



ACWA course accreditation guidelines



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SECTION 1

Accreditation guidelines

Introduction

ACWA accreditation signals quality assurance for potential students and indicates that students will have access to adequate and appropriate resources, including teaching staff. Graduates from an accredited course are work ready and well equipped to provide quality services to the community.

These guidelines outline the obligations and requirements to be met by education providers in order to gain and maintain accreditation for **diploma and higher education courses**.

The accreditation process involves assessing the course (content, duration etc) as well as the campus (teaching staff suitability, resources). For this reason, the accreditation applies to a course at a specific campus. If students complete the same course at a different non-assessed campus they cannot be considered to have undertaken an ACWA accredited course.

Accreditation will only be granted to courses at AQF diploma and higher level that have ASQA or TEQSA accreditation and meet the guidelines contained in this document.

Education providers will need to submit an application, pay the relevant fees and meet all requirements to obtain ACWA accreditation. To maintain this accreditation providers will need to meet the ongoing conditions including paying annual registration fees and submitting annual registration, renewal or course upgrade forms when applicable.

Requirements

These requirements identify the obligations with which a diploma or higher education course must comply to achieve and maintain ACWA accreditation. An education provider must agree to comply with the ACWA requirements in seeking to conduct an accredited course.

Where the purpose of the course is to provide skills for remote communities and/or specialised community services programs the provider may submit a variation request to ACWA.

1. Minimum qualification and duration

- a) The minimum qualification for which accreditation will be granted is an AQF Diploma delivered over a minimum of two academic years (18 calendar months) of full time study (or part-time equivalent).
- b) Courses which include a **certificate** level qualification packaged into the **diploma** delivered over a total of two academic years can be granted accreditation if the ACWA packaged qualifications requirements are met.
- c) Where a diploma course is delivered to employees in a community sector workplace the course must be delivered between 12 – 18 months. For additional requirements for workplace delivery see *Section 3. Mode of delivery*.
- d) Bachelor degree level courses must be delivered over a minimum of three academic years) of full time study (or part-time equivalent).
- e) Post-graduate courses must be delivered over a minimum of two academic years) of full time study (or part-time equivalent).

2. Core content

- a) An accredited course must include the following core content:
- (i) society (including individual and family roles)
 - (ii) community, social and political structure and function
 - (iii) individual human structure and function, including psychological, physical and social aspects
 - (iv) general and specialised welfare services and welfare systems
 - (v) work with individuals, families, groups and communities
 - (vi) communication, interpersonal and basic counselling skills
- b) A course must include a minimum of 400 hours of supervised fieldwork placement which complies with ACWA guidelines. See *Section 2 - Fieldwork placement requirements*.
- c) Where an education provider offers a Certificate IV packaged into the diploma the electives and fieldwork placement components must be delivered and assessed at AQF level 5 or above. See *Section 3 - Packaged qualifications policy*.
- d) ACWA can explore accreditation for a number of courses within the community services training package. For some of these courses ACWA has determined certain electives that need to be run for the course to allow students to meet practice standards. These are outlined below; any variation to the structures should be discussed with ACWA. If the name of the course is not listed, please contact ACWA to see if it falls under our scope.

Diploma of Community Services (general)

Total number of units – 16

Core units – 8

Elective units – 8

Core units

1. CHCCCS007 Develop and implement service programs
2. CHCCOM003 Develop workplace communication strategies
3. CHCDEV002 Analyse impacts of sociological factors on clients in community work and services
4. CHCDIV003 Manage and promote diversity
5. CHCLEG003 Manage legal and ethical compliance
6. CHCMGT005 Facilitate workplace debriefing and support processes
7. CHCPRP003 Reflect on and improve own professional practice
8. HLTWHS004 Manage work health and safety

Compulsory electives for ACWA accreditation

1. CHCDEV001 Confirm client developmental status
2. CHCCSM005 Develop, facilitate and review all aspects of case management
3. CHCCCS004 Assess co-existing needs
4. CHCADV002 Provide advocacy and representation services or CHCADV005 Provide systems advocacy services
5. CHCCDE010 Develop and lead community engagement strategies to enhance participation or CHCCDE011 Implement community development strategies or CHCCDE012 Work within organisation and government structures to enable community development outcomes
6. CHCCSL001 Establish and confirm the counselling relationship or CHCCSL002 Apply specialist interpersonal and counselling interview skills or CHCCSL003 Facilitate the counselling relationship and process or CHCCSL007 Supporting counselling clients in decision-making processes
7. Education provider's choice
8. Education provider's choice

Diploma of Community Services (Statutory & Forensic Child, Youth and Family Welfare)

Total number of units – 16

Core units – 8

Elective units – 8

Core units

1. CHCCCS007 Develop and implement service programs
2. CHCCOM003 Develop workplace communication strategies
3. CHCDEV002 Analyse impacts of sociological factors on clients in community work and services
4. CHCDIV003 Manage and promote diversity
5. CHCLEG003 Manage legal and ethical compliance
6. CHCMGT005 Facilitate workplace debriefing and support processes
7. CHCPRP003 Reflect on and improve own professional practice
8. HLTWHS004 Manage work health and safety

Compulsory electives for ACWA accreditation

1. CHCDEV001 Confirm client developmental status
2. CHCCSM005 Develop, facilitate and review all aspects of case management
3. CHCCCS004 Assess co-existing needs
4. CHCCSL001 Establish and confirm the counselling relationship
5. CHCMHS013 Implement trauma informed care
6. CHCPRT001 Identify and respond to children and young people at risk
7. CHCPRT003 Work collaboratively to maintain an environment safe for children and young people
8. CHCCDE011 Implement community development strategies)

Diploma of Community Services (Case Management)

