# Veterinary Nursing Project Feedback Review & Technical Investigation

## Overview

During broad consultation for the Veterinary Nursing review project (21 January to 10 March 2026), the project team received over 1,400 comments from veterinary nursing professionals, peak industry bodies, registered training organisations (RTOs), regulators and state training authorities.

Feedback was often highly technical and pointed to competing solutions. Suggestions intended to strengthen consistency or workplace authenticity could also affect learner access, regional delivery, qualification size or implementation burden. Recognising that training package updates impact workforce supply, regulatory compliance, RTO delivery, and student learning, the project team sought Technical Committee guidance on key design options. Resulting approaches were then tested for their practical, regulatory and policy implications before preparing revised drafts.

Qualification structure was also a significant focus of consultation. Following consideration of peak body submissions, AQF alignment, Technical Committee guidance and differing regulatory landscape, the *Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing* was retained as the entry-to-practice qualification, with the *Diploma of Veterinary Nursing* providing progression into advanced veterinary nursing capabilities. With a clear direction set for the Certificate IV, consultation shifted to addressing further key policy and technical areas.

This document summarises key technical and policy matters addressed during this period. Full feedback and responses will be available in the Consultation Log, published on the project webpage from November 4, 2026.

# Key areas investigated & addressed

## 1. Mandatory Workplace Requirements (MWR) vs. Work Placement

- **The challenge:** Before broad consultation, information gathered from a range of stakeholders informed the distinction between work placement for learning and MWR for demonstrating specified performance in a workplace. During consultation, the project team simultaneously provided clarification on the distinction and invited stakeholders to provide feedback on proposed approaches in the drafts. Feedback supported stronger workplace evidence for some clinical skills, but also raised concerns about access to suitable cases and facilities, animal welfare, regional delivery, assessment feasibility and learner delay
- **Work undertaken:** The project team reviewed feedback and sought Technical Committee guidance on where workplace performance was essential for assessment, where a combination of workplace and simulated evidence was appropriate, and how to avoid unintended barriers or implementation burden. The project team and Technical Committee also worked closely to define what constitutes a veterinary workplace for MWR purposes, so the products could operate across delivery contexts and jurisdictions where legislation, regulation and scope of practice vary or, in some cases, are not consistently defined.
- **Outcome:** The project team implemented a clear distinction between general work placement (for skill development) and MWR (for formal assessment). Consistent MWR have now been added or clarified, based on feedback and using an agreed definition of a veterinary workplace. An additional round of consultation invites feedback on the

revised MWR and their deliverability nationally to ensure requirements are transparent, achievable, and clear for RTOs, employers and regulators alike.

## 2. Clarifying qualification pathways & entry requirements

- **The challenge:** Feedback reflected different contextual or policy perspectives. Some stakeholders prioritised flexible, competency-based entry requirements that recognise capabilities gained through varied pathways that included on-the-job application. Others sought qualifications or units as objective benchmarks for consistent RTO decisions and reduced implementation burden. These starting points led to substantially different feedback.
- **Work undertaken:** The project team analysed the different positions through targeted consultation, including selected Technical Committee input. A hybrid approach was tested from different directions: whether it allowed appropriately flexible entry and recognised varied learner pathways, and whether it provided sufficient specificity, consistency and practical guidance for implementation by RTOs.
- **Outcome:** Entry requirements for the Certificate IV and Diploma have been restructured under the hybrid approach using both competency-based and training product-based descriptors. This is supported with explicit guidance in the draft User Guide.

## 3. Regulatory alignment & species scope (microchipping)

- **The challenge:** To reflect evolving industry practice, the microchipping unit *Implant microchip in animals* was initially expanded beyond cats and dogs. However, feedback from state regulators and animal welfare bodies identified significant variations in species-specific handling risks, state-based licensing, and authorisation frameworks.
- **Work undertaken:** Following guidance from the Technical Committee, the project team engaged directly with relevant authorities, as well as peak industry bodies, to review safety, welfare, and legal requirements across jurisdictions.
- **Outcome:** *ACMMIC4X05 Implant microchip in animals* will remain focused on cats and dogs to maintain safe, nationally consistent delivery within existing legal frameworks. Opportunities for future, specialised unit/s covering other species will continue to be monitored in alignment with peak body welfare guidelines.

