

# Aboriginal Traineeships

Information for New Trainees



nsw Federation of  
Housing Associations inc





*"Spreading the message"*  
© Rodney Matthews 2008

## Artist's story & his painting – Rodney Matthews

I am a proud suburban Koori man. I have grown up in the west of Sydney and lived there my entire life and I call the vast Aboriginal communities of the region my mob and my place of belonging. My people hail from the far and wide which is not too different from the rest of the 'mob' in my area.

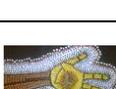
My mum is a proud Kamilaroi woman hailing from the northern arid centre of NSW, but moved to the big smoke long ago, and she has plenty of 'big smoke' knowledge. My dad is a Wiradjuri man from the Dubbo/Wellington area, a salt of the earth character with a bit of bush knowledge. I guess that's what makes me who I am, what I learned from my folks and my mob has helped shape me.

My strong upbringing has taken me through university and helped me achieve many things that allow me to be a role model for the younger generation coming through. Giving to them is important, as is giving back to the Elders that helped me grow into the man I am. Which brings me to my painting titled *'spreading the message'*, which I guess I can describe as a sense of giving back to that which gave to you. A pretty important message I seem to think, that's just my two cents.



*Artist: Rodney Matthews*

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# Welcome

Welcome to your traineeship and a career in community housing. This traineeship is an excellent way for you to gain valuable employment, work experience and training in an important and interesting part of the community services sector.

Over the two (2) years of your traineeship, you will be working full-time with your housing association and studying part-time for the Certificate IV in Social Housing CHC40908. This training provides a qualification accepted across the community and social housing industry and is designed to meet your needs as the trainee, as well as your employer's, the housing association. You will do most of your training on the job with your housing association and part of the training will be away from the workplace. This is called 'off the job training'.

The off-the-job training component (or classes) will be delivered by the NSW Federation of Housing Associations (operating as the Centre for Training in Social Housing). They are a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and have been providing social housing training for over ten years.

## What can you expect?

You will:

- work full-time for your housing association for two years;
- be employed under the Social and Community Services (State) Award (your employer will give you more details about this);
- study part-time for a Certificate IV in Social Housing ;
- be released during paid work time to attend this training and other approved training activities such as an introduction workshop; and
- be provided with informal and formal on-the-job training and work experience and support by staff in your housing association.

Assistance could include (Centrelink):

- Living Away From Home Allowance
- Public Transport concessions
- Health Care Card
- One off incentive payment at commencement of traineeships

You can find out more about these when a representative from the New Apprenticeships Centres (NAC) visits you and your employer to draw up the necessary documents to formalise your traineeship. The NAC representative will visit you within the first few weeks of you starting work.

## **Aboriginal traineeships**

The Centre for Training in Social Housing (CTSH), together with the housing association you are employed with are developing and supporting the implementation of a traineeship program for Aboriginal people with two aims in mind:

- to assist housing associations to improve and increase housing options for Aboriginal people; and
- to provide training, skills and employment opportunities in community housing for Aboriginal people.

The NSWFHA is the peak body representing community housing associations in NSW. The Federation has a membership of over 100 organisations and includes housing associations, housing co-operatives, Aboriginal housing organisations, church based housing organisations and supported accommodation services. The principles of access and equity direct all of the Federation's planning and services.

The Federation leads the way in supporting community based housing associations to deliver high quality, professional housing services to tenants, applicants and for the community. We believe that clients and local communities are the top priority of community housing associations.

## **About your training**

In order to gain your qualification – the Certificate IV in Social Housing CHC40908 - you will have to meet 'national competency standards'. These describe the knowledge, skills and personal attributes needed to work effectively in community housing. The emphasis is on the PRACTICAL competence and skills you need and how you can apply what you know to your day-to-day work with the housing association.

We are offering accredited training because it means that this qualification is nationally recognised and allows you to gain formal recognition of your skills. With the Certificate IV, you can work towards higher qualifications such as a Diploma or Bachelor degree down the track - not just in community housing but in other parts of the community services sector (e.g. youth work, aged care, etc).

The Certificate IV is divided into various subjects (also called ‘units of competency’). Within each unit there is a series of learning outcomes which are the skills or competencies that you need to show you can do. This is done by attending the training day or being sent a distance training pack and completing assessment requirements for each unit. Most of these assessments are very practical – you could be doing work based projects for example, rather than writing many long essays.

You will be getting a lot of support from both your supervisor (and others) in your housing association as well as from the trainers and assessors at the CTSH. We will also put you in touch with other Aboriginal trainees in NSW who you can talk with about assessments, work issues and anything else related to your traineeship.

All the face to face training for the Certificate IV will be held at the NSWFHA office in Surry Hills in Sydney unless alternative venues are arranged. You will get confirmation of these details before you start the training. A distance information booklet is available on our website for trainees considering doing the course via distance or correspondence.

## **About the Certificate IV in Social Housing CHC40908**

Over the 2 years that you will be studying, you will need to successfully complete fifteen (15) units of competency - ten (10) compulsory units and five (5) electives (see attached sample list of subjects). You can receive a Statement of Attainment for each unit you successfully complete or the full Certificate IV at the end of the course. There are assessment tasks for each of the units and these tasks must be successfully completed in order to be awarded with a Statement of Attainment or the Certificate IV qualification.