Total number of units – 16

Core units – 8

Elective units – 8

Core units

1. CHCCCS007 Develop and implement service programs
2. CHCCOM003 Develop workplace communication strategies
3. CHCDEV002 Analyse impacts of sociological factors on clients in community work and services
4. CHCDIV003 Manage and promote diversity
5. CHCLEG003 Manage legal and ethical compliance
6. CHCMGT005 Facilitate workplace debriefing and support processes
7. CHCPRP003 Reflect on and improve own professional practice
8. HLTWHS004 Manage work health and safety

Compulsory electives for ACWA accreditation

1. CHCDEV001 Confirm client developmental status
2. CHCCSM005 Develop, facilitate and review all aspects of case management
3. CHCCCS004 Assess co-existing needs
4. CHCCDE010 Develop and lead community engagement strategies to enhance participation or CHCCDE011 Implement community development strategies or CHCCDE012 Work within organisation and government structures to enable community development outcomes
5. CHCCSL001 Establish and confirm the counselling relationship or CHCCSL002 Apply specialist interpersonal and counselling interview skills or CHCCSL003 Facilitate the counselling relationship and process or CHCCSL007 Supporting counselling clients in decision-making processes
6. CHCCSM004 Coordinate complex case requirements or CHCCSM007 Undertake case management in a child protection framework or CHCCSM006 Provide case management supervision
7. CHCCSM004 Coordinate complex case requirements or CHCCSM007 Undertake case management in a child protection framework or CHCCSM006 Provide case management supervision
8. Education provider's choice

Diploma of Alcohol and Other Drugs

Total number of units – 22

Core units – 16

Elective units – 6

Core units

1. CHCADV005 Provide systems advocacy services

2. CHCAOD001 Work in an alcohol and other drugs context
3. CHCAOD004 Assess needs of clients with alcohol and other drugs issues
4. CHCAOD006 Provide interventions for people with alcohol and other drugs issues
5. CHCAOD007 Develop strategies for alcohol and other drugs relapse prevention and management
6. CHCAOD008 Provide advanced interventions to meet the needs of clients with alcohol and other drug issues
7. CHCAOD009 Develop and review individual alcohol and other drugs treatment plans
8. CHCCCS004 Assess co-existing needs
9. CHCCOM006 Establish and manage client relationships
10. CHCDIV001 Work with diverse people
11. CHCMHS005 Provide services to people with co-existing mental health and alcohol and other drugs issues
12. CHCMHS007 Work effectively in trauma informed care
13. CHCPOL003 Research and apply evidence to practice
14. CHCPRP002 Collaborate in professional practice
15. CHCPRP003 Reflect on and improve own professional practice
16. HLTAID003 Provide first aid

Compulsory electives for ACWA accreditation

1. CHCDEV001 Confirm client developmental status
2. CHCCSM005 Develop, facilitate and review all aspects of case management
3. CHCCSL001 Establish and confirm the counselling relationship or CHCCSL002 Apply specialist interpersonal and counselling interview skills or CHCCSL003 Facilitate the counselling relationship and process or CHCCSL007 Supporting counselling clients in decision-making processes
4. CHCEDU001 Provide community focused health promotion and prevention strategies or CHCCDE004 Implement participation and engagement strategies
5. CHCMHS013 Implement trauma informed care
6. Education provider's choice

Diploma of Mental Health

Total number of units – 20

Core units – 15

Elective units – 5

Core units

1. CHCADV005 Provide systems advocacy services
2. CHCDIV001 Work with diverse people
3. CHCDIV002 Promote Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural safety
4. CHCMHS002 Establish self-directed recovery relationships
5. CHCMHS003 Provide recovery oriented mental health services
6. CHCMHS004 Work collaboratively with the care network and other services

7. CHCMHS005 Provide services to people with co-existing mental health and alcohol and other drugs issues
8. CHCMHS009 Provide early intervention, health prevention and promotion programs
9. CHCMHS010 Implement recovery oriented approaches to complexity
10. CHCMHS011 Assess and promote social, emotional and physical wellbeing
11. CHCMHS012 Provide support to develop wellness plans and advanced directives
12. CHCMHS013 Implement trauma informed care
13. CHCPOL003 Research and apply evidence to practice
14. CHCPRP003 Reflect on and improve own professional practice
15. HLTWHS004 Manage work health and safety

Compulsory electives for ACWA accreditation

1. CHCDEV001 Confirm client developmental status
2. CHCCSM005 Develop, facilitate and review all aspects of case management
3. CHCCSL001 Establish and confirm the counselling relationship or CHCCSL002 Apply specialist interpersonal and counselling interview skills or CHCCSL003 Facilitate the counselling relationship and process or CHCCSL007 Supporting counselling clients in decision-making processes
4. CHCEDU001 Provide community focused health promotion and prevention strategies
5. Education provider's choice

3. Mode of delivery

- a) A course must be delivered in a manner that, in the opinion of ACWA, will provide the learning outcomes of the specific units being delivered.
- b) If ACWA accreditation is sought for a course that is delivered online then the following requirements need to be met:
 - (i) 400 hours of supervised fieldwork placements must be offered as per the ACWA fieldwork placement requirements (refer to Section 2).
 - (ii) Courses that have specialised practice-based streams must have fieldwork placement outcomes that link directly with the field of specialisation.
- c) Where a diploma course is delivered to employees in a community sector workplace the following requirements must be met:
 - (i) The course duration must be between 12 - 18 months.
 - (ii) Instead of campus approval, the accreditation will be for the RTO providing the training and the normal accreditation requirements will need to be met.
 - (iii) The fieldwork placement must be for a minimum of 140 hours at a diploma skill level where the tasks, client group and supervision are different from the regular work undertaken by the student in their workplace.

- (iv) The fieldwork placement should not take place within the first six months of the course.

