

## Clinical Assistants vocational education and training incentive

**Policy Number:** G22 (QH-POL-453)

**Publication date:** November 2021

**Purpose:** To outline the entitlement and process for the vocational education and training (VET) incentive as outlined in Clause 69 of the *Health Practitioners and Dental Officers (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No.3) 2019*.

**Application:** The following provisions apply to permanent, temporary and casual Queensland Health clinical assistants for clinical assistants at classification levels CA2 to CA5.

**Delegation:** The 'delegate' is listed in the relevant Department of Health Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual, or Hospital and Health Services Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual, as amended from time to time.

### Legislative or other authority:

- *Health Practitioners and Dental Officers (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 3) 2019* (HPDO3)

### Related policy or documents:

- Salary Advancement HR Policy C16 (QH-POL-219)
- Clinical assistant endorsed qualifications list for VET incentive

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## 1 Policy statement

Queensland Health recognises the value of clinical assistants who obtain vocational education and training (VET) qualification(s) in providing a highly skilled workforce and improved service delivery. This policy enables Queensland Health to acknowledge and recognise clinical assistants with relevant and eligible qualifications through the VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or incentive.

## 2 Eligibility for VET incentive

The VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or incentive is for clinical assistants from CA2 to CA5 who obtain eligible AQF qualification(s) relevant to their role. There are two levels of qualifications:

- A level 1 qualification, which applies to employees classified at CA2 and CA3 levels, is a Certificate III.
- A level 2 qualification, which applies to employees classified at CA2 to CA5 levels, is a Certificate IV, or higher-level qualification as determined to be eligible.

The VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or incentive includes the accelerated pay-point advancement and the allowance.

## 3 Eligible qualifications

A complete list of eligible Certificate III and IV Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) qualifications for each role type can be found in the clinical assistant endorsed qualifications list for VET incentive (the list). An employee with a qualification relevant to their role type in accordance with the list, will automatically meet the eligibility requirements for an application for the VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or incentive.

Qualifications may be added to the list of eligible qualifications following approval by the Health Practitioners and Dental Officers Consultative Group (HPDOCG).

An AQF qualification higher than a Certificate IV is not automatically deemed to meet the VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or incentive eligibility and relevance requirements. Where an application is received for a qualification higher than a Certificate IV, the delegate will forward the application to the HPDO Secretariat for review of eligibility. If previously assessed by HPDOCG the Secretariat will provide a response on eligibility, or if not previously assessed the application will be assessed by HPDOCG. To note, where deemed eligible to receive VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or incentive, an AQF qualification higher than a Certificate IV will not be added to the list.

If the qualification is referred to HPDOCG and the qualification is endorsed, payment of the allowance is from the date the employee provided a completed application to their line manager.

## 4 Adding to list of eligible qualifications

A qualification may be added to the list of eligible qualifications following approval by the HPDOCG. An AQF qualification higher than a Certificate IV will not be added to the list.

Proposed additions to the list of eligible qualifications are required to be submitted to the HPDOCG for assessment and determination.

Assessment of an application (Attachment One) will occur during the HPDOCG monthly meeting after the application has been received. The HHS/Division is to contact the employee directly and advise them in writing of the outcome of their application once a determination has been made, with unsuccessful applications to contain the rationale behind the determination. The endorsed qualification list will be updated where the HPDOCG has determined a VET level qualification to meet eligibility and relevance requirements for a specified role type.

## 5 Qualification not recognised under the AQF framework

An employee who possesses qualifications that are not recognised under the AQF may seek recognition of prior learning (RPL) or recognition of current competencies (RCC) from a Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

Costs associated with recognition and award of qualifications by a training provider are the individual employee's responsibility, unless otherwise agreed between Queensland Health and the employee. E.g. An employee with a trade-based qualification may seek to have this qualification AQF assessed and then proceed to apply for the VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or allowance. An employee may apply to the Clinical Assistant Training Fund to cover the costs of the recognition.

Where the RPL or RCC are given for a qualification listed under their role type in the list, the qualification is automatically deemed to meet the eligibility requirements for that role type and the employee can apply for the VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or allowance.

