BRIEFING NOTE FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
THE TASMANIAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

SUBJECT: Basic Computing TQA 1, size value 10.

PURPOSE: To seek accreditation of the proposed course.

BACKGROUND: At its meeting of 5 December 2012 (Agenda Item 3.2) the Authority noted that accreditation for Computing TQA level 1 and 2 courses were to expire at the end of 2013. At its meeting of 3 April 2013 (Agenda Item 2.4) the Authority noted the following issue related to the Computing TQA 1 course:

• the need/use of ITC110109 requires further investigation. The course was designed for use by a small number of students in year 11/12 with little or no background in computing. It was anticipate at the time of writing that new arrival/refugee students would make up the majority of the cohort. In 2012, 117 qualifications were issued in the course. Who were these learners? Is the course meeting their needs? Is it being used as a ‘fall-back’ qualification for those who fail to demonstrate ‘Pass’ standards at TQA 2 Computing?

The Authority adopted the recommendation that:
the Office undertake further investigation (including via face-to-face meetings with major providers) of the issues noted before finalising specifications & timelines for course redevelopment.

Further analysis of TQA data suggested that:
• the course was not being used as a ‘fall-back’ qualification to TQA 2 courses in the same area
• the course was being used as a pathway to the TQA level 2 course ‘Essential Skills – ICT’
• a large percentage of the student cohort undertaking the TQA 1 course were not new arrival/refugee students.

The Office constructed a draft course document using:
• material from the Foundation Skills Training Package unit of competency FSKDIG02 ‘Use digital technology for simple workplace tasks’
• material from the current course
• articulation with the newly accredited course ‘Essential Skills – Using Computers and the Internet TQA 2.’
On 31 July 2013 TQA Officer Mike Jenkins met with staff at Newstead College. The college is a major provider of the TQA 1 course. A draft course document was tabled and discussed. Staff:

- confirmed the need for a course in computing at TQA level 1
- expressed support of the draft document and suggested minor amendments (these have been actioned)
- confirmed that the majority of students they enrolled in the course – while not new arrival/refugee students - had little or no previous experiences in computing, and that many had learning and/or physical disabilities.

TQA Officer Mike Jenkins was able to meet with some students enrolled in the current TQA 1 course at Newstead College and discuss their needs directly with these learners.

On 1 August 2013 TQA Officer Mike Jenkins met with the course teacher at the Don College. The college is a major provider of the TQA 1 course. The draft course document was tabled and discussed. The need for a course in the area was confirmed, support was expressed for the draft document, and learner needs were explored.

We issued the draft course document for general comment in the period 5 to 9 August. No comments were received.

An exposure draft of the course was circulated for comment as part of the accreditation process in the period 23 August to 6 September 2013. No comments were received.

The proposed course has been analysed against the TQA’s Course Accreditation Criteria. See Attachment A.

**CURRENT SITUATION:** The following course document is ready for accreditation consideration (Attachment B):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New course:</th>
<th>Replacing:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Computing TQA 1</td>
<td>Computing TQA 1 size value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>size value 10</td>
<td>10</td>
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</table>

** ISSUES:**

1. Size Value – the expiring course in this area has a size value 10. It comprises two parts: Introductory Computer Skills (size value 5); and Application Module (size value 5). The proposed course is organised in two parts: using computers; and using digital technologies safely. These parts may be delivered concurrently (e.g. safe use issues may be taught and assessed within the context of undertaking practical computer-usage
tasks). The issue of size value was discussed at the meetings with providers noted above. Both providers strongly supported the size value 10 proposed. They noted:

- the content of the course warrants a size value 10
- the nature of the learner cohort means that significant class time is needed for repetition and constant practice of basic computer skills that are required prior to undertaking some of the tasks required by the course. For example, mastery of finer motor skills required in cursor movement require repetition and constant practice for some with physical disabilities, and repetition and constant practice of basic file handling operations is required by some with learning disabilities.

As the course is at TQA level 1 the risk to the integrity of the TCE in assigning a size value 10 to this course is minimal. Only 40 credit points generated at TQA 1 can be used in the calculation of total points required by the TCE’s participation and achievement standard.

2. The proposed course includes a statement that a learner gaining an SA award “may reasonably expect a Registered Training Organisation with the unit FSKDIG02 ‘Use digital technology for simple workplace tasks’ on its scope to grant direct recognition.” This may have resource implications for the Authority.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the course Basic Computing be accredited for use from 1 Jan 2014 until 31 Dec 2018.

That the course be assigned a robustness level of 3.