4. Staffing requirements

- a) **Course coordinator:** A course coordinator must have a qualification in community work, social welfare, human services, social work or the like and at least 3 years relevant industry experience. Their qualification must be equivalent to or higher than the course they coordinate.
- b) **Teaching staff:** Teaching staff of an accredited course must have a qualification in an area related to the units that they will be teaching and at least two years full time relevant industry experience. Education providers must ensure that staff teaching core units undertake at least 20 hours of continuing professional development per year.
- c) **Fieldwork placement coordinator:** The fieldwork placement coordinator must hold a qualification in welfare work, community services, human services, social work or the like and have at least 3 years broad industry experience. Their qualification must be equivalent to or higher than the course for which they coordinate placements.
- d) Education providers must ensure that staff teaching core units or supervising fieldwork placements retain industry currency.

5. Student requirements

- a) Student selection criteria must be transparent, fair and comply with legislation.
- b) Student numbers must not exceed available fieldwork placement opportunities.
- c) Education providers are responsible for ensuring that every student can undertake appropriate fieldwork placements which will comply with ACWA requirements. Between 20 – 30 students per class are allowed for the necessary tutorial, group discussion and workshop classes however class sizes for counselling subjects are to be limited to 15.
- d) Education providers must ensure adequate academic reference material is available and students have access to hard copy, and digital materials. All subject areas must be adequately covered:
- general social work/welfare/human services work, including field education guides
 - counselling and case management
 - community work, including radical social action
 - introductory psychology
 - introductory sociology
 - the Australian welfare system and welfare state, including social policy
 - ethics, values and professional practice
 - networking, communication, meetings, & group work
 - a selection of specialised areas such as aged, mental health, disabilities, etc;

- agency management
- understanding research
- legal aspects.

6. Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

- For the purposes of migration and membership assessments ACWA will accept a maximum of 40% RPL awarded from an education provider or course which is not ACWA accredited based on study.
- For the purposes of migration and membership assessments ACWA will accept a maximum of 40% credit transfer awarded from an education provider or course which is not ACWA accredited.
- For the purposes of migration and membership assessments ACWA will accept a maximum of 40% RPL awarded on prior work experience.

7. Packaged qualifications

Where a Certificate III or IV is packaged into a diploma course, accreditation can only be granted if the delivery strategy complies with the ACWA packaged qualifications policy. **Please read Section 3 - Packaged qualifications policy carefully.**

Terms and conditions

In order to receive ACWA accreditation courses must meet the accreditation guidelines. In order to maintain the accreditation education providers must meet certain ongoing requirements. These are outlined in full in *Section 5 - Terms and conditions* and need to be agreed to during the application process. **Please read Section 5 – Terms and conditions carefully.** Here are some of the key points.

1. Ongoing notification obligations

Providers of accredited courses must notify ACWA under the following circumstances:

- ACWA must be informed of any significant changes in an accredited course including changes to course leader, fieldwork coordinator, teaching staff, campus location, or any other aspect associated with delivery of the accredited course.
- Education providers must provide ACWA with an up-to-date staff matrix upon application as well as when any of the following events occur:
 - upon any significant change to staffing (for example, a change in the course coordinator position, fieldwork placement coordinator position or when more than 10% of teaching staff identified in the staff matrix change).
 - upon any significant change to unit allocations.

2. Audit

An accredited course may be the subject of an audit. **Please read *Section 4 - Audit policy* carefully.**

3. Provisional accreditation

An accredited course may have its status downgraded to provisional accreditation. **Please read *Section 5 - Terms and conditions* carefully.**

4. Course review and grievance procedure

An accredited course is required to comply with the course review and grievance procedure. **Please read *Section 5 - Terms and conditions* carefully.**



SECTION 2

Fieldwork placement requirements

Background

Fieldwork placements are an important part of a student's education allowing them to experience the frontline tasks of a community worker and providing the opportunity to develop the practical skills needed in the workplace. A fieldwork placement should allow a student to integrate theory into practice through a range of community and human services experiences.

Fieldwork placements are neither volunteer nor observational placements, as they involve:

- specific types of tasks;
- supervision by appropriately qualified supervisors; and
- contact between the education provider and the agency at which the fieldwork placement occurs.

Fieldwork placements must be conducted in accordance with these fieldwork placement requirements to ensure graduates from an accredited course are work ready and well equipped to provide quality services to the community.

This section outlines the obligations and requirements that must be met by education providers in relation to fieldwork placements to gain and maintain accredited course status.

ACWA reserves the right to vary the Fieldwork placement requirements from time to time.

Requirements

1. Responsibilities of education providers

Education providers must:

- a) Ensure there is a suitably qualified and experienced fieldwork placement coordinator
- b) Ensure that there are sufficient fieldwork placement supervisors for the numbers of students
- c) Ensure that qualification of the fieldwork placement supervisor is equivalent to or higher than the qualification level they are supervising and that this qualification is in a welfare or community work-related discipline
- d) Ensure that a fieldwork placement supervisor has three year's broad and relevant practical experience (post-qualification) in the community services industry
- e) Ensure that all enrolled students are provided with fieldwork placements which comply with the *Fieldwork placement requirements*.
- f) Arrange fieldwork placements within the designated course duration and in line with the course delivery structure

- g) Monitor and assess the appropriateness of each fieldwork placement, having regard to:
 - (i) the qualifications of the agency supervisor/s;
 - (ii) the capacity of the agency supervisor/s to provide adequate supervision to the student;
 - (iii) the progress of students undertaking the fieldwork placement;
 - (iv) any complaints made by the agency, agency supervisor/s or the student in relation to the fieldwork placement; and
 - (v) relevance and skill level of placement tasks in relation to professional community work practice.
- h) ensure the agency has sufficient information about these fieldwork placement requirements prior to the commencement of a placement.