Where the RPL or RCC are given for a qualification not listed under their role type in the list the delegate will forward the application to the HPDO Secretariat for review of eligibility, and if required will be assessed by HPDOCG.

## 6 Overseas qualifications

When an employee possesses an overseas qualification, it is the responsibility of the employee to provide a conversion statement, including a list of all completed subjects in English, with their application to their line manager.

When an employee possesses an overseas qualification, it is the responsibility of the employee to provide an assessment statement, and copies of certified relevant documents, with their application to their line manager. The employee is to contact their local Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT) office to attain such a statement at their own expense.

Where the conversion statement outcome is at eligible AQF level, the qualification will need to be reviewed to ensure the completed subjects are applicable to the relevant discipline. The delegate will forward the application to the HPDO Secretariat for review of eligibility. If previously assessed by HPDOCG the Secretariat will provide a response on eligibility, or if not previously assessed the application will be assessed by HPDOCG.

If deemed equivalent, the employee can apply for the VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or incentive.

Where the conversion statement does not match a qualification listed under their role type in the list the delegate will forward the application to the HPDO Secretariat for review of eligibility, and if required will be assessed by HPDOCG.

## 7 Documentation of qualifications

The HHS/Division must ensure that a certified copy of the eligible qualification is provided as evidence that the employee has been awarded the full qualification before accessing pay point advancement or paying the allowance. Information provided by the employee that demonstrates partial completion or a particular component of a qualification is not acceptable.

HHSs/divisions, specifically the line manager, is to ensure that the qualification for which an employee is approved to receive the VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or allowance, is properly recorded in the payroll system.

A certified copy of the qualification must be retained locally.

## 8 Statements of attainment/achievement and certificate of proficiency

A statement of attainment is not acceptable, as this does not indicate the successful completion of an entire qualification. Any employee who has only provided the employer with a statement of attainment must produce further documentation to support their claim for incentives under this policy.

A statement of attainment or statement of achievement from a training course such as an in-house program or from organisations not registered as an RTO, is not acceptable and is not recognised for this policy's purpose.

## 9 Roles with mandatory qualification requirements

The clinical assistant stream includes some role types with mandatory qualification requirements at the Certificate III and IV levels. These mandatory requirements are published in the Clinical Assistant Role Manual, which has replaced the Operational Services Manual for clinical assistant roles and is currently under review by the HPDOCG.

## 10 Accelerated pay point advancement

Employees at levels CA2 to CA5 who commence employment with, or subsequently obtain, an eligible qualification, but who have not yet reached the maximum pay point of their classification will be entitled to advancement of one increment. Such employees will retain their pre-application (existing) increment date and will continue to increment on this date annually until they reach the maximum pay point in their level. The advancement will take effect, following an assessment of the application from the employee, from the date the employer received the application. If new employees hold an eligible qualification an application should be submitted as part of the recruitment paperwork. Providing an application is submitted within two months of commencement, the advancement will take effect from their first day of employment.

After completing 12 months of service at the maximum pay point, employees will be paid the applicable VET incentive allowance.

Employees who have advanced a pay point under the above provisions are not eligible for any further advancement in their current classification level i.e. obtaining a second qualification listed on the endorsed qualifications list will not entitle an employee to a second pay point advancement.

## 11 VET incentive allowance

An eligible full-time or part-time employee who has been at the maximum pay point of their classification for 12 months and who holds an eligible level 1 or level 2 qualification becomes entitled to receive the allowance. The allowance is to be paid on the following basis:

- The **level 1 allowance** for CA2 and CA3 employees with a Certificate III qualification is calculated based on 2.5% of CA3.4, or
- The **level 2 allowance** for CA2 to CA5 employees with a Certificate IV or higher qualification is calculated based on 4.0% of CA3.4

An employee who qualifies for the VET incentive is entitled to receive the allowance from the date the approved application is submitted to their line manager, but no earlier than the date the clinical assistant reached 12 months at the maximum pay point.

In the case of a casual clinical assistant, the employee must have 12 months' service or 1,200 hours service, whichever is the greater.

If an employee possesses an AQF eligible qualification, but the employee has not been on the top increment for 12 months or as required, documentary evidence of the qualification is to be recorded in myHR. After the required time has elapsed the payroll system will automatically apply the VET incentive allowance.