That the course be assigned the following characteristics for the TCE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course:</th>
<th>TCE Contribution:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Computing TQA 1 size value 10</td>
<td>level/credit points towards participation and achievement standard for PA or higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TQA 1, 10 credit points</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TCE Contribution: ‘Everyday Adult’ standard for SA award or higher</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nil</td>
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</table>
**Delegation Conditions** | **Comment**
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The course proposed clearly fits all the criteria for accreditation established by the Authority. | The proposed course meets the Authority’s Senior Secondary Course Accreditation Criteria. See Attached Reports.
Accreditation of the proposed course is consistent with Authority policy decisions, including the need to streamline the number of courses. | At its meeting of 5 Dec 2012 and 3 April 2013 the Authority decided that this replacement course was required.
An assessment of risk to the Authority’s reputation of a decision to accredit the course is agreed in consultation with the Chair of the Authority to be low. | The CEO and the Chair of the Authority met on 9 September 2013. It was agreed that accreditation of these proposed courses was low risk.
Course accreditation will only be carried out by delegation when the decision is positive (all refusals will be made by the Authority meeting) and in full compliance with Authority policy decisions. | The recommendation is for a positive decision (ie accreditation).
Proposals for new courses, unless previously decided by the Authority, whether or not fully compliant in all other respects, will fall outside the delegation. | The proposed course replaces an existing one. It is not a ‘new’ course.
Cases where there is not agreement that the risk to the Authority’s reputation is low would fall outside the delegation. | n/a
Signed by Dr Reg Allen

CEO, Tasmanian Qualifications Authority
Date: 9 September 2013

Acting under delegation from the Tasmanian Qualifications Authority to accredit senior secondary courses.

Attachments:

A: Analysis of Proposed Course
B: Proposed Course Document
## TQA Senior Secondary Course Accreditation Report
### On Exposure Draft Course Document

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course:</th>
<th>Basic Computing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Proponent:</td>
<td>TQA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluator(s):</td>
<td>‘X’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Date:</td>
<td>6/9/2013</td>
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### Accreditation History:

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<th>Evaluation History:</th>
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<th>Evaluation History:</th>
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### Rationale

1. **Rationale**
   - The proposed course has a clearly identifiable rationale which includes consideration of strategic need, demand, coherence and increasing student participation/achievement including appropriate consultation with stakeholders.
   - The need for a course in computing at TQA level 1 has been confirmed via consultation with providers as well as discussion with student representatives.

### Coherence

2. **Coherence**

2.a **General Coherence**

   - The proposed course
     - must have educational aims and learning outcomes appropriate for students in the senior secondary phase of education in Tasmania; and
     - must be at least at the equivalent of the types of competencies characteristic of AQF Cert I; and
     - has a balance of learning of both domain-specific and generic skills and knowledge
     - meets the TQA’s specifications document (if applicable).

   - Yes
   - Yes
   - Yes
   - NA
2.b Internal Coherence

- there is clarity regarding what content is compulsory, and what (if any) is optional. Language used reflects this (eg ‘must’ or ‘will’ not ‘should’ or ‘could’)

- (if applicable) the degree of optional content (eg choice between units/topics) is limited. Options allow for some specialisation, but there is a significant ‘core’ of common content

- there is clarity regarding the sequence for delivery of content (eg notations to say if the order in which contents listed in the document reflects compulsory or suggested delivery sequencing)

- there is a clear match between the stated Learning Outcomes Content and Criteria/Standards.

Note: while some Learning Outcomes may be aspirational (non-assessed, eg ‘develop a positive attitude towards’) the number of such objectives is limited. Overwhelmingly there is a clear match between the outcomes and the criteria/standards.

2.c Coherence with other courses

- if applicable, there are clear linkages between a TQA 3 course and a ‘Foundation’ course at level 2 (or other specified TQA accredited pathway courses).

Note: a ‘Foundation’ course is not a simplified or ‘easier’ version of a TQA 3 course. It has its own distinctive features (content, standards, criteria etc) but prepares students who wish to study at TQA 3 in the same/similar learning area.
3. **Overlap with other courses**

   Does the proposed course duplicate, by titles or coverage
   
   - other TQA senior secondary accredited courses? or
   
   - nationally accredited VET courses?

If relevant, does the course document identify where any outcomes meet the requirements of VET units of competence in Training Packages to the extent that a learner may reasonably expect an RTO to grant direct recognition (RPL, credit transfer) for those units on the basis of successful achievement in the TQA accredited course.

