

Extending Industry Accreditation for the Landscape Industry

Mark Sorby
Landscape Queensland Industries Association Inc

Project Number: NY10028

NY10028

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Landscape Queensland Industries Association Inc.

Extending Industry Accreditation for Landscape Industry

Horticulture Australia Project NY10028

FINAL REPORT

(01/10/2013)



Know-how for Horticulture™

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Purpose of Report

This report fulfils the final requirement of the agreement between **Horticulture Australia Ltd** (HAL) and the **Landscape Queensland Industries Assoc. Inc.**

Acknowledgement of Support



Know-how for Horticulture™

Date of Report: 30/09/2013

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MEDIA SUMMARY

HAL Project Code NY10028.

Extending Industry Accreditation for the Landscape Industry

The unregulated nature of some segments of the Landscape Construction Industry in Australia can create issues resulting from poor work quality and low work standards. These issues generally arise when work is undertaken by largely unskilled and unqualified operators. Relatively low start-up costs to gain entry to the industry enables fly by nighters the opportunity to undercut qualified contractors and bring a bad name to the industry as a whole through their poor work practices and lack of accountability.

Industry accreditation and certification sees the landscape industry self- regulate and set base skill levels for contractors and management procedures and processes for business operators. These industry designed certifications give consumers, body corporates and government the ability to identify and engage quality contractors resulting in better outcomes all round.

To date the Landscape Industry accreditation schemes which have been developed cover supplier and contractor businesses and both the structural and horticultural sides of landscape construction. The latest addition to the suite of schemes is the Certified Specialist Garden Maintenance. It recognises the size and value of the garden maintenance industry and the need to have this highly unregulated industry segment assisted to become more professional and encourage participants to formalise their qualifications and in doing so increase their scope of works and potential income streams.

The certified specialist scheme has achieved 50 participants signed on to date. Broad consultation continues throughout the industry to refine the requirements and processes. The program has been introduced to a number of larger garden maintenance contractor businesses and has been incorporated into their existing training and employee review and reward programs.

The certified specialist scheme has the potential to be accepted and implemented nationally with application requirements flexible to ensure state and local Government licences and regulations can be included as required. These businesses have been encouraged to market the fact that their employees are industry certified when communicating to their target audience.

Industry Accredited businesses and Certified individuals are now being promoted to consumers who are being encouraged to use these qualified and experienced operators to achieve best outcome.

This HAL VC funded program was finalised in October 2013 but with the implementation of a comprehensive sustainability plan will see this industry scheme grow and continue to provide benefits to the entire lifestyle horticulture supply and demand chain.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The purpose of the project “Extending Industry Accreditation for the Landscape Industry” (Horticulture Australia Project No: NY10028) was to develop, implement and promote an additional industry certification scheme aimed at the highly unregulated garden maintenance industry. This new certification scheme was an extension of the existing industry schemes and targeted those contractors or employees who specialised in garden maintenance. This new scheme encourages the attainment of recognised qualifications and provides a stepping stone for industry participants to achieve additional industry certification as well as increased experience and further qualifications. The opportunity was also taken to review the currency and relevance of requirements for the existing Landscape Accreditation and Certification Schemes.

It is anticipated the long term benefit of these programmes will be the improvement in the professionalism and the delivery of quality products and services offered by landscapers and those contractors and employees who undertake garden maintenance to the benefit of the whole lifestyle horticulture supply and demand chain and the consumer market.

The landscape industry can be viewed as the window to the green life industry showcasing the full range of nursery and turf products. A professional, well trained and highly skilled landscape industry can have a significant positive flow on effect to the green life production industries. The maintenance and upkeep of professionally constructed landscapes ensures that the lifestyle horticultural industry is presented at its best on an ongoing basis.

The unregulated nature of the garden maintenance industry and some segments of the landscape construction Industry in Australia can create issues resulting from poor work quality and low work standards. These issues generally arise when work is undertaken by largely unskilled and unqualified operators. Relatively low start-up costs to gain entry to the industry enables fly by nighters an opportunity to undercut qualified contractors and bring a bad name to the industry as a whole through their poor work practices and lack of accountability.

To address this issue, the establishment of industry accreditation and certification sees the landscape industry self- regulate and set base skill levels for contractors and management procedures and processes for business operators. These industry designed and approved schemes give consumers, body corporates and government the ability to identify and engage quality contractors resulting in better outcomes all round.

To maintain and continue the ongoing development of the high standards expected of leading landscape industry businesses, it was necessary to review the requirements for the existing accreditation and certification process to ensure its relevance and currency. To implement the new certified specialist scheme which targeted the garden maintenance industry, it was necessary to identify minimum skill standards required to undertake the scope of works at an acceptable level whilst creating a pathway or stepping stone for industry participants to encourage ongoing personal and career development.

This was achieved with consultative input from key stakeholders from throughout the landscape industry in Queensland and included contractors, garden maintenance franchisors and franchisees, employees and supervisors of Government departments and providers of industry training courses.

The criteria for attainment of the new certified specialist qualification identified key competencies required to undertake the scope of works in the area of garden maintenance and provided flexibility for any local licensing requirements and made provision for increased importance in the area of bio security.

Applicants are required to complete or gain recognition of prior learning (RPL) for a total of 7 competencies from the Certificate III in Horticulture Qualification.

