



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

PSPCOM503A Build and maintain community relationships

Revision Number: 3

PSPCOM503A Build and maintain community relationships

Modification History

Release	TP Version	Comments
3	PSP12V1	Unit descriptor edited.
2	PSP04V4.2	Layout adjusted. No changes to content.
1	PSP04V4.1	Primary release.

Unit Descriptor

This unit covers building, rebuilding and maintaining trusting relationships with individuals and communities by public sector officers. It includes setting the parameters for relationships or partnerships, providing information relating to community engagement, and building community engagement and community problem solving capacity.

In practice, building and maintaining community relationships overlaps with other generalist or specialist work activities such as acting ethically, providing leadership, developing client services, developing policy, undertaking research, facilitating change, etc.

No licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication

Application of the Unit

Not applicable.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not applicable.

Pre-Requisites

Not applicable.

Employability Skills Information

This unit contains employability skills.

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements are the essential outcomes of the unit of competency. Together, performance criteria specify the requirements for competent performance. Text in ***bold italics*** is explained in the Range Statement following.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

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| 1. Set the parameters for relationships or partnerships | 1.1 A <i>contextual framework</i> is developed to assist in analysing and setting parameters for <i>relationships/partnerships</i> in accordance with organisational policy and procedure.
1.2 The parameters and purpose for the relationships/partnerships are established and agreed.
1.3 The emergence of new ideas and options are allowed for in the flexibility of the purpose.
1.4 The dynamics within and across relationships/partnerships are identified and managed.
1.5 Benefits for both parties are identified and agreed in accordance with organisational policy and procedure.
1.6 <i>Constraints</i> are identified, including time, procedural and resource limitations, and resources are allocated in accordance with organisational requirements. |
| 2. Provide information relating to community engagement | 2.1 Current community understanding of the roles and responsibilities of public officials is assessed, and information is provided to clarify the roles and responsibilities in accordance with organisational policy and procedures.
2.2 The rights and responsibilities of individuals and communities to be involved in government processes and decision making are explained in a manner accessible to the audience.
2.3 Government/agency priorities, strategic direction, systems, decision making and approval processes are communicated using language, materials and timelines to suit the audience and the occasion.
2.4 <i>Opportunities for community involvement</i> in government/agency processes and decision making are communicated in ways suited to the <i>diversity</i> of the community. |
| 3. Build community engagement capacity | 3.1 The skills and knowledge requirements of individuals and communities to engage with government are identified and addressed with a range of strategies tailored to individual needs.
3.2 <i>Opportunities for individuals and communities to develop their capacity</i> to engage with government are identified collaboratively, resourced and promoted in accordance with organisational policy and procedures.
3.3 <i>Innovative strategies</i> are developed and implemented to identify and reach out to those who have not yet connected with government, and those who have had a previous poor experience in attempting to engage with government.
3.4 <i>Informal and formal community networks</i> are tapped into to strengthen local capital and to ensure ongoing capacity.
3.5 <i>Barriers to community engagement</i> are identified and solutions formulated and implemented in accordance with organisational |

ELEMENT**PERFORMANCE CRITERIA****4. Build community problem-solving capacity**

policy and procedures and community context.

- 4.1 Information and opportunities for involvement in government processes and decision making are provided to individuals and communities in accordance with their needs and preferences.
- 4.2 Existing and *new ways to engage* with government are identified and promoted in a variety of ways suited to diverse communities.
- 4.3 Mechanisms for communities to raise their own *issues* with government are developed, implemented and promoted in accordance with organisational policy and procedures and community context.
- 4.4 A range of *strategies* to address community issues is developed in partnership with communities.
- 4.5 Mutually developed and agreed solutions to community issues are implemented in accordance with organisational policy and procedures.
- 4.6 Strategies for reporting developments to communities are identified and utilised.

Required Skills and Knowledge

This section describes the essential skills and knowledge and their level, required for this unit.