**Note:** At its meeting of August 2012 the Authority adopted the following guidelines for the implementation of its policy about overlap between VET and TQA accredited courses:

- a course accreditation report must identify any potential overlap between the content (skills, knowledge, competencies, learning outcomes) of the course and the skills, knowledge required in competencies of training packages
- where a proposed course has content that appears to be the same as that in a Training Package but is intended to be different, the course must be explicit about the nature of this difference
- a proposed course that includes content found in competencies in VET training packages may be accredited where the Authority considers the requirements of its delivery as VET to Tasmanian senior secondary students are insufficiently relevant to the achievement of the intended outcomes [For example, reading and writing skills at Australian Core Skills Framework levels 1-3 are not clearly and distinctly different across everyday adult contexts including work to the extent that assessment requires current industry competence]
- in accrediting a course with content found in competencies in VET

The **Basic Computing** course meets the requirements of the unit of competency FSKDIG02 ‘Use digital technology for simple workplace tasks’ from the Foundation Skills Training Package. A learner who gains a qualification in **Basic Computing** with a Satisfactory Achievement award may reasonably expect a Registered Training Organisation with the unit on its scope to grant direct recognition (Recognition of Prior Learning / credit transfer) for FSKDIG02 ‘Use digital technology for simple workplace tasks’ on the basis of successful achievement in this TQA accredited course.

The relationship between **Basic Computing** and FSKDIG02 is included in the course document.
training packages the Authority will decide the support (course requirements and quality assurance) for relevant RPL, credit transfer or articulation.

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<th>4. Assessment</th>
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<td>• there is clarity regarding any prescribed assessment instruments and work requirements</td>
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<td>• the standards are expressed in clear, unambiguous language (e.g. it is not acceptable that standards are expressed in terms such as <code>sound understanding = C, good understanding = B</code>). The standards must clearly describe <strong>features/characteristics</strong> of the evidence of student work required by the standard). <strong>Note:</strong> panel to check criteria and all standard elements against issues noted in Appendix F of the Course Writer’s Guide and make comments here</td>
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<tr>
<td>• (if applicable) the standards are comparable with ACARA/CCAFFL/VET standards in regard to their level of complexity and wording</td>
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<tr>
<td>• the degree of difficulty/complexity of the standards and the range of criteria are comparable with those in accredited courses in the same/similar learning area and level of complexity/size value <strong>Note courses used for comparison and comments. Courses can be found at</strong> <a href="http://www.tqa.tas.gov.au/1053">http://www.tqa.tas.gov.au/1053</a> Those used for comparison should be in the same/similar ASCED sector, be of the same TQA level. Those most recently accredited are recommended for comparison purposes.</td>
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*Note: panel to check document against DoE ‘Without Prejudice: Guidelines for Inclusive Language’ and note comments here. This guideline is included in the last section of the Course Writer’s Guide.*

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<tr>
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<th>Delivery</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The methods of delivering the proposed course are likely to achieve the purposes, aims and learning outcomes of the course.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
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<th>Access</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(If applicable) any limitations to access based on age, gender, employment, cultural, social or educational background are explicit, clearly stated and justified.</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<th>Quality Assurance</th>
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|   | The assessment processes to be used to determine whether a student has achieved the learning outcomes of the course are of standard sufficient to deliver  
  • a match between the standards for achievement specified in the course and the standards demonstrated by students; and  
  • a level of comparability of results/awards essentially the same as for all other Authority accredited courses; and  
  • community confidence in the integrity and meaning of results. | The course has an audit QA model, TQA Quality assurance audit processes include assessment of these requirements. |
9. **Resource Requirements**  
- What, if any, special requirements are there for providers of the course (eg special equipment, resources)?  
  
- Are these clearly described?  
  Yes – noted in course document  
  
- What requirements are there for the TQA (eg quality assurance, external assessment)?  
  The course has a risk based audit quality assurance model.

10. **Evaluation**  
The proposed course must identify  
- course evaluation processes.  
  Yes – Included in course document

11. **Size /Complexity**  
- Are the level of complexity and size value of the course clearly described?  
  Yes  
  
- Does the ‘amount’ of content/assessment regime match the size value indicated?  
  Yes  
  
- Does the nature/aim/purpose of the course, its content, learning outcomes and assessment standards match the characteristics of the learning at this level of complexity? (see paragraph in course size and complexity section of the course document for these characteristics).  
  Yes

12. **Qualifications**  
- List the qualifications (including award types) to be conferred on successful completion of the course  
  Basic Computing TQA level 1, size value = 5 (with the award of):  
  SATISFACTORY ACHIEVEMENT  
  PRELIMINARY ACHIEVEMENT  
  
- Is this information included in the course documentation?  
  Yes
| **Overall Observations** | Successful completion of this course will provide learners with a solid basis to move into more complex computing courses. |
ATTACHMENT B: PROPOSED COURSE DOCUMENT
Please visit www.tqa.tas.gov.au/3435 to access the course document.