Compulsory Competencies

RTF3207A Implement a landscape maintenance program

RTE3713A Carry out workplace OHS procedures

RTC3401A Control weeds

RTC3310A Operate specialised machinery and equipment

RTC3704A Prepare and apply chemicals

RTC3705A Transport, Handle and store chemicals

RTF3012A Implement a plant nutrition program

Larger landscape and garden maintenance businesses have been invited to nominate their best garden maintenance employees to apply for the certified specialist garden maintenance certification. They have been encouraged to incorporate this into their existing staff review and reward programs. This approach has received very positive feedback and will present a good opportunity moving forward to promote this scheme throughout the industry.

Key outcomes achieved during this project included;

- 50 certified specialists signed up to the scheme.
- Numerous meetings, workshops and conference presentations undertaken as part of the consultation required to develop the certified specialist scheme.
- Marketing plan developed and implemented targeting, industry, stakeholders and consumers.
- Sustainability plan developed to ensure project longevity and assist ongoing uptake in other regions.
- Existing Accreditation and Certification schemes reviewed in consultation with key stakeholders resulting in a more user friendly process incorporating Industry and Business Management Best Practices.
- Promotion of the program via a range of industry publications, workshops and expos resulting in greater awareness of the schemes throughout industry, Government and the general public.

- Promotion of the schemes to all other state landscape associations creating a greater awareness of the benefits, processes and procedures involved.
- Development of application documents, criteria and logo

See Appendices B & D

Take up of the accreditation and certification schemes, although good within the association membership base, is not considered strong throughout the industry as a whole. Recent economic and environmental issues including changes of Government, natural disasters and a general downturn in the economy over the period of this project, has seen decision makers prioritising a range of other issues over and above achieving certification for themselves or their employees.

Implementation of the schemes in other states has been slow. This seems to be as a result of a lack of resources/staffing in those states in conjunction with other priorities individual states have to deal with. A proactive approach, including continued communication of the schemes and increased support to other state associations, is required to see the program successfully adopted nationally.

The lack of a functioning national landscape body during the course of this project has not assisted the national rollout of this project.

INTRODUCTION

Since 2001 the Landscape Association of Queensland has strived to provide a recognition program for professional landscapers in the industry. With support from Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL) the Landscape Certification Scheme was created and launched. During the course of that project the need for a business focused accreditation scheme was identified. A scheme which could recognise landscape business' "Best Practice" in addition to acknowledging individuals for their experience and qualifications via a certification program was required.

By 2008 and the continuation of the landscape industries schemes, a number of accreditation and certification schemes had been established in various industries. Landscape Queensland, as it strived to maintain its continuous improvement program, reviewed a number of these schemes and consulted with many key industry stakeholders in an attempt to identify aspects of the landscape industry programs which could be improved. **See Appendix A.**

2011 saw the commencement of the current program which continued the review process but also focused on the unregulated garden maintenance industry. The low start-up costs of this industry segment tend to attract unqualified operators with poor work practices and little accountability. These operators create a bad name for the industry which can reflect poorly on the whole supply and demand chain. In an attempt to address this problem, industry developed the certified specialist garden maintenance certification and set base skill levels and qualifications as the assessment requirements. The application process provided flexibility for local licensing requirements and included provision to include areas such as an awareness of bio security obligations. The scheme

was promoted to landscape and garden contractors and Government departments and garden franchisors.

Keys for success of the schemes were identified as;

- wide consultation process
- develop a user friendly application process
- creating a stepping stone throughout the certification levels
- providing encouragement to attain recognised qualifications
- incorporating industry and business management best practice procedures and
- broad promotion to the landscape industry, Government and consumer markets
- developing scheme drivers to create value for participants to go through the process
- developing a sustainability plan to ensure the longevity of the scheme

Implementation of the program was undertaken in Queensland initially to gain acceptance and ensure a satisfactory likelihood of industry uptake. Introduction to all state associations during the course of the project then followed.

It is anticipated the long term benefit of the programme will be the improved professionalism and the quality of product and services delivered by landscapers and garden maintenance contractors to the benefit of the whole lifestyle horticulture supply and demand chain and the consumer market.

MATERIALS & METHODS

As the accreditation and certification schemes had been in existence for some time enabling industry to form judgement and evaluate, substantial industry consultation with key stakeholders was undertaken with the primary aim of reviewing the current schemes for relevance and currency and developing a new certification scheme aimed at the garden maintenance industry.

This strategy of continually looking at how the process can be improved has continued throughout this and previous projects. The term “living document” was coined to encourage feedback from both existing and potential accreditation and certification holders.

The implementation of the program and the consultation process was overseen by the CEO and steering committee who together monitored growth and ensured project milestones were on track and ultimately achieved. Regular reports were completed by the CEO and Industry Development Officer which contained scope for industry feedback and recommended actions to ensure relevance and currency of the schemes.

Communication and promotion of the program was vital to its successful development and uptake by contractors and their employees. Industry publications including Landscape Lifestyle, and the ACLH E-News bulletin were used to communicate the details, benefits and progress of the schemes throughout the life of previous projects. In recent times the Landscape Queensland E-News, web site and social media have become the preferred choice of industry to receive information on these schemes. Continual face to face meetings were held with contractors and franchisees getting feedback and communicating the benefits of these schemes.