2. Fieldwork placement specifics

Fieldwork placements must:

- a) Be for a minimum of 400 hours duration in two separate placements
- b) Not be less than 140 hours in duration in any one fieldwork placement
- c) Not occur in the first semester of the accredited course to ensure that students are exposed to some of the underpinning practical and theoretical concepts prior to their first fieldwork placement
- d) Occur at least one term apart to ensure that appropriate classroom instruction occurs to facilitate adequate integration of learning and practical experience
- e) Occur during normal agency hours when agency staff are present
- f) Not require a student to work more than eight placement hours per day
- g) Occur for a minimum of two full days per week
- h) Vary significantly, in context and role, between each placement (that is, students should not undertake similar tasks or be engaged with similar clients)
- i) Each occur in a different field of practice with a different agency supervisor
- j) Have a formal written agreement prepared which details the tasks, roles and responsibilities to be undertaken by the student; this agreement must be signed at the beginning of the placement and signed off at the end of the placement by the student, the agency supervisor, the task supervisor (if applicable) and the fieldwork placement supervisor.

3. Fieldwork placement supervision

To ensure that a student obtains the most benefit from a fieldwork placement, the education provider must ensure that the supervision in place at the agency is of an appropriate level as follows:

- a) The supervision of the student in the agency is to be oriented to the student's educational goals.
- b) The agency supervisor must work on the majority of the days that the student attends the agency, to ensure continuous monitoring of performance and professional progress.
- c) The agency supervisor must have an educational qualification in a welfare or community work-related discipline that is equivalent to or higher than the qualification level they are supervising plus a minimum of at least three years practical experience in a community services setting including at least 2 years post-qualification experience.
- d) For diploma courses, a task supervisor must have a minimum of certificate IV level qualification in community services and have at least three years of practical experience in a community services setting. For courses at bachelor degree and above, a task supervisor must have a minimum of diploma level qualification in community services and have at least three years of practical experience in a community services setting .
- e) An agency supervisor can only supervise up to three students under direct supervision at the same time if:
 - (i) they are employed on the days and times that the students are present;
 - (ii) supervision is a normal part of their role;
 - (iii) they have responsibility for the same duties and functions of the agency if students were not attending; and
 - (iv) no more than three students are on placement at the agency at the same time.
- f) An agency supervisor may only supervise more than three students where:
 - (i) the agency supervisor's role as defined by their position description is that of a student supervisor; and
 - (ii) where each student is assigned a suitably qualified task supervisor.

4. Liaison

Liaison visits provide a student with the opportunity to raise concerns or ask for external assistance in relation to the fieldwork placement, while also giving the agency an opportunity to provide feedback on the capabilities of the student.

- a) There must be a minimum of three agency liaisons per student for each fieldwork placement. Liaison may take a variety of forms and may include but is not limited to face-to-face meetings, video conferencing and phone. There should be at least one face-to-face, teleconferencing or video conference meeting.
- b) Face-to-face, teleconferencing and video conferencing must involve the student, the agency supervisor, the task supervisor (where applicable) and the fieldwork placement supervisor.
- c) The purpose of liaison is to discuss, facilitate and evaluate the educational progress of the student and to resolve any problems which may have arisen during a placement.

5. What students should gain from a fieldwork placement

Fieldwork placements should be used by students as an opportunity to experience different types of community work, while also using classroom-based learning in a workplace setting.

- a) Fieldwork placements should provide a student with the opportunity to demonstrate their increasing ability to operate as a 'work-ready' community work practitioner.
- b) A fieldwork placement should require a student to integrate theory and practice in the areas of:
 - individual and group assessment
 - early intervention
 - casework
 - case management
 - client services
 - program planning and development
 - family welfare and support work
 - advocacy and support work
 - community development work
 - community worksocial welfare work.
- c) To ensure that students obtain a hands-on experience of community welfare work, no more than 5% of the hours in each fieldwork placement may be occupied with non-community welfare related activities, such as:
 - administrative duties except where they directly relate to the student's position and responsibilities
 - food delivery
 - food preparation
 - personal care activities
 - domestic duties (including cleaning the agency premises)
 - respite
 - childcare
 - entertaining clients
 - recreational or leisure activities (without a focus on the psycho-social aspects of client engagement).

6. Credits/RPL placement

- a) Students may seek recognition of prior learning (RPL) for earlier or current work experience in relation to one fieldwork placement.
- b) Where no RPL or credit is obtained, one placement may be undertaken in a student's current workplace, however, it must comply with *Fieldwork placement requirements*.

7. Fieldwork placement reports

- a) Students will be required to complete a written report about each fieldwork placement. The fieldwork placement report must:
 - (i) clearly outline details of the tasks (duties and responsibilities) the student undertook whilst completing their fieldwork placement;
 - (ii) provide a reflective and analytical overview of the fieldwork placement;
 - (iii) provide evidence that the student has been able to correlate their classroom learning with their fieldwork placement experiences; and
 - (iv) be written in the student's own words and must not include any references from teachers, other students or from public documents such as agency websites, brochures etc., unless the student cites and acknowledges the reference source.
- b) Supervisors must not insist on changes to the report; however:
 - (i) Where the report reveals a deficiency in the fieldwork placement, the agency supervisor and/or fieldwork placement supervisor may make appropriate comments and indicate what action has been taken to remedy the deficiency and/or reporting inaccuracy.
 - (ii) The agency supervisor (including the task supervisor where applicable) and fieldwork placement supervisor and the student must each sign and date the report showing they have read it, and that it broadly captures the experience of the student on the fieldwork placement.

ACWA has developed a fieldwork placement completion form which education providers may use or adapt as a fieldwork placement report template.

8. Exceptions

- a) Any variation to the fieldwork placement requirements must have prior written approval from ACWA.
- b) A detailed written submission to vary the fieldwork placement requirements must be submitted to ACWA as soon as the need for a variation is discovered.