The allowance is an all-purpose allowance, i.e. the allowance attracts shift penalties, weekend penalties, overtime, leave payments, and leave loading. Leave payments and loading attract payment only when the allowance is being paid when taking the leave.

The allowance is included in superannuable salary, is paid through the payroll system and taxed as part of gross income.

The VET incentive allowance will cease if they progress to a CA3 advanced pay point as per cl53 of HPDO3.

As a transitional arrangement only, clinical assistants who at the date of certification (18 August 2020) of *Health Practitioners and Dental Officers (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No.3) 2019* hold an eligible relevant qualification, but who have not yet served 12 months at the top paypoint, will become eligible for payment of the applicable vocational education and training incentive allowance at this date.

## 12 Entitlement upon higher duties or promotion

A clinical assistant in receipt of the accelerated pay point advancement, or the allowance, who undertakes higher duties or is appointed to a higher level role at either the CA3, CA4 or CA5 levels:

- is immediately eligible for the accelerated pay point advancement at the higher classification level;
- becomes eligible to receive the VET incentive allowance once they have 12 months of service at the top pay point of the higher level;

provided the qualification remains eligible and relevant to the higher-level position.

Clinical assistants who receive a VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or allowance are **not** entitled to retain the VET incentive allowance (as per section 11) or the accelerated pay point advancement (as per section 10) when relieving in or appointed to positions classified at CA6 and above. These employees are to resume payment of the VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or allowance if they revert to a position at the lower classification level.

### 13 Entitlement where more than one qualification

Employees in receipt of the accelerated pay point advancement and/or allowance for a level 1 qualification are:

- Not entitled to an additional accelerated pay point advancement or allowance for obtaining a second level 1 qualification,
- Not entitled to an additional accelerated pay point advancement for obtaining a level 2 qualification,
- May apply to advance to the level 2 allowance for obtaining an eligible level 2 qualification relevant to their role.

Employees in receipt of the accelerated pay point advancement and/or allowance for a level 2 qualification are:

- Not entitled to an additional accelerated pay point advancement or allowance for obtaining a second level 1 or 2 qualification.

### 14 Process for applying for VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or allowance

- The employee receives an eligible AQF qualification as listed in the clinical assistant endorsed qualifications list and completes the clinical assistant application to recognise the qualification form.
- The application is to be accompanied by a certified copy of the qualification being sought for recognition.
- The employee provides the application and certified copy of the qualification to the line manager.
- The line manager provides the employee with a date stamped written acknowledgement (preferably email) that the application has been received.
- The line manager provides the employee with the outcome of the application in writing.

### 15 Approval process

The line manager confirms the qualification is eligible as listed for the relevant role type, and signs the application after sighting and retaining a copy of the certified qualification. The application is then forwarded to the appropriate delegate for approval under the relevant delegations/sub-delegations manual.

The approved application and supporting documentation is then forwarded to Payroll Services for processing. The delegate is in accordance with the applicable HR Delegations Manual.

### 16 Date of commencement of the VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or allowance

For all new appointments following the publication of this policy, where the qualification is mandatory for appointment to the role, the employee receives the applicable VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or allowance from the date of commencement in that role.

All documentation is to be date stamped upon receipt. An employee is entitled to receive VET incentive accelerated pay point advancement or allowance from the date a completed application is provided to the line manager. Applications must be assessed and determined within two months of being received.

<b>Anticipated VETI application assessment timeframes</b>	
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Employee to complete application and submit to line manager along with all supporting documentation (including certified copy of qualification and English translations if required).	Date stamped by line manager upon receipt, timeframe commences.
Line manager to assess application, and through their local HR, either submit to payroll or refer to HPDOCG.	Within 2 weeks of receipt.
HPDCOCG to assess qualification.	At next scheduled meeting following referral from line manager.
HPDO Secretariat to respond with outcome of assessment.	Within 1 week of HPDOCG meeting.
Line manager to notify employee of outcome and if required, submit application to payroll	Within 1 week of HPDO Secretariat's advice.

## 17 Qualification no longer relevant/eligible

A qualification will cease to be relevant/eligible when an employee acts in or is appointed to a different role type from the one in which they were approved to receive the VET incentive allowance and the qualification is not relevant/eligible (i.e. according to the endorsed qualifications list). In such cases, the VET incentive allowance will cease.

