

## Developing relevant and appropriate products and services

IBSA will continue to provide leadership by developing fresh training products and services to support the development of the skills needed for a flexible, innovative and adaptable workforce.

Training Packages are an important part of IBSA's core business: they represent a large investment of public funds, they have developed a reputation for quality, and through the processes used to specify industry skill development needs they have greatly enhanced industry's role in the VET sector. IBSA's Training Packages will continue to be reviewed, maintained, and updated to ensure relevance and currency as well as to recognise leading-edge developments in industry.

However future effort needs to be more focused on how IBSA can best support industry skill development needs through developing more innovative ways of using training products beyond the current confines. There will be a focus on working with other ISCs and the National Quality Council to explore ways of moving from 'competence' to 'capability', and integrating the skills required for innovation into new training products; and on ensuring that national training products can be adapted to respond more rapidly to emerging skill development needs.

With an eye to workforce mobility and the global labour market, there will also be a focus on internationalisation, ensuring that IBSA skill standards and qualifications are compatible where appropriate with the various systems of overseas qualification frameworks.

## Providing advice to RTO's on skills needs and solutions

IBSA will expand its role of providing advice to RTOs to support the provision of skills-based solutions in response to identified business problems. This will be done by clarifying the needs and demands of IBSA's industries, then working with RTOs to develop models of how training products can be used to build innovative capability in the real world, in a way that reflects the principles of innovation and adds value to industry.

## Better Business Through Innovation

IBSA is one of 11 authorised Industry Skills Councils, and is Australia's official voice on skills and training for industries underpinning the innovation economy:

Education      Financial Services      Business Services  
Printing & Graphic Arts      Cultural & Related Industries      Information & Communication Technologies

IBSA's mission is to build the capability, professionalism and innovative capacity of the Australian workforce. Sharp-focussed consultation with industry allows us to gather market intelligence on skill needs and trends. Our workforce development products and services reflect real industry skill requirements and are designed to foster innovation in thinking and practice.

To bring together fresh thinking and sound research IBSA fosters the support and collaboration of informed people from across industry, vocational education and training and research sectors.



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# strategic directions 2008 - 2010



# About IBSA

Innovation & Business Skills Australia (IBSA) is an Industry Skills Council recognised and funded by the Australian Government to:

- provide integrated industry intelligence and advice to governments on workforce development and skills needs;
- maintain and improve training materials and supporting products and services; and
- provide advice on skills, training and workforce development to enterprises.

IBSA engages in innovative thinking and incorporates creativity, fresh approaches and collaboration to help build the capability, professionalism and innovative capacity of the Australian workforce.

What makes IBSA unique is its whole-of-system impact: its extensive industry coverage, the major contribution of its industries to the nation's prosperity, and the responsibility carried by the first word in its title: *innovation*.

## The context

The demand for skills and knowledge in Australia is being re-shaped by changes in work, changes in the labour market, changes in technology, increasing regulation and compliance requirements, industry and occupational convergence, and increasing competition in global markets. The impact of an ageing population and workforce, coupled with the need to increase levels of work participation, means that skills development is a priority for all Australian enterprises and for all Australian governments. Individuals need to enter the workforce with high levels of skills and knowledge and to have the capacity for ongoing learning and skills acquisition.

IBSA's occupational groups include a high proportion of knowledge workers such as managers, administrators, professionals and associate professionals. Knowledge work within industries and organisations, as well as innovation and creativity, are increasingly being seen as the critical ingredients of economic success.

IBSA industries are important contributors to the Australian economy (about one-quarter of Australia's GDP) and require specific technical and occupational skills for their effective operation. More broadly, innovation and business skills help to create and sustain growth in all industries. IBSA provides for skills across multiple industries and locations beyond its direct workforce in areas such as critical thinking, information and computer literacy, project management, communication, and the capacity for creativity and innovation.

## Industry coverage

BUSINESS CULTURAL & RELATED INDUSTRIES PRINTING & GRAPHIC ARTS  
FINANCE INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

## What this means for IBSA

The challenge for IBSA is to further deepen its understanding of its industries and look beyond existing structures to new forms of training products which will best serve those industries.

IBSA's workforce development focus also needs to reflect that IBSA's industries operate in a global market, both for business and the supply of labour.