SECTION 3

Packaged qualifications policy

– AQF diploma level courses

Background

This section sets out the criteria by which ACWA will assess course accreditation applications where an education provider wishes to package a certificate qualification into a diploma.

ACWA recognises that high-quality education and training underpins high-quality service provision for individuals, families, groups and communities. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that course packaging meets the prescribed standard and does not diminish the quality of a diploma qualification.

Requirements

1. Certificate III into a diploma qualification

Courses that package a certificate III into an AQF level diploma qualification will be granted accredited course status, if all the following conditions are met:

- a) The Certificate III qualification is packaged with a Certificate IV qualification into an AQF level diploma
- b) The components of the diploma level qualification (as packaged) are delivered over a minimum of two (2) academic years full time study (or part time equivalent)
- c) The electives offered as part of the Certificate IV component of the package are at least at an AQF level 4
- d) Field placements conducted during the Certificate III component of the package are not counted towards the ACWA fieldwork placement requirement of 400 hours of suitable and relevant fieldwork which is required for the diploma qualification
- e) Each field placement is assessed at AQF level 5
- f) Recognition of prior learning for Certificate IV components is assessed at least at an AQF Level 4
- g) Recognition of prior learning for AQF level diplomas is assessed at least at an AQF level

2. Certificate IV only into a diploma qualification

Courses that only package the Certificate IV into a diploma may be granted accredited course status provided that:

- a) The diploma qualification (as packaged) is delivered over a minimum of two (2) academic years (or part time equivalent)
- b) The electives for Certificate IV are assessed at least at an AQF level 4
- c) Each field placement is assessed at AQF level 5
- d) Recognition of prior learning for Certificate IV is assessed at least at AQF level 4
- e) Recognition of prior learning for AQF level diploma is assessed at least at an AQF level 5

SECTION 4

Audit policy

Background

The section outlines the course and campus audit policy which is designed to ensure quality is maintained across ACWA accredited courses. Auditing is one of the measures ACWA has implemented to ensure the effectiveness and consistency of our approach to accreditation.

As part of the terms and conditions agreed upon by education providers, ACWA reserves the right to conduct an audit of arrangements relating to an accredited course. An accredited course is monitored throughout its accreditation period and ACWA reserves the right to audit a certain percentage of accredited courses each year.

Policy

An accredited course may be the subject of an audit conducted by ACWA during the course accreditation period. By accepting the course accreditation terms and conditions providers agree to participate in an audit should the need arise.

1. Scope

ACWA may conduct an audit of an education provider's arrangements relating to the accredited course and compliance with the obligations contained within the ACWA course and campus accreditation application, including but not limited to:

- a) Compliance with ACWA requirements;
- b) Fieldwork placements;
- c) Fieldwork placement agreements;
- d) Teaching staff qualifications and relevant industry experience; and
- e) Identification of student resources.

2. Provider identification and selection

The ACWA assessment team will identify providers for audit on the following basis:

- (i) Random selection
- (ii) Complaints relating to a breach of ACWA requirements received from students, recent graduates, teaching staff, or fieldwork placement agencies
- (iii) Breach of ACWA requirements identified by employers (especially those employers requiring ACWA accredited qualifications for employment)
- (iv) Breach of ACWA requirements identified by other bodies including regulatory bodies
- (v) Breach of ACWA requirements identified by ACWA staff or members

3. Audit advice

- a) ACWA will provide an education provider with at least seven (7) calendar days notice of its intention to conduct an audit. A further seven (7) calendar days notice can be negotiated in response to a reasonable request.
- b) The education provider will make available to ACWA's nominated auditors copies of all information requested by ACWA that relates to the conduct of the accredited course within seven (7) calendar days of such a request being made. A further seven (7) calendar days can be negotiated in response to a reasonable request.
- c) The education provider must nominate an authorised person and must ensure that the authorised person provides ACWA with written or verbal responses, as requested, to any question by the ACWA auditor.
- d) The education provider shall permit an officer or employee of ACWA to conduct an audit and to enter any of its business premises on any working day between the hours of 8:30 am and 5:00 pm for the purpose of inspecting records, copying records, holding discussions with the education provider's employees and/or holding discussions with students or other stakeholders during the course of such an audit.

4. Audit team and qualifications

- a) The ACWA audit team will comprise of a minimum of two audit officers.
- b) At least one audit officer will have qualification/s and direct practice experience in human services work.
- c) All audit officers conducting an audit of a diploma or above course will have relevant qualification/s at the same level or above the level of the course under audit.
- d) All audit officers of VET courses will have relevant qualification/s at a minimum of a VET diploma level.

5. Professional conduct

ACWA Audit team members will conduct themselves at all times in a professional, courteous manner in a spirit of goodwill and in accordance with the formal audit process, the ACWA Code of ethics and ACWA's privacy policy. All staff of the educational provider are expected to conduct themselves in the same professional and cooperative manner.

6. Responses to breaches of ACWA requirements

- a) A failure by the education provider to comply with any of the ACWA requirements may result in ACWA, in its absolute discretion, taking any of the following steps:
 - (i) Requiring the education provider to rectify the identified breach in a manner proposed by ACWA within twenty eight (28) calendar days of receiving a written notice from ACWA;
 - (ii) Replacing the education provider's accredited course status with provisional accreditation status;

- (iii) Suspending accredited course status and advising affected students of same
 - (iv) Revoking accredited course status and advising affected students of same; and/or
 - (v) Notifying state and federal regulatory authorities of any breach of these terms and conditions or ACWA requirements.
- b) If an accredited course status is suspended or revoked, that course shall be deemed, unless determined otherwise by ACWA, to have ceased holding accredited course status and any students completing their course during the period of suspension or revocation will be held not to have completed their qualification at an accredited course.
- c) If accredited course status is suspended or revoked, a notice will appear on the ACWA website advising stakeholders of the new status of the education provider.

