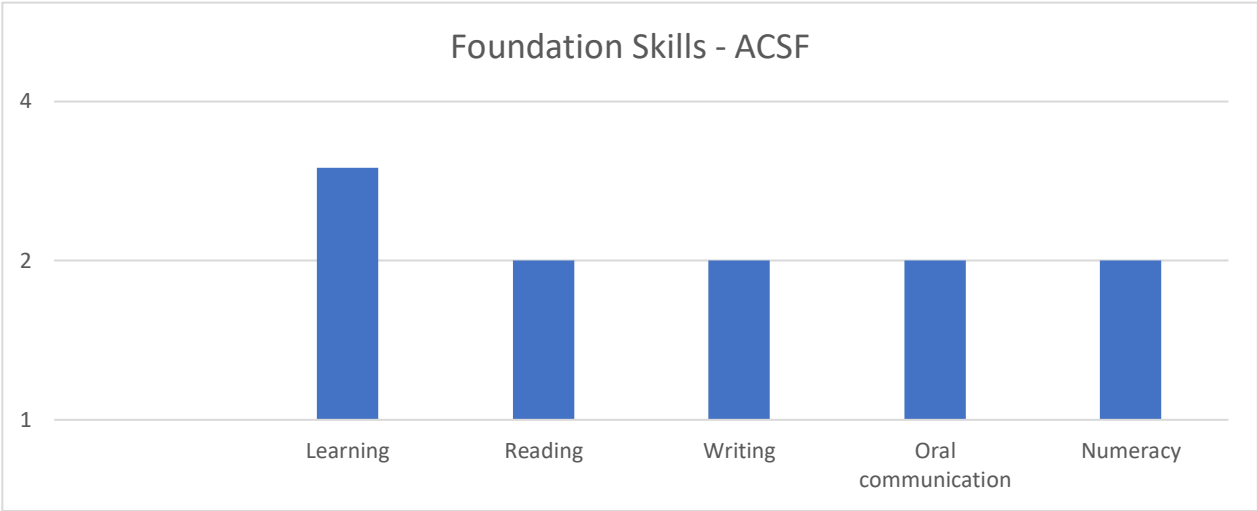
- Tells a supervisor about a problem/hazard/defect
- Listens to short announcements and identifies key information
- Expresses a personal opinion or preference in a discussion with co-workers, e.g. preferred roster days
- Asks questions and follows specific information/instructions in an immediate environment in order to complete a highly familiar procedure, e.g. stop machine when a red light goes on
- Describes a routine task, using workplace specific vocabulary as appropriate, supported by body language, e.g. explains how to turn on a familiar piece of machinery or operate a piece of technology, such as the drink machine, to a new worker or club member
- Listens to and responds to short, clearly worded requests, e.g. attends a meeting area, takes an early lunch break or indicates availability for weekend work
- Gives basic facts about own personal background in a survey at work

At Numeracy Level 2, sample activities may include:

- Orders and groups shapes and measurements, explaining any simple relationships or patterns, e.g. four-sided shapes or quantities from smallest to largest
- Identifies, draws and describes common 2D shapes and some common 3D shapes, e.g. sphere, cube or cylinder
- Uses a combination of mainly informal and some formal written mathematical and general language to represent the mathematical and problem solving process
- Writes a purchase list and calculates the cost to undertake a simple task, e.g. lunch for a group of friends or planting a vegetable garden
- Works in group to construct a simple chart/table and comment on information, e.g. the number of workplace accidents over a given period
- Identifies and names common uses of shapes in a familiar environment, e.g. compares use of the shapes used for road or OHS danger signs

(Commonwealth of Australia, 2025)

Once the qualification is endorsed and uploaded to the National Training Register, the matrix will be represented as a bar chart. For example,



(Commonwealth of Australia - Skills and Workforce Ministerial Council, 2025)

Section 2: Qualification review and Packaging Rules

Following the broad consultation period and with the Technical Committee, the following changes have been made to the Packaging Rules:

- The total number of units to be completed has been reduced from fifteen (15) to twelve (12)
- The number of Core Units has been reduced to two (2):
- The number of Elective Units will be ten (10) of which at least six must be chosen from the list in the qualification document. Four (4) may come from the list or from the AHC or any other training package or accredited course.

Please see Section 3 of this guide for examples of how the qualification may be utilised according to the job description of an individual undertaking the Certificate II in Primary Industries and Rural Operations.

Assessment requirements for units of competency

Assessment requirements for units are specified in the 'Assessment Conditions'. All units state the following: *"Assessors of this unit must satisfy the requirements for assessors in applicable vocational education and training legislation, frameworks and/or standards"*.

Units of competency which belong to the On Country Management sector (code "AHCOCM") have the extra statement:

"In addition, the following specific assessor requirements apply to this unit:

- *Assessment must be undertaken by a workplace assessor who has expertise in this unit of competency and who is:*
 - *an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Elder and/or Custodian*

or:

- *accompanied by, and/or in communication with, an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person who is a recognised member of the community with experience and knowledge of local cultural protocols."*

Section 3: Training delivery AHC21226 Certificate II in Primary Industries and Rural Operations

The following are examples of how electives might be selected for individuals as a pathway into different job roles and industries.

Example of a training program for a person in Aquaculture

Core Units

AHCWHS202 Participate in workplace health and safety processes

AHCWRK212 Work effectively in industry

Examples of Elective Choices

AHCBIO204 Follow site biosecurity procedures

AHCCHM201 Apply chemicals under supervision

AHCWRK211 Participate in environmentally sustainable work practices

AHCWRK213 Participate in workplace communications

AHCWRK215 Collect and record production data

AHCWRK216 Provide information on products and services

SFIAQU202 Handle stock

SFIBIO201 Inspect and clean aquatic work equipment

SFIXSI102 Communicate in the seafood industry

SFIXSI201 Work effectively in the seafood industry

Example of a training program for a person in Ecotourism

Core Units

AHCWHS202 Participate in workplace health and safety processes

AHCWRK212 Work effectively in industry

Examples of Elective Choices

AHCECR202 Maintain wildlife habitat refuges

AHCFAU202 Recognise fauna

SIRXCEG001 Engage the customer

SIRXCOM001 Communicate in the workplace to support team and customer outcomes

SIRXPDK001 Advise on products and services

SITTIND003 Source and use information on the tourism and travel industry

SITXCCS009 Provide customer information and assistance

SITXCCS011 Interact with customers

SITXCOM007 Show social and cultural sensitivity

Throughout the consultation, it was clear that job roles in some areas are not always linear. For example, a person employed by a local community council in a remote area may be required to dig a grave at a local cemetery one day and then be required to assist in herding cattle the next day. Therefore, the skills and knowledge required for that person need to be transferable across a number of areas. The flexibility within this qualification packaging rules allows for that transferability to occur.

The following is an example of how a training program for that person might look in a Certificate II in Primary Industries and Rural Operations:

Example of a training program for a person performing a range of tasks in a remote location

Core Units

AHCWHS202 Participate in workplace health and safety processes

AHCWRK212 Work effectively in industry

Examples of Elective Choices

AHCBIO204 Follow site biosecurity procedures

AHCLSK224 Handle livestock using basic techniques

AHCLSK225 Identify and mark livestock

AHCLSK226 Load and unload livestock

AHCMOM203 Operate basic machinery and equipment

AHCPGD207 Plant trees and shrubs

AHCWRK215 Collect and record production data

AHCWRK216 Provide information on products and services

SIFBCR003* Dig graves manually

SIFCWS001 Identify hazards and assess risks in a cemetery or crematorium