You will get all the information you need about each unit when you commence the training for that unit. You will receive course notes, reading materials, interactive workbooks, self assessment exercises and the assessment requirements for each unit.

Talk to your trainer if you have any questions or concerns.

## **Registering for the Certificate IV in Social Housing training**

You will need to register with CTSH to do the Certificate IV in Social Housing. CTSH produce a training information booklet each year which gives details of all face to face and distance delivery training available throughout the year. The units available for you to choose from are very similar from year to year, however elective unit choices can change for the face to face training. This is important to note when choosing your electives.

The main things to know when registering for the Certificate IV are:

1. You can start the Certificate IV qualification at any time during the year.
2. There is no set order that you have to do the units in.
3. Face to face training days are usually delivered over 2 consecutive days at the end of each month, although this may vary slightly.
4. You have 2 years to complete the qualification so you can choose how many units you plan to do in each of the 2 years. You may, for example, want to give yourself a bit more time between attending training or being sent distance units at the beginning of your traineeship until you are more familiar with the process.
5. You can change your registration in discussion with your workplace and with the training co-ordinator at CTSH at any time, as long as we have 5 days notice prior to attending or being sent a training package. For example, you may want to swap your chosen unit(s) around to fit in with the area you are currently working in.
6. Some of the units have been grouped together, for example 2 of the compulsory units are delivered on the same day of face to face training, and have been combined into the one distance pack and assessment task. This occurs more frequently in the elective options. Some have 2 or 3 units in one day/distance pack. This will affect the number of training days you need to attend or distance packs you need to complete.

The current training handbook is available on our website. This will give you a lot of information regarding the Certificate IV qualification including doing the training face to face in a 'class room' style of delivery with other people or doing it via distance delivery. The website address is:

<http://www.communityhousing.org.au>

then go to the Training section and click on Training Info. There is also other useful information for you to look at here.

## Assessments

The Certificate IV is meant to be useful to you in your everyday work with your housing association. It is NOT academically oriented and does not include lots of theory and essay writing. Rather, it is a qualification that is based on practical skills and knowledge.

The assessment tasks reflect this. They are relevant, practical and on-the-job oriented. Not all of them involve writing but most do, so if you feel you need assistance with completing the assessments please let your trainer know. The CTSH trainers are happy to talk about alternative ways of assessing your competence, knowledge and skills (e.g. this may involve coming to your workplace and observing you doing a task).

Your studies and assessment tasks will be flexible and will include a variety of methods of learning and assessment. Your trainer will give you more information about this.

## Study time

You will be released from your workplace to attend formal training in Sydney (or an alternative location if necessary). The 15 units that you attend will be spaced out over the 2 years of your traineeship so that you will be able to keep on top of your studies and assessment work.

It's hard to be exact, but generally you will need to allow between 4 and 5 hours per week of study time for **each** of the 15 units you will be studying. That's in addition to the time you will be attending the training session (or classes). This study time gives you a chance to do the reading, the exercises and the assessments. It's important to allow for this time as part of your weekly workplan in your workplace. It is also important for your employer to be aware that this is part of your traineeship.

## Certificate IV in Social Housing units of competency

### Compulsory units

You have to complete the following 10 units:

1. *Social Housing – the Big Picture*: Work effectively in social housing CHCCH301A
2. Manage and maintain tenancy agreements and services CHCCH410A
3. *Strengthening Communication in Your Workplace*: Use targeted communication skills to build relationships CHCCOM403A
4. *Keep it legal!* Work within a relevant legal and ethical framework CHCCS400A
5. Provide support services to clients CHCCS419B
6. Work with other services CHCNET501A
7. Provide services to clients with complex needs CHCCS504A
8. *Understanding homelessness*: Work effectively with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness CHCCH427A
9. *Work safe!* Contribute to OHS processes HLTOHS300A
10. *Understanding culture*: Work effectively with culturally diverse clients and co-workers HLTHIR403B

## Elective units we offer

You have to complete at least 5 elective units to complete the qualification

### Social housing electives:

1. Manage housing application processes CHCCH411A
2. Manage housing allocations CHCCH412C
3. Manage tenancy rent, charges and rental arrears CHCCH13A
4. Manage rental assistance process CHCCH414C
5. Manage vacant properties CHCCH416C
6. Manage leasehold properties CHCCH424B
7. Respond to property maintenance enquiries

### Property industry electives:

8. Undertake property inspection CPPDSM301A

### Client services electives:

9. Facilitate client participation in the organisation and its management CHCCS410A

### Work with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities:

10. Work effectively with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people HLTHIR404B

### Community development electives:

11. Work within a community development framework CHCCD412A

## Helpful information for support

Your supervisor at your housing association is the first person you should be in contact with. Speak to them about any concerns you have with your work or your training.

You can also talk to your trainers at CTSH – where you come to do the training sessions in Sydney (Surry Hills). You will be given their telephone numbers or email addresses so you can contact them between training days. Talk to them about any study issues including assessment requirements.

You will also be given the names and contact details of other Aboriginal trainees in NSW as well as other Aboriginal people working in the field or in related areas. You may already know people who will be helpful during this time.

The contacts and networks you make are important. Add to them and keep them up to date. They will support you throughout your traineeship and beyond.

**Good luck and congratulations on your  
appointment to your traineeship.**

**We hope that the next two years are fulfilling and  
enjoyable.**

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