The HHS/Division provides the employee with written advice of their intent to cease the VET incentive allowance, stating the reason the qualification is believed to be no longer relevant/eligible. In the case of merit appointments, the interview panel provides the employee with written advice of their intent not to recognise a VET qualification, stating why it is deemed no longer relevant/ eligible to the position.

When employees do not agree with the HHS/Division or the interview panel, they can dispute this matter. The dispute process is outlined in the *Health Practitioners and Dental Officers (Queensland Health) Agreement (No. 3) 2019* (refer to clause 13, Prevention and Settlement of Disputes Relating to the Interpretation, Application or Operation of this Agreement).

In addition, the HHS/Division or interview panel is to provide written advice to Payroll Services of the date the allowance is to cease, including a copy of the letter provided to the employee.

The date of discontinuing any allowance is when the HHS/Division or interview panel formally advised the employee in writing.

## 18 Grievance procedure

Normal grievance procedures apply to this policy. Refer above.

## 19 Disciplinary processes

When an employee is subject to a disciplinary process, the subject of the retention of both accelerated pay point advancement and/or allowance must be addressed in accordance with the Discipline HR Policy E10.

## 20 Retention of payment on deployment

When an employee is subject to the deployment process, they retain their original increment and allowance subject to the salary maintenance provisions applicable to surplus employees.

## Definitions:

<b>AQF</b>	A unified system of national qualifications in schools, vocational education and training and the higher education sector.
<b>Competency</b>	The consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace. It embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments.
<b>Delegate</b>	A delegated officer may undertake actions in accordance with the conditions of the delegation and processes stated in relevant legislation, industrial instruments, directives, policies and procedures, as they think necessary or expedient to the proper exercise or discharge of the power. An action undertaken by a delegate acting in accordance with a delegation has the same force and effect as if the action had been undertaken by the Director-General.
<b>Recognition of current competencies (RCC)</b>	Recognition of current competency is a specific form of RPL, it applies where an individual is required to maintain current competency in one or more units of competency linked to a license or regulatory requirement.
<b>Recognition of prior learning (RPL)</b>	Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is about recognising the skills and knowledge gained through work and life experiences, and the process of evaluating the level of skill and knowledge against an endorsed industry competency standard or outcomes specified in an AQF accredited qualification or course.
<b>Registered Training Organisation (RTO)</b>	Registered Training Organisations (RTO) are training providers and assessors registered by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) or a state regulator to deliver Vocational Education and Training (VET) services.
<b>Skill sets</b>	A skill set is a single unit of competency or combination of units of competency from one or more training packages that link to a licence or regulatory requirement, or defined industry need.
<b>Vet Incentive</b>	The vocational education and training incentive acknowledges and recognises clinical assistants from CA2 to CA5 who obtain relevant vocational education and training qualification(s), thus providing a skilled workforce and improved service delivery
<b>Vet Incentive Allowance</b>	The vocational education and training incentive allowance is paid depending on the level of employee's qualification and is split in two categories, level 1 qualification allowance and level 2 qualification allowance.

## History:

November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attachment One updated</li> </ul>
August 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed as a result of the certification of the <i>Health Practitioners and Dental Officers (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No.3) 2019</i>.</li> </ul>



# Attachment One – Consideration of qualification for VET incentive form

The following form is to be submitted to [HPDOCG Secretariat](#), to request consideration:

- to add an additional VET qualification (Certificate III or IV) to the qualification list; or
- of eligibility for a qualification higher than a Certificate IV.

## Qualification details

Name:	
Code:	
Core units:	
Institution:	
Qualification major (if applicable):	
Eligible Clinical Assistant position/s:	
Is the qualification currently on the list:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If no, state the reason the qualification should be added/deemed eligible:	

## Request details

Clinical Assistant's name:	
Line manager name:	
Delegate name:	
Local HR contact:	

## HPDOCG Outcome

Outcome:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Not Approved
Reasoning for decision:	

## HPDOCG Secretariat notification

Date outcome advice sent to Local HR Contact/Delegate:	Date: ___/___/_____
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