7. Appeals

- a) The education provider may appeal against an outcome of an audit on the following grounds:
- (i) The provider disagrees with the outcome of the audit.
 - (ii) The provider wishes to highlight special circumstances that were not considered at the time of the application.
- b) An appeal must be lodged by the provider within twenty eight (28) calendar days of receiving an audit outcome from ACWA.
- c) The provider is required to complete an appeal form listing the reason for the appeal and to attach any additional relevant documentation.
- d) The provider is required to submit the above documents to the ACWA national office.
- e) Upon receiving an appeal request ACWA will, within five working days, acknowledge receipt of the request and provide details of the appeal process and the timeframe.

SECTION 5

Terms and conditions

Terms

The following definitions apply to ACWA course accreditation:

Accreditation Time Limit for a course shall mean the period for which ACWA determines that the course is entitled to hold accreditation. This is three years.

Accredited Course means a course which has been assessed by ACWA and has been accredited, in connection with a specified campus, as one which is designed to meet the training needs of the community worker profession.

ACWA means the Australian Community Workers Association Incorporated.

ACWA Course Accreditation Guidelines refers to the relevant ACWA Course and Campus Accreditation Requirements, as amended by ACWA from time to time.

ACWA Requirements includes, but is not limited to:- ACWA Course and Campus Accreditation Requirements (for relevant course) ; - ACWA Fieldwork Placement Requirements (for relevant course);- ACWA Code of Ethics;- Any other requirements published by ACWA relating to the conduct of an accredited course.

Agency means an organisation at which a student completes a fieldwork placement.

Agency Supervisor means an appropriately qualified employee of an agency who supervises a student engaged in a fieldwork placement with that agency.

Annual Course Registration shall refer to the annual process by which an education provider seeks to maintain its accreditation status.

Applicant means the education provider on whose behalf an application for course accreditation is submitted.

AQF means the Australian Qualifications Framework

Campus shall mean the campus location identified in the application.

Course shall mean the course which is the subject of a course accreditation application, and as taught at the identified campus.

Course Accreditation is the status bestowed on a course that has applied for and met ACWA assessment criteria for course accreditation.

Course Coordinator means the person employed by an education provider in relation to the conduct of an accredited course. The course coordinator is typically the main contact person for ACWA staff.

Course Re-accreditation shall refer to the process by which an education provider seeks to re-accredit the course following major changes.

Course Renewal refers to the process by which an education provider seeks to renew its accreditation on expiry of the accreditation time limit.

Course Upgrade shall refer to the process of applying for an upgrade of an accredited course from a previously approved Community Services Training Package (CSTP).

CSTP shall refer to the Community Services Training Package.

Direct Supervision means day-to-day task supervision of a student provided by an agency supervisor.

Education Provider includes a university, TAFE college and RTO.

Fieldwork Placement means the placement of a person at an agency for the purposes of gaining practical experience in the profession of community work.

Fieldwork Placement Coordinator means a suitably qualified employee of an education provider who is employed to coordinate and supervise the fieldwork placement arrangements of students.

Fieldwork Placement Supervisor means a suitably qualified employee of an education provider whose role is to supervise the fieldwork placements of students.

Packaged/packaging refers to the combination of two separate qualifications to provide a pathway to the higher qualification (also known as 'embedding' or 'nesting').

Provisional Accreditation shall mean a type of accreditation, which is less than course accreditation.

Relevant Industry Experience refers to employment in the community services sector at the required skill level. This may also refer to experience which directly relates to a unit of study being taught or supervised.

Statement of Accreditation refers to the Statement of Accreditation document provided by ACWA to an education provider upon the granting of accredited course status.

Student shall mean any person who has been enrolled in or has completed an accredited course.

Task Supervisor means a suitably qualified employee of an agency who is responsible for the 'day-to-day' supervision of a student engaged in a fieldwork placement.

Conditions (obligations) upon applying

1.1 When these obligations apply

The obligations contained in this clause and its sub-clauses shall apply if an applicant submits an application and up to the point at which the applicant may receive accreditation.

1.2. General obligations

- a) By submitting the application, the applicant is taken to have accepted the conditions contained in the application.
- b) The applicant must comply with all ACWA requirements as exist at the time of submitting the application to ACWA.
- c) The applicant shall pay the relevant non-refundable fee.
- d) The applicant must not hold itself out as conducting an accredited course, unless ACWA has provided such approval in writing.

1.3. Warranties

- a) The applicant warrants that information provided as part of the application is true and correct.
- b) The applicant agrees that ACWA may conduct any enquiries it considers relevant to confirm the accuracy of the information submitted in this application.
- c) The applicant agrees to provide all reasonable assistance to ACWA in undertaking a review of information submitted as part of the application.
- d) The applicant acknowledges that ACWA retains the discretion not to confer accredited course status on the applicant.

2. Obligations if accredited course status is granted

2.1 When these obligations apply

The obligations contained in this clause and its sub-clauses shall apply if an applicant receives accreditation and for the duration of the accreditation.

2.2. General obligations

- (a) If the applicant receives accreditation for the course and for the duration, the applicant will:
 - (i) be taken to have accepted the conditions contained in this application;
 - (ii) comply with all ACWA requirements which are in effect at the time of receiving accreditation and which may be in effect for the duration;

- (iii) pay any fee required by ACWA in relation to the processing of the application;
 - (iv) participate in the annual course registration;
 - (v) pay on an annual basis the annual course registration fee.
 - (vi) notify ACWA in writing within 14 days of becoming aware that it cannot comply with the obligations in the application or with any ACWA requirement.
- (b) ACWA agrees to ensure that all ACWA requirements are published or otherwise notified to an accredited course provider including any variations, deletions or modifications of ACWA requirements.