The accreditation and certification program was seen as a key association priority. Certified Specialist workshops were held in conjunction with a range of Landscape Queensland events to increase the exposure of the scheme to as many members as possible. This gave industry participants face to face opportunities to ask questions and gain a full understanding of the workings of the scheme. Trade and consumer expos were used as a vehicle to present to these respective audiences throughout the course of this project.

Advertising of the accreditation and certification schemes was undertaken in the Landscape Queensland 6th Edition Costing Guide. This publication is well regarded and is purchased by contractors, specifiers and council giving good exposure to the programs in those areas. The Landscape Queensland member diary also has details of the schemes and is distributed widely.

Government, body corporate managers and consumers were identified as potential drivers for industry to take up the accreditation and certification programs. As such representation was made to both state and local government who showed interest in the schemes. Some local councils are giving preference to Landscape Industry Accredited businesses when tender lists are sought.

Landscape Queensland has exhibited at trade, consumer and government expos where the opportunity was taken to promote the existence of the schemes and the benefits to the end users of landscape industry accredited businesses or certified individuals.

RESULTS

The success of this project can largely be determined by the achievement of required milestones.

1. Review of the existing accreditation and certification scheme
2. Development of the Certified Specialist scheme including the scheme criteria, application form and review process
3. Attainment of 50 participants signed up to the scheme
4. The hosting of workshops with industry stakeholders to develop/ implement the programs
5. Development of Promotion of Scheme

- Promotion of the scheme included a number of target groups and mediums of communication.

Target Groups;

- Landscape contractors
- Garden maintenance contractors
- Garden maintenance franchisors
- Garden maintenance franchisees
- Specifiers
- Government: state/local
- Consumers
- Interstate associations
- Other horticultural Industries

- Promotional mediums
 - o Industry publications
 - o E-News bulletins
 - o Face to face meetings
 - o Workshops: scheme specific
 - o Business management seminars
 - o Online: web page, online application process
 - o Expos: trade, consumer, Government
 - o Promotional brochures
 - o Advertising in 6th Edition Costing Guide
 - o Advertising in Association diary

See Appendix C

- All of the above promotional mediums were used to assist communication of the schemes to the target groups. Although take up rate of contractors and suppliers meet required milestones, greater numbers are required in order to become a scheme truly representative of and accepted by the broader industry and end users.
- Implementation by interstate landscape associations has been slow. Most states have shown an interest but either the lack of resources to enable implementation or other more pressing priorities have taken precedence. However, this and preceding projects has introduced the accreditation and certification schemes to interstate associations and developed user friendly processes that could easily be adapted to each individual state's needs as required. Each association has been given the opportunity to evaluate the program, ask questions and seek assistance. On this basis the project has achieved its objectives.

The project has created a sound foundation for the industry to move forward with user friendly, high quality accreditation and certification schemes. Continued promotion and fine tuning of the program should see greater acceptance and appeal by industry. Greater focus on the “drivers” i.e. consumers and Government, who will then seek landscape industry accredited businesses or certified individuals will provide greater demand and therefore motivation to industry to take up the scheme. The sustainability plan has been designed to ensure the longevity of these schemes.

See Appendix F

The introduction of the additional tier of the scheme as part of the overall suite of certifications available now sees the ability for industry participants to achieve acknowledgement for their increased experience and qualifications as they progress from garden maintenance through to other areas of horticulture and landscaping. This scheme encourages personal development and the undertaking of recognised qualifications

As landscape is regarded as “the window to the green life industries” a more professional and highly skilled landscape industry, the medium to long term benefit of this program, will have substantial positive flow on effects to the likes of the nursery and turf production industries.

DISCUSSIONS

Australian Horticulture has the potential to benefit from this ongoing landscape industry accreditation and certification program. This project has developed a best practice industry scheme with the potential for widespread industry acceptance. The increased professionalism of the landscape industry will see better showcasing of all green life production industry products leading to greater revenue sales streams for those industries.

Awareness amongst consumers of accredited and certified landscape professionals providing better service and value will combat some of the issues of unlicensed, unqualified contractors providing poor service, workmanship and undercutting on prices.

Moving forward, management of this program will need to consider the following;

- Challenges
 - Up take by industry
 - Up take by interstate associations, some that are poorly resourced
 - Consumers driving demand for accredited or certified contractors/suppliers
 - Government driving demand for accredited or certified contractors/suppliers
 - Continuing to ensure communication to industry is undertaken using a broad range of mediums
 - Continuing to ensure industry sees value in the scheme
 - Continuing to ensure the process is acceptable to industry
- Opportunities
 - Lift industry standards, skill levels, business practices and conditions
 - Provide better outcomes for end users
 - Reduce incidence of unqualified contractors
 - Showcase the green life production industries increasing an interest and ultimately increasing revenue to those industries
 - Introduce a high quality scheme consistent across all states
- Strengths
 - Sound well researched and consulted scheme
 - Good management and team to champion the scheme to success
 - Solid foundation built to further promote and implement
- Weaknesses
 - Current memberships of landscape associations small in terms of overall % of industry. Greater membership equates to larger area of influence and better likelihood of uptake
 - Lack of resources in some state Associations means ability to implement scheme reduced