Skill requirements

Look for evidence that confirms skills in:

- establishing and fostering transparent, trusting relationships/partnerships with individuals and communities
- maintaining multiple and potentially conflicting relationships/partnerships
- working with diverse communities using a range of communication styles to suit different audiences and purposes
- explaining complex and formal policies and concepts to a variety of audiences
- responding to diversity, including gender and disability
- applying lateral thinking to provide solutions and overcome barriers to community engagement
- linking people to appropriate capacity-building opportunities
- applying workplace safety procedures to community engagement activities
- preparing community engagement information requiring the presentation of complex information using simple language structures and precision of expression

Knowledge requirements

Look for evidence that confirms knowledge and understanding of:

- legislation, regulations, policies, procedures and guidelines relating to community engagement
- community engagement theory, principles, practices and techniques
- community development practices and principles
- public sector values and codes of conduct
- leadership and the managing of expectations in the context of community engagement
- principles of cultural awareness and cross-cultural communication
- equal employment opportunity, equity and diversity principles
- workplace safety procedures relating to community engagement activities

Evidence Guide

The Evidence Guide specifies the evidence required to demonstrate achievement in the unit of competency as a whole. It must be read in conjunction with the Unit descriptor, Performance Criteria, the Range Statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Public Sector Training Package.

Units to be assessed together

- *Pre-requisite* units that must be achieved prior to this unit: *Nil*
- *Co-requisite* units that must be assessed with this unit: *Nil*
- *Co-assessed units* that may be assessed with this unit to increase the efficiency and realism of the assessment process include, but are not limited to:
 - PSPCOM501A Prepare for community engagement
 - PSPCOM502A Develop and implement community engagement strategies
 - PSPETHC501B Promote the values and ethos of public service
 - PSPGOV502B Develop client services
 - PSPGOV504B Undertake research and analysis
 - PSPGOV505A Promote diversity
 - PSPGOV507A Undertake negotiations
 - PSPGOV508A Manage conflict
 - PSPGOV511A Provide leadership
 - PSPGOV512A Use complex workplace communication strategies
 - PSPGOV514A Facilitate change
 - PSPLEGN501B Promote compliance with legislation in the public sector
 - PSPOHS501A Monitor and maintain workplace safety

Overview of evidence requirements

In addition to integrated demonstration of the elements and their related performance criteria, look for evidence that confirms:

- the knowledge requirements of this unit
- the skill requirements of this unit
- application of the Employability Skills as they relate to this unit (see Employability Summaries in Qualifications Framework)
- community relationships built and maintained in a range of (3 or more) contexts (or occasions, over time)

Resources required to carry out assessment

These resources include:

- community information, case studies or scenarios, including current journals, international case studies
- community engagement theory, principles, practices and techniques
- procedures and protocols for community engagement, including

Where and how to assess evidence

- occupational health and safety
- policy and legislation related to community engagement
- public sector values and codes of conduct

Valid assessment of this unit requires:

- a workplace environment, or one that closely resembles normal work practice and replicates the range of conditions likely to be encountered when building and maintaining community relationships, including coping with difficulties, irregularities and breakdowns in routine
- community relationships built and maintained in a range of (3 or more) contexts (or occasions, over time)

Assessment methods should reflect workplace demands, such as literacy, and the needs of particular groups, such as:

- people with disabilities
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- women
- young people
- older people
- people in rural and remote locations

Assessment methods suitable for valid and reliable assessment of this competency may include, but are not limited to, a combination of 2 or more of:

- case studies
- demonstration
- portfolios
- projects
- questioning
- scenarios
- authenticated evidence from the workplace and/or training courses

For consistency of assessment

Evidence must be gathered over time in a range of contexts to ensure the person can achieve the unit outcome and apply the competency in different situations or environments

Range Statement

The Range Statement provides information about the context in which the unit of competency is carried out. The variables cater for differences between States and Territories and the Commonwealth, and between organisations and workplaces. They allow for different work requirements, work practices and knowledge. The Range Statement also provides a focus for assessment. It relates to the unit as a whole. Text in ***bold italics*** in the Performance Criteria is explained here.

