Companion Volume User Guide: AHC21227 Certificate II in Primary Industries and Rural Operations

Published with *AHC Agriculture, Horticulture and Conservation and Land Management Training Package Release 12.0*

January 2027



Skills Insight

JSC | Jobs and Skills Council
Agribusiness, Fibre, Furnishing, Food, Animal and Environment Care
An Australian Government Initiative

Skills Insight acknowledges that First Nations peoples have been living on and caring for Country for thousands of years.

This is respected in our values and the way we work.

Skills Insight

JSC | Jobs and Skills Council
Agribusiness, Fibre, Furnishing, Food, Animal and Environment Care
An Australian Government Initiative

Skills Insight is a Jobs and Skills Council funded by the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

© Commonwealth of Australia, 2027 This document should be attributed as: Skills Insight (2027) Companion Volume User Guide: *AHC21227 Certificate II in Primary Industries and Rural Operations*

Disclaimer

This work has been produced with the assistance of funding provided by the Commonwealth Government through the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR).

The views expressed in this work do not necessarily represent the views of the DEWR. In addition, the DEWR does not give warranty or accept any legal liability in relation to the content of this work.

For further information about this Companion Volume or any other work being undertaken by Skills Insight, please visit:

www.skillsinsight.com.au

Skills Insight Ltd

ABN: 58 006 212 693

Suite 1.02, Level 1

1010 La Trobe Street

Docklands 3008

p. (03) 9321 3526

e. inquiry@skillsinsight.com.au

w. www.skillsinsight.com.au

Contents

User Guide modification history 5

Introduction **6**

About this Guide 6

Structure of this Guide 6

Section 1 Inside the updated qualification 7

Qualification 7

Qualification purpose 7

Why 'Primary Industries and Rural Operations'? 8

Regulatory and Equitable Compliance 9

Foundation Skills 10

Mapping the Foundation Skills Outcomes 10

Performance Features for ACSF Core Skills 10

Section 2 Assessing units in the updated qualification 13

Assessment requirements for units of competency 13

Assessing Units with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Content 13

Assessing 'respect' and 'acknowledgement' 14

Section 3 Packaging electives for industry pathways 15

Example of a training program for a person in Aquaculture 15

Example of a training program for a person in Ecotourism 16

Example of a training program for a person performing a range of tasks in a remote location 17

User Guide modification history

Implementation Guide Release Number	Implementation Guide Release date	Author	Comments
1.0	January 2027	Skills Insight	User Guide created to accompany *AHC21227 Certificate II in Primary Industries and Rural Operations* qualification in the AHC Agriculture, Horticulture and Conservation and Land Management Training Package R12.0

Introduction

About this Guide

This user guide is designed to assist Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in effectively delivering training for *AHC21227 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 AHC Companion Volume: Implementation Guides. 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** outlines the updated packaging rules, qualification purpose, title rationale, and Foundation Skills mapping.
- **Section 2** provides guidance on assessing units of competency, including units with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural content.
- **Section 3** provides sample elective packaging pathways for different industry and regional job roles.

Section 1
Inside the updated qualification

Qualification

AHC21227 Certificate II in Primary Industries and Rural Operations is the result of a comprehensive review of AHC21016 Certificate II in Rural Operations under the Training Package Organising Framework (TPOF) and Qualification Reform.

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 (6) 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.

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:



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 Local Government Areas (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

