

A Course in Action Learning

Explanatory paper for stakeholders to support a case for national accreditation.

This project has been funded by the South Australian Department for Innovation and Skills.

About us

"There is no learning without action... there is no action without learning."

*Professor Reginald Revans
1907-2003*

The [Action Learning Institute](#) (ALI) is the first education institution in the world to deliver nationally recognised qualifications entirely through [action learning](#).

This is made possible through unique assessment methods and clustering of performance criteria around natural work events.

Since 2010, we have been embedded in industry, co-designing our action learning programs, with employers and learners.

Our systems have been assessed by ASQA twice and found to be highly compliant with the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*.

Action learning skills



We have facilitated 33 action learning projects with 25 companies across two states, with consistent results.

Each project has achieved measurable business outcomes for employers, while delivering a nationally recognised qualification for learners.

We have observed that learners develop other skills in the process. Skills that have considerable value but are not formally recognised.

We have defined these skills as **'action learning skills'**.



Why do we need this qualification?

Some people are better at action learning than others.

With practice and support, people can improve their action learning skills.

This process would be enhanced if there were a framework to help them develop and assess their action learning skills.

There are no qualifications available in Australia that formally recognise action learning skills.

What is action learning?



- A group of people coming together to undertake a 'common mission'
- Participants come from different situations with different skills and knowledge to bring to bear on a problem or opportunity
- The intended change is used as a vehicle for learning through exploration and reflection
- A natural way for adults to learn; particularly suits people who may not shine in the classroom
- Discovery, through questioning, and reflection are key
- Achieves organisation outcomes and personal development outcomes
- Demonstrates what is possible and sets a pattern of learning for the organisations involved

Foundations of action learning



Reginald Revans
1907-2003

$$L = P + Q$$

Professor Reg Revans coined the term 'action learning'.

Revans suggested that there are two types of learning; *programmed learning* (P), based on existing knowledge of best practices or 'known solutions', and *questioning* (Q).

In Revans' view, traditional learning has involved too much P and not enough Q.

Action learning emphasises Q, that is, asking good questions and systematically answering those questions.

Values of action learning

- Learning from action – and action informed by learning
- Support and challenge of peers
- Encouraging feedback
- Collaboration, giving and receiving
- Personal responsibility and proactivity
- The ultimate purpose of learning is to make a difference

Types of action learning

Single project action learning:
sets formed around a single problem or opportunity.




Multi-project action learning:
sets formed to bring together set members, who are each working on a problem or opportunity of their own.



Types of action learning

Both types of action learning draw on a common skill set, however...



Single project action learning emphasises working effectively with others.

Multi-project action learning emphasises self awareness and self management.

A well rounded action learner performs effectively in both contexts.

The proposed Course in Action Learning

Designed for concurrent delivery with another qualification that is being delivered using an action learning delivery methodology OR as a stand-alone credential.

A skill set rather than a full qualification, because skill sets do not have a specific level assigned to them.

Provides a framework for RTOs to deliver their qualifications using action learning.

In our case, Certificate III, Certificate IV, Diploma of Competitive Systems & Practices and Certificate IV in Sustainable Operations.

The skill set could be delivered concurrently with qualifications from Certificate III to Advanced Diploma or beyond.

The proposed Course in Action Learning

‘Enterprise’ units:

Perform effectively in an action learning set undertaking a joint research project

Perform effectively in an action learning set implementing a project plan

Perform effectively in an action learning set undertaking individual projects

Training package units:

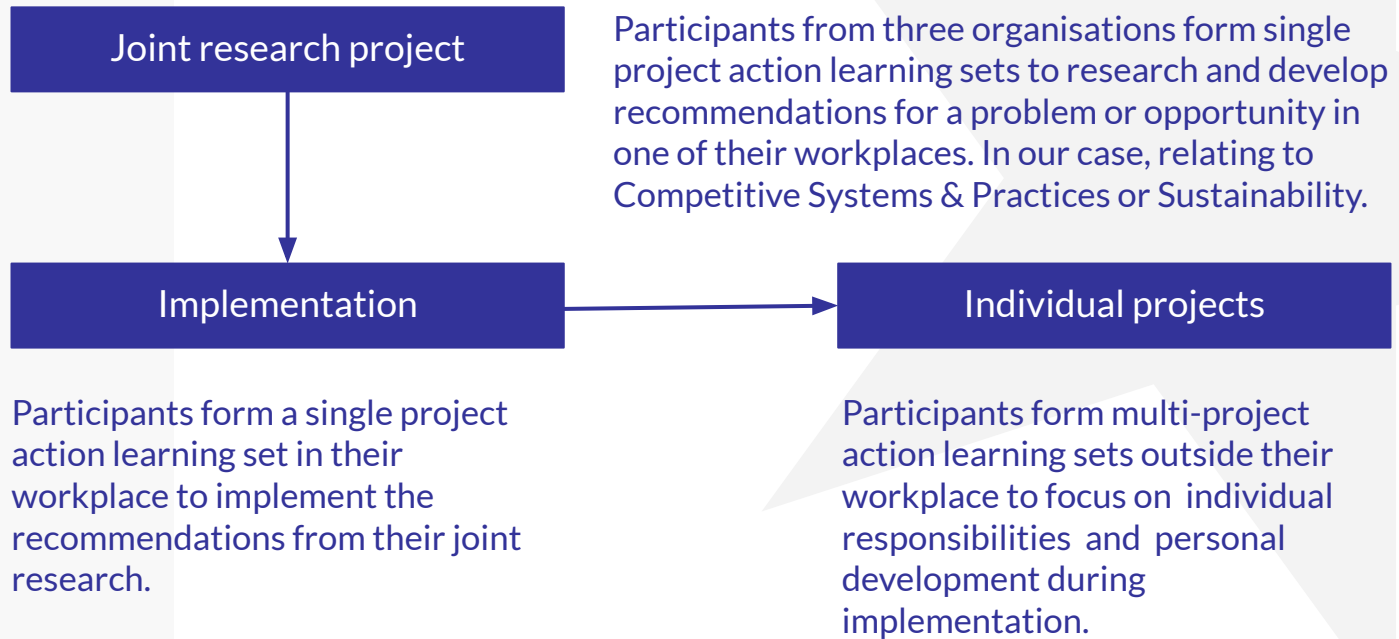
BSBCMM411 Make presentations

BSBPPEF302 Develop self-awareness



Our current delivery model

This is an example, other delivery models are possible, tailored for the context.



Who is this for... delivery with another qualification?

Senior high school, VET or university students in work placements or internments

Work-based trainees and apprentices

Mature aged workers required to qualify to retain their jobs, eg. aged care and disability support

Mature aged workers in declining occupations seeking to broaden their opportunities for advancement

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What are the advantages of an action learning delivery strategy for the employer?

- Trainee spends more time in the workplace
- Training is contextualised leading to greater productivity
- Quicker adaptation to organisation's cultural norms

Who is this for... as a stand-alone credential?

Graduate trainees in their first year of employment

Existing workers in organisations that use action learning to solve wicked problems

Professionals required to undertake continuing professional development (CPD)

Community volunteers

Download the draft submission document

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