



# ACCI POLICY STATEMENT

## EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS POLICY

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### PRINCIPLES OF EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS POLICY

Australia has undergone a decade of change and economic growth with a strong focus on productivity improvement. Australian enterprises, in recognition of the economic challenges and globalisation, have implemented a range of strategies to support growth and increase their international competitiveness. These strategies have included multiskilling, greater automation and workforce restructuring.

Australia is an international player in the knowledge economy and the need to continue building Australia's capacity to effectively operate in the 'global knowledge-based economy' is integral to its economic performance. There are a series of government initiatives targeting research and development, commercialisation, venture capital and technology diffusion.

The Australian community must understand the broad issues underpinning globalisation and the knowledge economy but more particularly the need to create a community equipped to understand and participate in ongoing change. Education and training providers will have a key role in equipping the community for this challenge.

Enterprises continue to focus on adaptation, cost reduction, increased productivity and new markets and/or new products and services. Enterprise choices with regard to recruitment and training are largely being driven by these business strategy directions. In this environment, there is an increasing requirement for employees to be able to support increased competitiveness, innovation, flexibility and client focus.

Enterprises are increasingly seeking a more highly skilled workforce where the generic and transferable skills are broadly distributed across the organisation.

There has been broad agreement that all young people need to recognise a set of personal attributes and skills that will prepare them for both employment and further learning. It is also recognised that the ongoing employability of individuals is dependent on their having a set of relevant skills, as well as a capacity to learn new things. The *Employability Skills Framework* is a comprehensive framework of these skills. It shall be recognised that such a Framework needs to be relevant to small, medium and large enterprises and able to support the future needs of Australian industry.

### POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of *Employability Skills Framework* were based on the need for:

- the provision of a two-tiered response to attributes and underpinning skills required for effective participation in the labour market;
- the need for any Framework to allow for the diversity of occupations, entry and ongoing development pathways and differences in types of engagement in the labour market;
- an understanding that general education from kindergarten to year 12 also has an important role which supplements any agreed Framework;
- the recognition that the Mayer Key Competencies were still sound but required some revision;

- the importance of a nationally consistent response against an agreed framework across the three education and training sectors; and
- the need to ensure clearly articulated outcomes against skill components.

## THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

The definition of employability skills is:

*“Employability skills are the skills required to gain employment or establish an enterprise, but also to progress within an enterprise or expand employment capability, so as to achieve one’s potential and contribute successfully to enterprise strategic directions.”*

The *Employability Skills Framework* incorporates the following personal attributes that contribute to overall employability:

- loyalty;
- commitment;
- honesty and integrity;
- enthusiasm;
- reliability;
- personal presentation;
- commonsense;
- positive self-esteem;
- sense of humour;
- balanced attitude to work and home life;
- ability to deal with pressure;
- motivation; and
- adaptability.

There is no doubt that enterprises see the inclusion of these attributes as a new and essential component of employability skills.

The key skills identified in conjunction with the personal attributes to make up the *Employability Skills Framework* are:

- **communication** skills that contribute to productive and harmonious relations between employees and customers;
- **team work** skills that contribute to productive working relationships and outcomes;
- **problem-solving** skills that contribute to productive outcomes;
- **initiative and enterprise** skills that contribute to innovative outcomes;

- **planning and organising** skills that contribute to long-term and short-term strategic planning;
- **self-management** skills that contribute to employee satisfaction and growth;
- **learning** skills that contribute to ongoing improvement and expansion in employee and company operations and outcomes; and
- **technology** skills that contribute to effective execution of tasks.

There is a need for the *Employability Skills Framework* to apply across the education, training, higher education and employment sectors. Industry must be involved in the further development and implementation of the Framework in each sector.

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