

## Strengthening the Queensland Residential Care Workforce – Minimum Qualification Standards Information Sheet

UPDATE released October 2021 v8

The Minimum Qualification Standards (MQS) for all residential care staff and their direct supervisors working in Queensland (QLD) took full effect on 1 January 2019.

### Minimum Qualification Standards\*

**All residential care staff and their direct supervisors employed by licensed residential care services must:**

- hold or be enrolled in and working towards a recognised relevant qualification (*Refer to Appendix 1*). Staff may be enrolled as part of their recruitment process with the residential care service provider but must be enrolled prior to commencing any unsupervised direct care work with children and young people;
- for those staff currently enrolled, obtain the qualification within the timeframes determined by the relevant training authority; and
- complete the online Hope and Healing Framework Foundational Training prior to commencing unsupervised direct care work with children and young people.

\*Note, as part of the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (DCYJMA) response to the COVID-19 pandemic, some easing of the MQS requirements are available to funded residential care providers. For more information, providers should speak to their contract officer.

### Licensed Residential Care

Licensed residential care is provided at a premises (not a carer's own home) that is owned or leased for the specific purpose of accommodating children and young people in care. Licensed residential care services are delivered by non-government organisations, funded by DCYJMA and licensed under the *Child Protection Act 1999*. Services in scope include residential care services, supported independent living services, therapeutic residential care services and individual care arrangements to meet the specific care needs of children and young people. For the purposes of the MQS, Safe Houses are not considered a licensed residential care service.

### Residential Care Staff

The MQS will apply to all residential care staff and their direct supervisors, including agency staff, employed by organisations providing licensed residential care services in QLD, other than those persons employed, contracted or volunteering to provide services to children and young people that do not involve the provision of care or supervision of direct care staff. Staff, such as allied health professionals, Elders and advocates, are excluded from the MQS.

### Unsupervised Work

Unsupervised work refers to any type of work with children and young people where a staff member is not accompanied by either a direct supervisor or another staff member who is employed at a higher level and meets the MQS.

### Relevant Training Authority

Refers to Australian universities, TAFEs and registered training organisations.

## Compliance with Minimum Qualification Standards

At recruitment, applicants who are applying for a position as a residential care worker, who do not hold a recognised or preferred qualification listed in Appendix 1, are required to:

- enroll in the preferred or a recognised relevant qualification and attain the qualification within the timeframes determined by the relevant training authority; or
- seek recognition of prior learning against the preferred or a recognised qualification and finalise assessment within the timeframes determined by the relevant training authority ; or
- seek assessment of a qualification gained overseas (see below) prior to commencing employment and provide evidence of equivalency within six months of commencing work. If equivalence is not granted, a recognised qualification must be completed within nine months of a decision not to grant equivalence.

### Preferred qualification

A Certificate IV in Child, Youth and Family Intervention (Residential Care) is the preferred qualification for residential care staff who do not hold a recognised qualification as the skills and knowledge required are most relevant to the residential care setting.

### Timeframes for completion of qualification

Staff must obtain the qualification within the timeframes determined by the relevant training authority (this may include part-time arrangements as determined by the relevant training authority). In extenuating circumstances (for example where workers are on extended leave) the timeframe for completion can be extended for a reasonable period. An individual learning plan should be in place to identify the expected timeframe for completion, based on the staff member's needs.

### Recognition of prior learning

Residential care staff who hold a qualification not listed in Appendix 1, or who have relevant experience, may utilise recognition of prior learning processes in accordance with a relevant training authority's requirements to enable their previous training and/or work experience to be considered for the purpose of gaining credits towards the qualification.

### Assessment of overseas qualifications (including New Zealand qualifications)

The QLD Government's Overseas Qualification Unit (OQU) provides free general academic assessments of higher education and post-secondary school technical and vocational qualifications for QLD residents. Assessments are based on guidelines developed by the Australian Government and expressed in Australian Qualifications (AQF) terms. For further information on applying for an assessment, contact the department through the [OQU webpage](#), telephone 1300 369 935 or email [oqu@desbt.qld.gov.au](mailto:oqu@desbt.qld.gov.au).

### Other relevant qualifications

For other Australian qualifications not listed in Appendix 1, organisations wishing to have qualifications assessed as relevant can refer to the nationally recognised training search website ([Training.gov.au](#)) to determine currency and equivalency of Certificate IV and Diploma level qualifications consistent with the recognised qualifications in Appendix 1.

If an organisation assesses an Australian qualification as having the same components as any qualification listed in Appendix 1, the organisation's human resource (HR) manager can document their justification for approval on the staff member's HR file which will need to be made available to auditors upon request. Due to qualifications being superseded over time, new qualifications emerging, and differences across states, DCYJMA recognises this process as appropriate, however, clear internal processes should be well documented.