The landscape industry recognises that ongoing encouragement and support will be needed in years to come to aid professional landscapers to attain their desired status of Certification and/or Accreditation. Future workshops, lectures, presentations and events shall continue to support these systems. With improved technologies and cooperative relationships with various industry groups it is envisaged that future R&D may need to streamline CPD recording processes across various industry sectors (with their respective CPD programs) and greater support offered for each sector's accreditation program.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

The details of these schemes have been communicated throughout the development and implementation stages via the following mediums;

- Promotional mediums
 - o Industry publications
 - o E-News bulletins
 - o Face to face meetings
 - o Workshops: scheme specific
 - o Business management seminars
 - o Online: web page, online application process
 - o Expos: trade, consumer, Government
 - o Promotional brochures and logos
 - o Advertising in 6th Edition Costing Guide
 - o Advertising in association diary

A certified specialist application and logos, see **Appendices B & D**, has been developed and is available for use by other landscape associations who wish to implement this scheme. This document may need to be amended to suit local regulatory and licensing requirements and as a living document, can grow and be flexible in terms of the scheme's requirements as needed.

A sustainability plan has been completed, see **Appendix F**. This plan outlines ways to maintain the growth, relevance and adoption of the accreditation and certification schemes into the future.

The following factors should be taken into account when assessing transfer rates v adoption rates;

- Take up of these schemes has been affected by the small number of association members as a percentage of those employed in the landscape and garden maintenance industry as a whole.
- The recent political and ongoing economic instability has also contributed to businesses being less open to approaches to consider certification as they are more focused on other higher priorities.
- In recent years since the commencement of the current certified specialist scheme, the national landscape association has not been functioning which again made expansion of the project to other state Associations more challenging.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Australian Horticulture support industry accreditation and certification schemes which incorporate industry best practice. Communication and support between industry schemes and joint representation to Government and promotion to consumers will see greater demand for industry accredited and certified contractors and suppliers.

Improved standards and industry conditions are dependent upon ongoing education and professional development. This should be supported and encouraged by industry and can be facilitated through accreditation and certification schemes where incentive to participate is provided.

Individual states will have varying local issues determined by a range of factors including climate, demographics and logistics. Industry schemes must be flexible to include these differences whilst at the same time each states scheme should be acknowledged and recognised by other states.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgement is given the following people for their input into this project:-

- Mark Sorby, Chief Executive Officer, Landscape Queensland Ind. Assoc. Inc.
- Peter Tiralongo Industry Development Officer, Landscape Queensland Ind. Assoc. Inc.
- Professional Committee Members of Landscape Queensland Ind. Assoc. Inc. who have provided valuable input into the development, direction and enhancements of the Certification and Accreditation systems
- Nursery and Garden Industry of Queensland – for assistance in understanding the NIASA system
- SPASA QLD who provided information on their certified specialist scheme
- Nick Westwood, Bremer TAFE, who provided assistance in the development of relevant garden maintenance competencies as a base skill standard
- Landscape Queensland Training committee members, who provided feedback on the scheme from a training and professional development perspective.
- Dept. Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery (DAFF) QLD who provided feedback and assistance in relation to licensing review and application processes for chemical spraying
- Bio Security QLD for their input into the Bio Security obligations and risk management processes for industry contractors

Appendix A

Accreditation schemes that were evaluated included:

- Australian Garden Centre Accreditation Scheme (AGCAS)
 - Nursery and Garden Industry Australia (NGIA)
 - Businesses only
- Food Processing Accreditation (FPA)
 - Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS)
 - Businesses only
- Gold License Catering Accreditation
 - Restaurant and Catering Australia
 - Business only (but linked to current owner)
- ISO 9000 series Quality Systems Standard
 - Standards Australia International Limited
 - Businesses only
- ISO 14000 series Environmental Management System Standards
 - Standards Australia International Limited
 - Businesses only
- Pre-Qualification Contractors (PQC)
 - State Department of Public Works Qld
 - Businesses only
- Nursery Industry Accreditation Scheme Australia (NIASA)
 - Nursery and Garden Industry Australia (NGIA)
 - Businesses only
- Safe Quality Food 2000
 - AGWEST Trade and Development

Appendix B Technology Transfer

Documents are:

- Certified Specialist Garden Maintenance: Application form
- Certified Specialist Garden Maintenance: Fee structure document
- Certified Specialist Garden Maintenance: Logo
- Certified Specialist Garden Maintenance: Certificate

Logos for the Accreditation program are:



Logos for the Certification program are:



Logo for Certified Specialist Garden Maintenance:



Appendix C

Promotional mediums used: Landscape Industry Accreditation & Certification Program

Date	Workshops Held	Region
20 February 2012	Workshop 1	Sunshine Coast
22 February 2012	Workshop 2	Brisbane North
27 February 2012	Workshop 3	Gold Coast
29 February 2012	Workshop 4	South Brisbane
5 June 2012	Workshop 5	DEEDI Brisbane
Date	Event	Venue
27 February 2013	AGM	Kedron Wavell Services Club, Chermside Qld
19 March 2013	Contracts Workshop	MSIT TAFE, Mt Gravatt Qld
27 March 2013	Business Planning Workshop	Homestead Hotel Function Centre, Zillmere Qld
23 April 2013	Contracts Workshop	Wantima Golf Course, Brendale Qld
8 May 2013	Landscape Industry Arvo: Nu Grow Soils & Mulch	Nu Grow Landscape Supplies, Forestdale Qld

A number of scoping workshops with garden maintenance franchisors and Government departments have been conducted during the development phase of this scheme.