A <i>contextual framework</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dynamics of community • community power structures • big political versus community politics (big 'P' v little 'p') • collaborations • networks • formal or informal partnerships • timelines for relationship building • purpose of partnership/relationship building and therefore type of partnership/relationship to be developed • level of agency support
Relationships/partnerships may be with:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individuals • community groups • ethnic communities • local residents - through place-based initiatives • non-government organisations • private sector organisations • other public sector agencies • media organisations • business community • industry specific target groups
Constraints may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of knowledge • lack of understanding • lack of decision making powers • lack of time and resources • geographic location • previous experiences with engagement processes • community angst or lack of trust • organisational capacity to respond to community • external factors (including non-negotiables) • perceived status of organisation in the community • community expectations of the partnership/relationship • cost for the community to be involved, such as transport, time off work, childcare
Opportunities for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'whole of government' forums and networks as part of

community involvement may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• regional/place-based strategies• 'whole of community' projects as part of regional/place-based strategies• policy development• program or service delivery planning or decision making• review or evaluation of existing policies, programs or services• involvement through:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cabinet sittings• charettes• citizens' panels/juries• community-based information• consultations• correspondence with/to Members of Parliament• direct participation• employment of local community members• focus groups• government announcements• information flows• media campaigns• one-on-one meetings• parliamentary sittings• participation in local events• public meetings/forums• regional forums• response/s to questionnaires• scenario planning• think tanks• visioning• workshops
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Community diversity may include differences in:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • age • cultural background • educational level • English language proficiency • ethnicity • expertise • family responsibilities • gender • household structure (couples, singles, single parents, same sex relationships) • interests • interpersonal approach • language • length of residence • life experience • marital status • mobility • physical ability • political orientation • religious belief • sexual orientation • socio-economic background • thinking/learning styles • work experiences
Opportunities for individuals and communities to develop their capacity may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formal and informal leadership programs • formal or informal mentoring and coaching programs • access to resources and information to build knowledge • community visioning • community development • attendance at workshops • agency professional development • participation opportunities • formal learning opportunities • community building networks
Innovative strategies must:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be tailored to those being approached • take account of past failures/difficulties • take advantage of a range of media/communication channels
Informal and formal community networks may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interest groups • clubs • associations • leadership structures

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• community leaders/elders (place-based)• word of mouth• web-based information networks• electronic communication• (online) virtual learning communities• reference groups• church groups• service clubs• existing multi-agency reference groups• school networks• community organisations• community services• non-government organisations• religious and cultural networks
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Barriers to community engagement may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access constraints • community perception that nothing ever comes from engagement with government - 'talk fest' • cultural barriers • diversity variables listed previously • geographical isolation • inappropriate timing, venues and strategies • lack of awareness of the full range of government services • lack of clear branding in government communications • lack of confidence or trust in government • lack of follow-up within community engagement strategies • lack of information at the local level through local resources such as community newspapers • lack of interest in or commitment to the issues • lack of knowledge about the structure of government (at all three levels) • lack of openness/transparency • lack of understanding about an actual issue - building knowledge and literacy, knowing the scenarios • lack of understanding or clarity about the engagement process • language issues • limited access to effective information in first language • little access to traditional ethnic media channels such as print and radio or an integrated mix • mobility issues • over-reliance on or sole use of electronic media and Internet • poor integration of government information strategies • poor monitoring and feedback loops • poor past experiences with engagement processes • previous over-consultation • social capital gate keepers - residents who block broad participation • socio-economic levels • the difficulty of contacting the right area of government first time (no 'one number for government') • the terminology and style of copy used in government information • time constraints • unequal access to information, participation, influence on decision making
New ways to engage may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • active participation in government planning and decisions making through a range of innovative and appropriate methods and techniques such as:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• citizens' juries• citizens' panels• deliberative polling• negotiation tables• online consultation• policy round tables• policy action teams• search conferences
Community issues may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• local solutions to a range of local issues• new or improved services or programs• infrastructure• strategic planning• community development• crime reduction
Strategies to address issues may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• community planning processes• community development processes• collaborative service and program planning

Unit Sector(s)

Not applicable.

Competency field

Community Engagement.