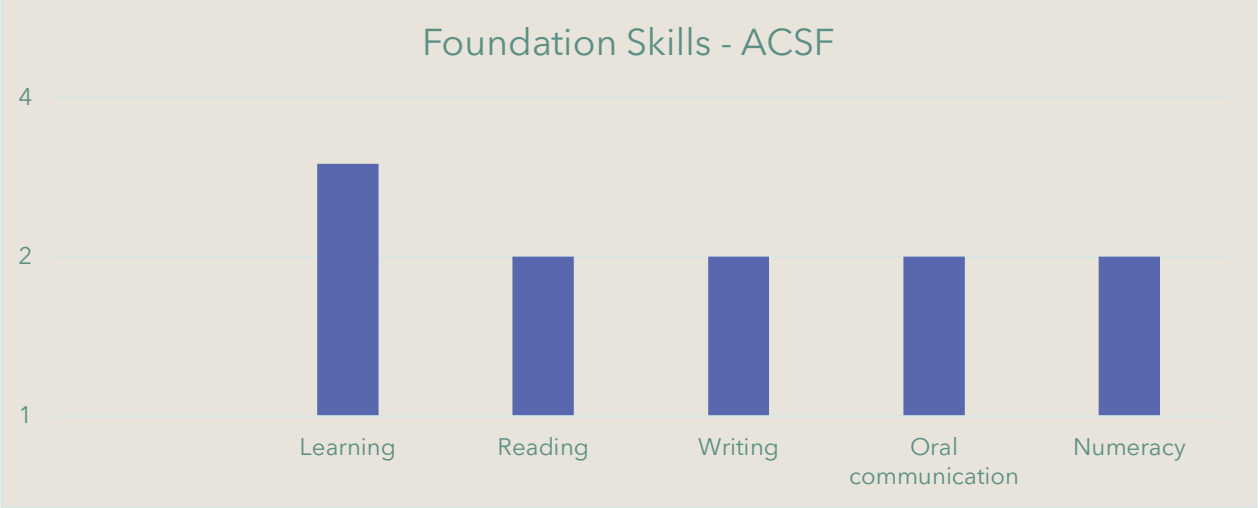
This combined title aligns with the Training Package Organising Framework (TPOF) requirements for purpose-led design. By explicitly removing location-based limitations, the qualification accommodates the true diversity of learner needs, delivery contexts, and regional workforce aspirations across Australia,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

Foundation Skills

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).



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

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)

Section 2
Assessing units in the updated qualification

Assessment requirements for units of competency

Specific assessment requirements—including required equipment, workplace or simulated conditions, and any specialist assessor expertise—are detailed within the Assessment Conditions of each individual unit of competency, whether selected from the listed electives or imported from another endorsed training package.

General information about Assessment Conditions in AHC units of competency can be found in the *AHC Companion Volume Implementation Guide Part 1*. For imported units, check the Companion Volume Implementation Guide for the training package the unit belongs to.

Assessing Units with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Content

Where this qualification includes or imports units of competency containing Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural content (such as units from the On Country Management or Cultural Sites Work sectors), Assessment Conditions specify additional cultural expertise and community consultation requirements for assessors.

Industry has established this mandatory requirement for RTOs assessing units with cultural content:

- 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.

Where applicable, this information is found in the Assessment Conditions for each unit.

In addition to the additional Assessment Conditions, there are terms that have been included in some units referring to the concepts of law and lore. In Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture, law refers to the legal systems and practices unique to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Lore is the passing down of knowledge and traditions, a way of life. The word 'law' may not be as widely used across Australia in these modern times; however, it is important to remember that it is still referred to in some cultures today.

Assessing 'respect' and 'acknowledgement'

Several units containing Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural content include Performance Criteria where an individual is required to 'respect' or 'acknowledge' (for example, referring to acknowledging the rights of individuals or acknowledging and respecting traditional knowledge). Difficulties may arise when considering how these might be assessed; however, acknowledgement and respect are an integral part of showing support for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture and can be demonstrated in the way an individual interacts with local Community members or Cultural Authorities. It can also be demonstrated through showing support for decisions being made by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples or groups and complying with those decisions.

Section 3
Packaging electives for industry pathways

To achieve this qualification, competency must be demonstrated in **12 units of competency**:

- **2 core units** plus
- **10 elective units**.

Elective units must ensure the integrity of the qualification's Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) alignment and contribute to a valid, industry-supported vocational outcome. The electives are to be chosen as follows:

- **6** from the electives listed in the qualification
- the remaining **4** may be selected from the electives listed in the qualification, or from any currently endorsed Training Package or accredited course.

The pathways below provide examples of how units might be packaged to suit different job roles, industries, and regional contexts. These examples are indicative only and are not exhaustive; Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) should consult with local employers and industry stakeholders to tailor elective selections to genuine workplace and community needs.

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

AHCWRK211 Participate in environmentally sustainable work practices

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

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

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's 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*:

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

SIFCBCR003* Dig graves manually

SIFCWHS001 Identify hazards and assess risks in a cemetery or crematorium

** Note: SIFCBCR003 Dig graves manually has a prerequisite requirement of SIFCWHS001 Identify hazards and assess risks in a cemetery or crematorium (included in this example pathway).*