The Certified Specialist Garden Maintenance has been promoted via the Association's monthly e-News and through e-News publications of a range of industry stakeholders.



Appendix D

APPLICATION FORM

Landscape Industry Certification Scheme

Certified Specialist Garden Maintenance

Please complete this form and attach your supporting documentation. Send to the Landscape Certification Scheme Administrator, Landscape Queensland Ind. Assoc. Inc., PO BOX 245, Geebung, Qld, 4034.
Phone: 1300 883 966 Fax: (07) 3265 5556 Web: www.landscapequeensland.com.au

Personal Details

Name: _____

Postal Address: _____

Home Address: _____

Personal Mobile: _____

Home Phone: _____ Home Fax: _____

Personal Email: _____

Landscape Queensland Ind. Assoc. Inc. Membership No: _____

Existing Certified Landscape Professional Number: _____

Employment Details

Business Name: _____

Owner/Manager: _____

Position held: _____

Postal Address: _____

Street Address: _____

Work Phone: _____ Work Fax: _____

Work Mobile: _____

Work Email: _____

Website: _____

Landscape Competencies

Applicants are required to complete or gain recognition of prior learning (RPL) for a total of 7 competencies from the Certificate III in Horticulture Qualification.

Compulsory Competencies

RTF3207A Implement a landscape maintenance program
 RTE3713A Carry out workplace OHS procedures
 RTC3401A Control weeds
 RTC3310A Operate specialised machinery and equipment
 RTC3704A Prepare and apply chemicals
 RTC3705A Transport, Handle and store chemicals
 RTF3012A Implement a plant nutrition program

Please complete and provide copies of Certificates / Academic transcripts, notarised by a Justice of the Peace, or authorised by a Solicitor, Accountant or General Practitioner.

Qualification	Course Code	Institution	Year Awarded	Copies Attached?
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No

Licenses (where appropriate)

Please list relevant industry licenses held; i.e.

Ground distribution license

Chainsaw operation & maintenance license

Queensland Building Services

If applicable, provide details. Please provide a copy of your licence / s.

Licence Type	Licence Grade/Class (e.g. Trade Contractor)	Licence Number	Copies Attached?
			Yes / No
			Yes / No

Bio-Security

Applicants acknowledge and adherence to approved Fire Ant Risk Management plans and give an undertaking to uphold their obligations in relation to bio security issues related to the lifestyle horticulture industry in this State.

Please list details of Bio Security courses attended.

Industry Bio-Security courses attended;

Course Name e.g. Fire Ants, Myrtle Rust	Facilitator	Date	Copies of Certificate Attached?
			Yes / No

Industry Experience

Please complete the tables below and attach a resume to outline your experience in the Landscape OR Garden Maintenance Industries.

Garden Maintenance Franchise Operator

Name of Franchise	Area	Franchisor Contact Details	Date Commenced

Or

Garden Maintenance Industry Experience

When Employed	Employer	Position Held	Duties

Membership to other Organisations

If you are a member of other related organisations, please provide details:

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Checklist

To enable us to process your application quickly, please ensure you have attached the following necessary documentation as applicable to your CLP type.

Documentation	Attached?	Office Use Only: Approved?
Academic transcript	Yes / No	
Copy of appropriate licence/s	Yes / No	
Copy Bio security course certificates attendance / attainment	Yes / No	
Resume	Yes / No	
Payment Details	Yes / No	
Form complete and signed	Yes / No	

Declaration

The Code of Ethics & Goals, and the Terms and Conditions of the Landscape Certification Scheme form part of this application. By signing this form to become an Industry Certified Specialist and returning the declaration means you have read, understood and accepted them. To get a copy of these documents go to www.landscap queensland.com.au or contact the Landscape Queensland Ind. Assoc. Inc. on 1300 883 966.

According to the Privacy Act of 1988, Landscape Queensland Ind. Assoc. Inc. requires written permission from applicants to view private documents and discuss matters relating to their Certified Specialist application and for the ongoing review of any Professional Development documentation submitted by the applicant. Landscape Queensland Ind. Assoc. Inc. will treat all documents as commercial-in-confidence and will not disclose your details to any unauthorised party.

Landscape Queensland Ind. Assoc. Inc. and representatives will only conduct discussions with relevant parties as required. Should further documentation be required, the scheme administrator will contact the applicant directly.

I hereby apply for Certified Specialist: Garden Maintenance recognition status in accordance with the following:

1. I agree to observe and comply with the Terms and Conditions of the Landscape Certification Schemes (receipt of which is acknowledged), as varied from the time to time, and agree to maintain the Code of Ethics & Goals of a Certified Landscape Professional or Certified Specialist.
2. I warrant that the information provided in this form is true, complete and correct and will give prompt written notice to the Landscape Certification Scheme Administrator of any change in such information
3. I understand that the fees and charges are non-refundable, may vary from time to time and are payable in relation to my application for Certified Specialist status.
4. I indemnify and release Landscape Queensland Ind. Assoc. Inc. and employees, contractors and agents against any claims in accordance with the Terms and Conditions.
5. I give authority to Landscape Queensland Ind. Assoc. Inc., and representatives to view all documents and discuss with relevant parties the evidence as submitted to substantiate the application.