Organisations can email the Non-Family Based Care and Tertiary Support team, Investment and Commissioning, DCYJMA, at [Non-FamilyBasedCareandTertiarySupportMailbox@cyjma.qld.gov.au](mailto:Non-FamilyBasedCareandTertiarySupportMailbox@cyjma.qld.gov.au) should further assistance be required. Refer to Appendix 3 for further guidance.

## Appendix 1

### Recognised qualifications

While residential care specific vocational pathways are critical to the development of the workforce, it is recognised that residential care staff with qualifications in related disciplines bring knowledge, skills and experience that also provide a solid foundation for achieving outcomes for children and young people experiencing vulnerability. The table below outlines the qualifications that are recognised as meeting the MQS.

Minimum Qualification Standards for Residential Care Staff in QLD		
Preferred Qualification		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Certificate IV in Child, Youth and Family Intervention (Residential Care)</li> <li>➤ Additional Mandatory Training - Hope and Healing online Framework Foundations Training</li> </ul>		
<p>While the recognised qualifications support a number of skills relevant to residential care work, completion of additional mandatory training ensures a consistent baseline of skills and knowledge across the workforce.</p>		
Recognised Qualification		
Certificate IV		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Alcohol and Other Drugs</li> <li>➤ Community Development</li> <li>➤ Community Services</li> <li>➤ Community Welfare</li> <li>➤ Disability</li> <li>➤ Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care</li> <li>➤ Youth Justice</li> <li>➤ Youth Work</li> <li>➤ Mental Health</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Additional Mandatory Training - Hope and Healing Foundational Training E-Learning Modules</li> </ul>		
Diploma		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education</li> <li>➤ Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care</li> <li>➤ Alcohol and Other Drugs</li> <li>➤ Applied science (Community and Human Services)</li> <li>➤ Behavioural Science</li> <li>➤ Child, Youth and Family Intervention</li> <li>➤ Children Services</li> <li>➤ Community Development</li> <li>➤ Community Sector Management</li> <li>➤ Community Services</li> <li>➤ Community Services Coordination</li> <li>➤ Community Welfare and Development</li> <li>➤ Community Welfare Work</li> <li>➤ Counselling</li> <li>➤ Crime and Justice Studies or Justice Studies</li> <li>➤ Early Childhood Education and Care</li> <li>➤ Mental Health</li> <li>➤ Nursing</li> <li>➤ Psychology</li> <li>➤ Secure Services</li> <li>➤ Youth Justice</li> <li>➤ Youth Work</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Additional Mandatory Training - Hope and Healing Foundational Training E-Learning Modules</li> </ul>		
Degree (Australian Qualification Framework Level 7)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advocacy</li> <li>➤ Alcohol and Other Drugs</li> <li>➤ Allied Health</li> <li>➤ Applied Social Science or Arts - Psychology or Criminology</li> <li>➤ Behavioural Sciences</li> <li>➤ Child and Family Studies</li> <li>➤ Community Development</li> <li>➤ Community Welfare</li> <li>➤ Community Services</li> <li>➤ Counselling</li> <li>➤ Criminology</li> <li>➤ Disability</li> <li>➤ Education</li> <li>➤ Health Science</li> <li>➤ Human Services</li> <li>➤ Justice (Policy)</li> <li>➤ Mental Health</li> <li>➤ Nursing</li> <li>➤ Nursing &amp; Midwifery</li> <li>➤ Occupational Therapy</li> <li>➤ Paramedic Science</li> <li>➤ Psychology</li> <li>➤ Psychological Science</li> <li>➤ Social Work</li> <li>➤ Speech Pathology</li> <li>➤ Youth Justice</li> <li>➤ Youth Work &amp; Youth Studies</li> <li>➤ Youth Work</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Additional Mandatory Training - Hope and Healing Foundational Training E-Learning Modules</li> </ul>		
Other Qualifications		
<p>Graduate Certificate / Post Graduate Diploma / Masters in the following disciplines: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ All Psychological Studies</li> <li>➤ Clinical Child and Adolescent Studies</li> <li>➤ Counselling</li> <li>➤ Criminology</li> <li>➤ Education</li> <li>➤ Health Promotion</li> <li>➤ Positive Psychology</li> <li>➤ Nursing and/or Mental Health Nursing</li> <li>➤ Social Work</li> <li>➤ Teaching/Education</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Additional Mandatory Training - Hope and Healing Foundational Training E-Learning Modules</li> </ul>		

## Appendix 2

### Implementation requirements

The following table outlines the implementation requirements for individual employment types.