2.3. Duration of course accreditation

- (a) An accredited course will maintain accreditation subject to annual registration and the payment of the annual course registration fee refer to in clause 2.4(a).
- (b) An annual registration fee will be payable annually on the anniversary of the date that the course was accredited.

2.4 Annual course registration

- (a) The applicant will be required to apply for annual course registration and pay the annual course registration fee upon each anniversary of the course to maintain accreditation. ACWA will notify the applicant before the anniversary of the fees payable.
- (b) If the applicant has not paid the annual course registration fee within 28 days of the anniversary of the course receiving accredited course status, ACWA may, in its absolute discretion, suspend the accredited course status and remove details from ACWA's website.

2.5 Course re-accreditation

- (a) The applicant will be required to apply for course re-accreditation if the accredited course has undergone major changes including but not limited to, course re-structure, course name change etc.
- (b) The applicant will be required to pay the fee imposed by ACWA in respect of the new course accreditation.

2.6 Course upgrade

- (a) If the applicant has received accredited course status in relation to a CSTP course which has been superseded and wants to upgrade to the current training package, it must participate in a course upgrade.
- (b) If the applicant applies for a course upgrade, it will agree to pay such fees as are imposed by ACWA in relation to such an application.

2.7 Applicant's obligations regarding the provision of information

- (a) The applicant will be responsible for ensuring that the information they provide in relation to accreditation is updated on an ongoing basis.
- (b) Where ACWA has requested updated information or amendments to information already provided which relates to accreditation, the applicant will comply with ACWA's request within 14 days.
- (c) The applicant must not hold itself out as conducting an accredited course in circumstances where the applicant has not complied with annual course registration or where accreditation has been suspended, revoked or downgraded to provisional accreditation.

2.8 Outsourcing of obligations

- (a) If the applicant receives accreditation, it agrees that it will fulfil each of its obligations, as set out here, or any ACWA requirement, directly through its directors and employees and that it will not outsource any of the obligations without first obtaining the written approval of ACWA to enter into such an arrangement.
- (b) If ACWA's approval for an outsourcing arrangement is granted, such approval will be for 3 months, or a specified duration as identified by ACWA.

2.9 Audit

- (a) The applicant acknowledges that ACWA may conduct an audit of the applicant's arrangements relating to the accredited course and the accredited course's compliance with the obligations contained in the application, including but not limited to:
 - (i) Compliance with ACWA requirements;
 - (ii) fieldwork placements;
 - (iii) fieldwork placement agreements;
 - (iv) teaching staff qualifications; and
 - (v) identification of student resources.
- (b) ACWA will provide an applicant with at least 7 days notice of its intention to conduct an audit.
- (c) The applicant will make available to ACWA's nominated auditors copies of all information requested by ACWA that relates to the conduct of the accredited course within 14 days of such a request being made.
- (d) The applicant must nominate an authorised person and must ensure that the authorised person provides ACWA with written or verbal responses, as requested, to any question by the ACWA auditor.
- (e) The applicant shall permit an officer or employee of ACWA to conduct an audit and to enter any of its business premises on any working day between the hours of 8.30 am and 6.00 pm for the purpose of inspecting records, copying records, holding discussions

with the applicant's employees or holding discussions with the applicant's students during the course of such an audit.

2.10 Response to concerns

- (a) The applicant agrees that ACWA can raise any concerns with them, in person or by phone regarding any failures to comply with the obligations contained in the application or any other ACWA requirements as amended from time to time.
- (b) The applicant agrees that they will respond in writing to any concerns raised by ACWA within 28 days of being notified of such concerns.
- (c) ACWA may indicate by written notice that the applicant must rectify certain issues or problems.
- (d) Where ACWA requires an issue to be rectified by the applicant, the applicant agrees to remedy the issue within 28 days of being notified of the issue or problem.

2.11 Referral of concerns to relevant authorities

- (a) The applicant agrees that ACWA may, at its absolute discretion, refer concerns, issues or problems relating to accredited courses or courses with provisional accreditation to the applicable State or Federal agencies or authorities.

2.12 Indemnity

- (a) The applicant hereby covenants to indemnify and to keep indemnified ACWA against any claim or proceeding that is made, threatened or commenced by any student or by the applicant and any liability, loss (including consequential loss), damage or expense (including legal costs on a full indemnity basis) that the applicant or ACWA suffers as a direct or indirect result of ACWA's decision not to grant the course or any course, accredited course status, any breach, or any allegation of a breach, by the applicant of the conditions of the application or ACWA requirements, the suspension or revocation of accredited course status or imposition of provisional accreditation status, or the assessment by ACWA of a student for membership of ACWA or for migration purposes.
- (b) The applicant agrees to notify ACWA of any situation which may give rise to a claim to which the indemnity identified in point 2.12(a) relates.

2.13 Variations

- (a) An applicant may request that the obligations contained in this application or any ACWA requirement may be varied.
- (b) Such a request to vary the obligations contained in the application or any ACWA requirement must be made in writing to ACWA and must include any documents which would support the request to vary.
- (c) ACWA reserves the right not to grant a request to vary made under 2.13(b).