Signature of Applicant:

Print Name:

Date:



ABN: 92 439 102 270

Certification Fees

Certified Specialist Garden Maintenance

Fees, including GST, for one year as a Certified Specialist Garden Maintenance is as follows:

- Certified Specialist Garden Maintenance (CSGM) - \$275.00 (including GST)

Payment Method

Visa: MasterCard: Direct Deposit: Cheque: Cash:

Card Number: _____/_____/_____/_____ Expiry Date: ____/____

Cardholder Name: _____ Amount: \$ _____

Cardholder Signature: _____ Date: _____

Cheque Number: _____ Bank: _____ Branch: _____

Direct Deposit: Landscape Queensland Ind. Inc. **BSB:** 034 051 **Account No:** 134 637

(If using Direct Deposit please include your name)

PO Box 245, Geebung QLD 4034
Phone: 1300 883 966 Fax: (07) 3265 5556
Email: admin@landscapequeensland.com.au
Website: www.landscapequeensland.com.au



Horticulture Australia

Certified Specialist Marketing Plan June 2011

Vision

Our vision is to raise the level of professionalism for our industry from the perception of governments, construction and Lifestyle Horticulture industry stakeholders, consumers and the general community.

Objectives

15 Certified Specialists by 31/12/11

30 Certified Specialists by 31/12/12

50 Certified Specialists by 30/9/13

Create acceptance and uptake by industry associations in all states

Increase awareness and acceptance by councils, landscape architects and land developers

Develop awareness and acceptance with consumers

Market Segmentation

Certified Specialists will be drawn from various industry sectors and may include disciplines such as garden maintenance, retaining walls, permeable paving, green walls & roofs, hydro seeding. A portion of Certified Specialists will be self-employed contractors, some will be franchisees, and some will be employees of contractors or councils.

Additional targets of the marketing program are the clients and/or potential clients of the Certified Specialists. These include State Government, councils, land developers, landscape architects, builders, and consumers. By targeting this market it will provide more value to the Certified Specialists and ensure it is more likely they will wish to proceed with entering the program.

Positioning

The scheme will be positioned to reflect professionalism, and industry best practice quite often exceeding existing regulatory legislation and providing industry self-regulation.

Different specialties will have varying criteria. Where a licence exists the specialty may have to satisfy criteria over and above the licence requirements to encompass not only technical skill but other business management, safety, environmental and bio security control systems and procedures.

All target markets will be educated as to the benefits of engaging a LQ Certified Specialist. The key messages include professionalism, knowledge, experience, quality and being certified by Industry to be of a standard in line with industry best practice.

Promotion

LQ will execute a push/pull strategy to promote the scheme. The entire supply and demand chain from lifestyle horticulture production through to consumers will be targeted. Clients include Governments, councils, facility managers, developers, builders, and consumers.

Consumer promotion/Public Relations

The vast majority of consumers can be easily reached through print media. There are many consumer interest articles that LQ can release. These include latest trends in landscaping, what you should discuss with your landscape contractor, plant selection, information on diseases and pests, etc. Intertwined with this information will be the message that a Certified Specialist is the best person to engage for the work they require. Consumer protection in unregulated areas such as garden maintenance will also appeal to the general public and relevant Government bodies.

Media vehicles include:

- Outdoor Design & Living
- Outdoor Design & Living's Outdoor Rooms
- Backyard & Garden Ideas
- Queensland Living
- Australian House & Garden
- Burke's Backyard
- Newspapers
- Various media industry E-News publications

Direct Marketing

LQ will attend expos including HIA Home, Renovate & Build Expo in July 29 – 31 2011. LQ has booked a 36m² stand and will promote the Certified Specialist qualification to consumers. All visitors to the LQ stand will be encouraged to leave their contact details which will be used in our database marketing efforts.

Other consumer garden shows will also be attended.

Internet Marketing

LQ's website has been updated to include detailed information for consumers. Information explaining why they should engage a Certified Specialist and a list of Certified Specialists will also be included. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) will be used to drive traffic to the www.landscapequeensland.com.au landing page. The website will also be used to collect details from consumers. Additional information promoting the benefits of landscaping and greenlife will be posted to encourage greater uptake of landscape services and sales of horticulture products.

Database Marketing

LQ will build a significant database of consumer contacts. LQ will email regular and relevant information similar to PR articles. Also included will be our message to use a Certified Specialist.

Industry Promotion

When promoting to industry LQ considers three audiences, 1) potential certified specialists and 2) industry clients of certified specialists, 3) interstate landscape associations

Potential Certified Specialists

Database Marketing

LQ possess several extensive databases of potential certified specialists. These contacts will be sent marketing messages informing them of the scheme and the advantages to joining the scheme and how to join the scheme. These messages can be stand-alone emails and also as a supplement to our existing and well received e-news.

Direct Representation

LQ's Industry Development Officer will make direct approaches to larger contracting companies with a large employee base. The IDO will also approach franchise organisations that perform garden maintenance and other horticultural services.