## 4. Cross-JSC collaboration & foundation content

- **The challenge:** To avoid duplication across national training packages and streamline learning, the team explored opportunities to incorporate existing or emerging units from sectors covered by other Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs) including health and retail for topics including workplace wellbeing.
- **Work undertaken:** Skills Insight sought input from partner JSCs to identify unit options. Regarding wellbeing, the project team collaborated with HumanAbility and SaCSA to analyse units' suitability, share development timelines, seek expertise and ensure shared units achieve broad, cross-sector applicability without compromising their direct relevance and practical utility in a clinical veterinary setting.
- **Outcome:** With Technical Committee guidance and through cross-JSC collaboration, a dedicated unit, *ACMGEN4X02 Promote workplace wellbeing and psychosocial safety,* was developed to supersede a SaCSA unit, *SIRXHWB002 Promote workplace health and wellbeing,* and incorporated into the Diploma core, ensuring critical wellbeing skills are embedded without creating unnecessary duplication across the

national VET system. This builds on wellbeing and psychosocial safety concepts built into the updated Certificate IV, including through the core unit *ACMGEN304 Promote positive wellbeing in self and others in animal care workplaces*, providing progression from foundational wellbeing capability to the workplace leadership focus of the Diploma.

## 5. Balancing qualification content, flexibility and implementation

- **The challenge:** Stakeholders identified a broad range of skills and knowledge across veterinary nursing roles and settings, including species diversity. However, this coverage needed to be balanced against increased qualification size, delivery complexity and implementation burden. The challenge was to support broad and transferable veterinary nursing capability while achieving deliverability.
- **Work undertaken:** With Technical Committee guidance, the team reviewed qualification packaging, unit content and assessment requirements. This included considering access to species, equipment and clinical cases alongside feedback about content volume, assessment feasibility and regional delivery.
- **Outcome:** Nutrition content was reorganised, species assessment requirements were made more flexible and transferable, and the overall Certificate IV packaging was streamlined to balance core rigour with elective flexibility.

## 6. Navigating new training product development frameworks & design concepts

- **The challenge:** While the project team was confident navigating the recently updated Training Package Organising Framework (TPOF), many stakeholders were encountering these new concepts and template structures for the first time. This required a dual approach during consultation: actively educating stakeholders on how the new design features worked, while simultaneously seeking their input on draft products. Furthermore, a subset of stakeholders held varying interpretations of specific policy elements, requiring targeted engagement and negotiation to reach mutually supported solutions.
- **Work undertaken:** The project team embedded capability-building directly into the consultation process. We developed tailored explanatory resources—such as dedicated guides on Qualification Purpose and the new Application of Skills and Knowledge (ASK) unit template—and incorporated these concepts into the consultation sessions. This resulted in stakeholders having a deeper understanding of the context in which their feedback was being applied. With time to absorb and reflect on the concepts, many stakeholders returned with additional, highly considered feedback.
- **Outcome**: Integrating education directly into consultation proved to be a valuable investment for overall system capability. State Training Authorities and advisory networks particularly welcomed the informative resources and open dialogue. Ultimately, this collaborative approach resolved complex policy interpretations and empowered stakeholders to provide rich, highly constructive feedback that, whilst added to the duration of this feedback review phase, directly enhanced the final draft products.

# Next steps

With these complex technical foundations addressed, we invite stakeholders to review updated draft materials during Broad Consultation Round 2.

Your feedback in this round will help refine these products ahead of final consensus gathering.

Follow the progress of the Veterinary Nursing project and provide feedback on the Skills Insight website, or contact the project team at vetnursing@skillsinsight.com.au.

Skills Insight

JSC Jobs and Skills Council
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