2.14 Course review and grievance procedure

- (a) The course review and grievance procedure can be activated when an individual or group has reason to believe that an accredited course is in breach of ACWA requirements.
- (b) An accredited course is required to ensure that students and staff are advised of the existence and specifics of a course review and grievance procedure through a notice on all noticeboards or intranet facilities used to convey messages about the accredited course.
- (c) Complaints relating to a breach of ACWA requirements can be made by any student, staff member, ACWA member, welfare agency, educational institution or education coordinating body.
- (d) Initial complaints may be made via email, letter, phone or in person.
- (e) Confidentiality of complaints will be maintained as far as possible; however, complainants must provide their name, contact phone number and any other contact details to ensure appropriate follow-up. If these details are not provided ACWA may not proceed with the complaint.
- (f) ACWA will respond to the complaint in the manner it sees fit and may determine in all the circumstances that no further action is warranted.
- (g) ACWA may determine to appoint a person to investigate a complaint.
- (h) If ACWA determines to investigate a complaint the original complainant may be asked to put the complaint in writing, and include any documentary evidence and references to witnesses or other support for the complaint, as well as any steps already taken to resolve the issues.
- (i) If ACWA determines to investigate a complaint the person investigating the complaint will communicate formally with the course leader of the accredited course setting out the details of the complaint and requesting a response.
- (j) Where ACWA determines that it is necessary to do so in relation to investigating the complaint, ACWA will:
 - (i) provide an applicant with at least 7 days notice of its intention to conduct an audit;
 - (ii) require the applicant to make available to ACWA's nominated auditors copies of all information requested by ACWA that relates to the complaint within 14 days of such a request being made;
 - (iii) require the applicant to permit an officer or employee of ACWA to conduct an audit to enter any of its business premises on any working day between the hours of 8.30 am and 6.00 pm for the purpose of inspecting records, copying records, holding discussions with the applicant's employees or holding discussions with the applicant's students during the course of such an audit.
 - (iv) require the applicant to nominate an authorised person;

- (v) require the applicant to ensure that the authorised person provides ACWA with written or verbal responses, as requested, to any question by the ACWA auditor.
- (k) Subject to the outcome of any investigation, ACWA will have the discretion to resolve an outcome. Such outcomes, may include:
- (i) A full audit of the accredited course;
 - (ii) the complaint is unwarranted and no action should be taken;
 - (iii) that a formal censure be issued to a party;
 - (iv) that the accredited course will have its accredited course status:
 - (A) downgraded to provisional accreditation;
 - (B) suspended; or
 - (C) revoked.
 - (v) Further information in relation to the imposition of provisional accreditation or the suspension or revocation of accredited course status can be obtained by contacting ACWA.

2.15 Responses to breaches of application obligations or ACWA requirements

- (a) The applicant and education provider covenant and agree that a failure by the applicant to comply with the obligations contained in the application or with any ACWA requirement may result in ACWA, in its absolute discretion, taking any of the following steps:
- (i) Requiring the applicant to rectify the identified breach in a manner proposed by ACWA within 28 days of receiving a written notice from ACWA;
 - (ii) Replacing the applicant's accredited course status with provisional accreditation status;
 - (iii) Suspending accredited course status and advising affected students of same;
 - (iv) Revoking accredited course status and advising affected Students of same; or
 - (v) Notifying State and Federal regulatory authorities of any breach of these terms and conditions or ACWA requirements.
- (b) If an accredited course status is suspended or revoked, that course shall be deemed, unless determined otherwise by ACWA, to have ceased holding accredited course status and any students completing their course during the period of suspension or revocation will be held not to have completed an accredited course.

2.16 Provisional accreditation

- (a) The provisional accreditation process allows a detailed and discretionary monitoring of courses and campuses for up to three months.
- (b) A course with accredited course status may be downgraded to provisional accreditation following a resolution of the Education Committee (EC) in circumstances:
 - (i) Where there are unresolved non-compliance issues following the instigation of the course review and grievance procedure;
 - (ii) Where there have been significant changes to the staffing levels, student numbers or other aspects of the accredited course without the applicant having consulted ACWA about those changes prior to them occurring; or
 - (iii) In any other case in which ACWA does not consider that the accredited course is providing an appropriate standard of education for the students.
- (c) If an applicant has its accredited course status downgraded to provisional accreditation, it will be notified by ACWA of this decision, including the date on which the downgrading of its status took effect.
- (d) If an applicant has its accredited course status downgraded to provisional accreditation, it will have up to three months to show evidence of improvements sufficient to alleviate ACWA's concerns.
- (e) If the education provider cannot show satisfactory evidence of improvement within three months, the Education Committee (EC) may resolve to suspend or revoke the education provider's accredited course status.

2.17 Suspension

- a) ACWA may, at its absolute discretion, suspend its accreditation of a course offered by the applicant at any time in any of the following circumstances:
 - (i) Where ACWA has requested the provision of information relating to the accredited course and the applicant has failed to provide such information;
 - (ii) Where ACWA has notified the applicant of issues which require improvement and the applicant has failed to rectify those issues;
 - (iii) Where ACWA has determined that the applicant has failed to comply with its obligations in relation to conducting an approved course;
 - (iv) Where the applicant has failed to submit an annual course registration application within 28 days of such an application falling due
 - (v) Where an applicant fails to pay such fees as required by ACWA in relation to course accreditation and annual course registration within 28 days of such fees falling due.

- b) If an applicant has its accredited course status suspended, it will be notified by ACWA of this decision, including the date on which the suspension took effect.
- c) Notification of the suspension of accredited course status may, at ACWA's absolute discretion, be published.

2.18 Revocation

- a) ACWA may, at its absolute discretion, revoke the accreditation of a course offered by the applicant at any time in any of the following circumstances:
 - (i) Where an applicant has repeatedly engaged in conduct which, in ACWA's reasonable view, is in breach of the obligations contained in this application and/or ACWA requirements;
 - (ii) Where an applicant has failed to remedy identified deficiencies during a period of suspension.
- b) If an applicant has its accredited course status revoked, it will be notified by ACWA of this decision, including the date on which the revocation took effect.
- c) Notification of the revocation of accredited course status may, at ACWA's absolute discretion, be published.
- d) If accredited course status is revoked, a new application cannot be submitted by the education provider for a period of 12 months from the date of the revocation.