Industry Clients

Promoting directly to the clients of Certified Specialists will generate awareness of the program with the objective that the clients will prefer to deal with Certified Specialists. LQ believes in addition to the activities outlined below significant momentum will be created by the adoption of the scheme by a small number of larger industry clients, such as Brisbane City Council, and/or a large land developer.

Direct Representation

The IDO will make representation to Parks Managers and other appropriate staff at SE QLD councils. Representations will also be made to major development and construction companies.

Internet Marketing

LQ's website will contain a dedicated industry section where potential clients of certified specialists will gain an understanding of what a certified specialist is and why they should be engaging their services.

Professional Networking

LQ has excellent working relationships with several associations in and around lifestyle horticulture. The IDO will endeavour to utilise these relationships to promote the scheme to the industry. For example the Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) will include the need for a developer to engage a Certified Landscape Professional in order to meet the criteria of UDIA's Enviro Developer Accreditation.

Interstate Landscape Associations

Interstate associations will be contacted and encouraged to embrace the scheme in their own states with a view to this being a nationally accepted scheme.

Consumer Awareness Program

Public Relations

The vast majority of consumers can be easily reached through print media. There are many consumer interest articles that LQ can release. These include latest trends in landscaping, what you should discuss with your landscape contractor, plant selection, information on diseases and pests, etc. Intertwined with this information will be the message that a Certified Specialist is the best person to engage for the work they require. Consumer protection in unregulated areas such as garden maintenance will also appeal to the general public and relevant government bodies.

Media vehicles include:

- Outdoor Design & Living
- Outdoor Design & Living's Outdoor Rooms
- Newspapers: local, state
- Various media industry E-News publications

Direct Marketing

LQ will attend expos including Outdoor Living and landscaping Expo May 2013 in Brisbane. LQ has booked a 36m² stand and will promote the Certified Specialist qualification to consumers. All visitors to the LQ stand will be encouraged to leave their contact details which will be used in our database marketing efforts.

Other consumer garden shows will also be attended.

Internet Marketing

LQ's website has been updated to include detailed information for consumers. Information explaining why they should engage a Certified Specialist and a list of Certified Specialists will also be included. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) will be used to drive traffic to the www.landscapequeensland.com.au landing page. The website will also be used to collect details from consumers. Additional information promoting the benefits of landscaping and green life will be posted to encourage greater uptake of landscape services and sales of horticulture products.

Database Marketing

LQ will build a significant database of consumer contacts. LQ will email regular and relevant information similar to PR articles. Also included will be our message to use a Certified Specialist.

Newspapers

Landscape Queensland has gained contacts for the Queensland Courier mail and the local based Quest newspapers. In addition the online publication Brisbane Times will be targeted. Articles of interest are being developed and will include information about Certified Specialist and contact details to enable consumers to get more information.

Marketing Brochures

Promotional brochures to be developed to communicate information about the certified specialist scheme and the benefits to the consumer of engaging a Landscape Queensland Certified Specialist Garden Maintenance. These brochures to be used primarily at consumer expos as part of the awareness program.

Awareness Program Timeline

2013 year

Month	Web site Promotion	Consumer Magazine	Newspaper article	Consumer Expo	Consumer Mailout/email
January	✓				
February	✓		✓		
March	✓	✓			
April	✓				✓
May	✓		✓	✓	
June	✓	✓			
July	✓				✓
August	✓		✓	✓	
September	✓	✓			
October	✓				
November	✓		✓		✓
December	✓	✓			

Landscape Industry Accreditation and Certification Scheme: Sustainability Plan Year 1

Component/Method	Action Steps	Timeline
Develop: Mission Statement, Vision, Case for Support	Talk with industry, state and national industry associations and relevant stakeholders about why this program is needed, who will benefit and why industry associations are best to undertake it. Talk to related industry accreditation scheme managers who might have a common vision.	Month 1-3
Research and Identify potential stakeholders	Solicit ideas from industry, industry suppliers and potential scheme supporters and partners. Identify scheme drivers: Government, body corporate, consumer groups	Month 1-3
Communicate with Stakeholders	Develop appropriate media and marketing communications to target various stakeholder groups.	Month 1-3
Initiate relationship with potential stakeholders	Schedule partner meetings. Select advisory committee and formulate meeting agenda. Prepare written materials for participants outlining programs general purpose and vision. Review scheme requirements or criteria to include prerequisites which mirror or encompass those required to achieve prequalified supplier/contractor status.	Month 4
Continue to cultivate stakeholders	Hold meetings. Include shared vision exercise to get input and expand vision to more stakeholders.	Month 4
Create buy in	Output of meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded vision that 	Month 4

	<p>includes stakeholders and potential partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of interested individuals and organisations to continue to advise on the program. <p>Summary of meeting highlighting groups that participated and seemed most interested.</p> <p>Assign advisory committee to share with those who could not attend.</p> <p>Press release to highlight participants and outcomes.</p> <p>Determine follow up steps and recontact participants.</p>	
Make the ASK	<p>Determine best strategic partnerships and key people to involve.</p> <p>Determine appropriate level of collaborative commitment to ask for.</p> <p>Determine who should ask for partnership involvement. Jointly develop strong case for partnership involvement. Be specific about level of commitment requested.</p>	Month 5
Follow up	<p>Formalise relationships with MOU, agreements and advisory committees roles, etc.</p>	Month 5-8
Be a good steward	<p>Continue to cultivate current partners and new stakeholders through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering opportunities for continued involvement in shaping the program through regular meetings and dialogue. 	Month 8 ongoing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing the credit. • Celebrating and promoting successes. • Making sure program is mutually beneficial to all partners. 	
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Landscape Industry Accreditation and Certification Scheme: Sustainability Plan Year 2