Employment type	Minimum Qualification Standards	Hope and Healing Foundation Training e-learning modules
Full time, part time and casual staff employed by the non-government organisation	<p>Hold or be enrolled in and working towards a recognised relevant qualification.</p> <p>For those staff currently enrolled, they must obtain the qualification within the timeframes determined by the relevant training authority, unless exempted due to extenuating circumstances.</p> <p>Staff can be enrolled as part of their recruitment process with the residential care service provider but must be enrolled prior to commencing any unsupervised direct care shifts.</p>	Must complete all modules prior to unsupervised direct care of young people.
Supervisor	<p>Hold or be enrolled in and working towards a recognised relevant qualification if they supervise residential care staff or work directly with young people.</p> <p>For those staff currently enrolled, they must obtain the qualification within the timeframes determined by the relevant training authority, unless exempted due to extenuating circumstances.</p>	Must complete all modules prior to unsupervised/direct care of young people.
Part time/Casual staff employed by the non-government organisation <b>after</b> 1 January 2019 (with exception of highly irregular, urgent emergent engagement of individuals)	<p>Hold or be enrolled in and working towards a recognised relevant qualification.</p> <p>For those staff currently enrolled, they must obtain the qualification within the timeframes determined by the relevant training authority, unless exempted due to extenuating circumstances.</p> <p>Staff can be enrolled as part of their recruitment process with the residential care service provider but must be enrolled prior to commencing any unsupervised direct care shifts.</p>	Must complete all modules prior to unsupervised/direct care of young people.
Staff engaged through a labor hire company	<p>Hold or be enrolled and working towards a recognised relevant qualification.</p> <p>For those staff currently enrolled, they must obtain the qualification within the timeframes determined by the relevant training authority, unless exempted due to extenuating circumstances.</p> <p>Staff can be enrolled as part of their recruitment process with the residential care service provider but must be enrolled prior to commencing any unsupervised direct care shifts.</p>	Must complete all modules prior to unsupervised/direct care of young people.
Staff recruited to support a time-limited Immediate Needs Placement and Support Arrangement funded from Child Related Costs – Placement and Support (CRC- PaS) <b>after</b> 1 January 2019 and within Child Safety Licensing (CSL) requirements	<p>Must hold or be enrolled in and working towards a minimum qualification within six weeks of placement commencing.</p> <p>Note – new Business Rules for Individualised Placement and Support packages are being piloted in a range of locations throughout QLD with implementation expected from April 2019.</p>	Must complete all modules within six weeks of placement commencing.
Placements outside of scope of CSL requirements	Placements outside of scope of CSL requirements will not be required to hold or be working toward a minimum qualification but must have other safeguards in place.	Not required to complete modules for these placements.

## Appendix 3

### Process to seek further assistance from the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs

Organisations can email the Non-Family Based Care and Tertiary Support team, Investment and Commissioning, DCYJMA, at [Non-FamilyBasedCareandTertiarySupportMailbox@cyjma.qld.gov.au](mailto:Non-FamilyBasedCareandTertiarySupportMailbox@cyjma.qld.gov.au) should further assistance be required in determining if a residential care worker applicant meets the MQS guidelines.

Please note the following process:

- 1) The Non-Family Based Care and Tertiary Support team is unable to accept direct email requests from residential care worker applicants.
- 2) The organisation is required to provide the Non-Family Based Care and Tertiary Support team with a clear rationale regarding their assessment and justification as to why the applicant meets the necessary MQS guidelines and that their qualification is similar to the Certificate IV in Child, Youth and Family Intervention (Residential Care). The organisation is required to provide the following completed table which should be used as a guide to record the subjects /units that are comparable to the required certificate.
- 3) Please include the applicant's name in the subject heading of the email.

<b>Cert IV in Child, Youth and Family Intervention (Residential Care)</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Qualification(s):</b>	
<b>Overview</b> Refer to <a href="#">TAFE QLD</a> for further detail and guideline.	
Core units	Applicant's qualification(s) units/subjects—assessed by the organisation
CHCCCS006 - Facilitate individual service planning and delivery	
CHCCOM002 - Use communication to build relationships	
CHCDEV001 - Confirm client developmental status	
CHCDIV001 - Work with diverse people	
CHCDIV002 - Promote Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural safety	
CHCLEG001 - Work legally and ethically	
CHCPRT001 - Identify and respond to children and young people at risk.	
CHCPRT003 - Work collaboratively to maintain an environment safe for children and young people.	
CHCPRT005 Work within a practice framework	
HLTWHS001 Participate in workplace health and safety	
Elective units	
Refer to <a href="#">TAFE QLD elective</a> unit's course overview.	