Component/Method	Action Steps	Timeline
Develop: Mission Statement, Vision, Case for Support	Talk with staff, committee members, partners and stakeholders about outcomes for year 1. Review progress towards goals, who will benefit, who else needs to be involved. Review industry needs and trends. Revise mission and vision as necessary.	Month 13-14
Research and Identify potential stakeholders/prospects	Research industry suppliers, government funding, and other options to support the program. Solicit ideas from industry, industry suppliers and potential scheme supporters and partners including Identify scheme drivers: Government, body corporate, consumer groups for further contacts they have.	Month 13-14
Communicate with Stakeholders	Talk to industry about how the program can benefit them. Get feedback. Identify any products or services that could be developed as part of the program and that are valued by participants which may create income to offset program expenses. Create a marketing team and develop a marketing plan to market these options. With staff and advisory committee discuss financial	Month 13-16

	<p>goals and budgets.</p> <p>Cultivate relationship with media. Communicate program and highlight partners who are involved.</p>	
Initiate relationship with potential prospects	<p>Schedule partner meetings. Select advisory committee and formulate meeting agenda.</p> <p>Prepare written materials for participants outlining programs general purpose and vision.</p> <p>Review scheme requirements or criteria to include prerequisites which mirror or encompass those required to achieve prequalified supplier/contractor status.</p>	Month 14
Continue to cultivate prospects	<p>Hold meetings. Include shared vision exercise to get input and expand vision to more stakeholders.</p>	Month 15
Create buy in	<p>Output of meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded vision that includes stakeholders and potential partners. • Identification of interested individuals and organisations to continue to advise on the program. <p>Summary of meeting highlighting groups that participated and seemed most interested.</p> <p>Assign advisory committee to share with those who could not attend.</p>	Month 15 ongoing
Make the ASK	<p>Determine best strategic partnerships and key people to involve.</p> <p>Determine appropriate level of collaborative commitment to ask for.</p>	Month 16-18

	Determine who should ask for partnership involvement. Jointly develop strong case for partnership involvement. Be specific about level of commitment requested	
Follow up	Formalise relationships with MOU, agreements and advisory committees roles, etc.	Month 16-18
Be a good steward	Continue to cultivate current partners and new stakeholders through; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering opportunities for continued involvement in shaping the program through regular meetings and dialogue. • Sharing the credit. • Celebrating and promoting successes. Making sure program is mutually beneficial to all partners.	Month 18 ongoing

Landscape Industry Accreditation and Certification Scheme: Sustainability Plan Year 3

Component/Method	Action Steps	Timeline
Develop: Mission Statement, Vision, Case for Support	Talk with staff, committee members, partners and stakeholders about outcomes for year 2. Review progress towards goals, who will benefit, who else needs to be involved. Review industry needs and trends. Revise mission and vision as necessary.	Month 24
Research and Identify potential stakeholders/prospects	Research industry suppliers, government funding, and other options to support the	Month 25-26

	<p>program.</p> <p>Solicit ideas from industry, industry suppliers and potential scheme supporters and partners including</p> <p>Identify scheme drivers:</p> <p>Government, body corporate, consumer groups for further contacts they have.</p>	
Communicate with Stakeholders	<p>Talk to industry about how the program can benefit them. Get feedback.</p> <p>Identify any products or services that could be developed as part of the program and that are valued by participants which may create income to offset program expenses. Create a marketing team and develop a marketing plan to market these options.</p> <p>With staff and advisory committee discuss financial goals and budgets.</p> <p>Cultivate relationship with media. Communicate program and highlight partners who are involved.</p>	Month 25-28
Continue to cultivate prospects	<p>Hold meetings. Include shared vision exercise to get input and expand vision to more stakeholders.</p>	Month 27 ongoing
Create buy in	<p>Output of meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded vision that includes stakeholders and potential partners. • Identification of interested individuals and organisations to continue to advise on the program. <p>Summary of meeting highlighting groups that participated and seemed most interested.</p>	Month 28 ongoing

	Assign advisory committee to share with those who could not attend.	
Make the ASK	<p>Determine best strategic partnerships and key people to involve.</p> <p>Determine appropriate level of collaborative commitment to ask for.</p> <p>Determine who should ask for partnership involvement. Jointly develop strong case for partnership involvement. Be specific about level of commitment requested</p>	Month 16-18
Follow up	Formalise relationships with MOU, agreements and advisory committees roles, etc.	Month 26 ongoing
Be a good steward	<p>Continue to cultivate current partners and new stakeholders through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering opportunities for continued involvement in shaping the program through regular meetings and dialogue. • Sharing the credit. • Celebrating and promoting successes. <p>Making sure program is mutually beneficial to all partners.</p>	Month 28 ongoing