A further challenge is for IBSA to rise to the challenge of leadership in innovation. While there is growing awareness in Australia at a national level of the need to be more innovative, it is not enough merely to espouse 'innovation'. The right conditions need to exist for innovation to occur, including clarity around the skills that are needed to ensure that innovation will flourish, and IBSA will need to ensure that everything it does reflects the need for innovation within its industries.

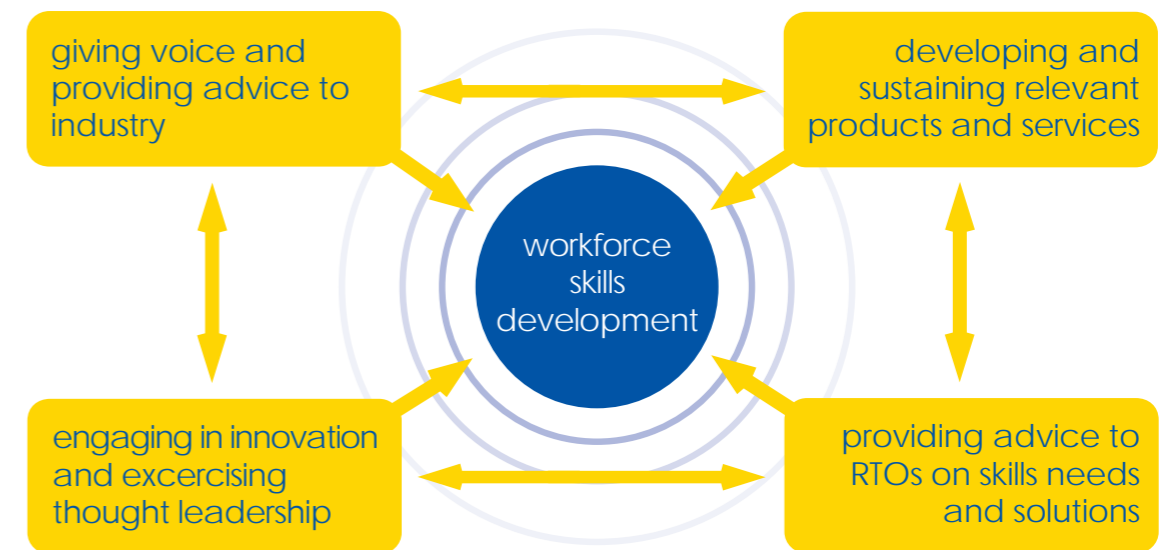
IBSA needs to focus on achieving its goals through connections and collaborations with enterprises, industries and training organisations.

The Strategic Direction has been prepared to ensure that IBSA rises to these challenges.

## IBSA's Strategic Direction 2008 - 2010

During 2008-2010, IBSA will advance the skill development within the workforces of its industries, by:

- giving voice and providing advice to industry,
- engaging in innovation and exercising thought leadership,
- developing and sustaining relevant products and services, and
- providing advice to RTOs on skill needs and solutions.



## Giving voice and providing advice to industry

IBSA is committed to representing industry by using robust processes, including regular Environmental Scans, to obtain on-going market intelligence, and promoting evidence-based decisions. This will ensure that IBSA continues to be informed by, and to inform, new developments in its industries, so that industry's views and needs can be promoted and communicated to RTOs.

This will enable IBSA to support a holistic approach to workforce skill development in its industries, by clearly articulating the importance of skill development and its contribution to productivity and profitability, and by ensuring a connection with government policies required for skill development.

It will also enable IBSA to ensure that the perspectives of its industries inform the shaping of national education and training systems, helping to redefine vocational education and training and developing mechanisms for collaboration between industry and the relevant portfolios in State and Federal governments.

IBSA will also establish brokerage services and mechanisms to help enterprises solve business or workplace problems by providing training needs analysis, support services, and advice on skills-related training-based solutions.

## Engaging in innovation and exercising thought leadership

IBSA's strategic direction in innovation is three-fold. Firstly, IBSA will contribute to the creation of a national culture that establishes and sustains innovation. This will be done in collaboration with industry, government and the VET sector by building and sharing knowledge about explicit conditions that cause innovation, and the commercialisation of innovation, to occur. IBSA will also develop frameworks and resources to help organisations develop their innovative capacity, and describe the learning approaches that will develop innovative capacity.

Secondly, IBSA will ensure that it is well-positioned to innovate in its contributions to education and training. It will do this by exploring new knowledge systems, ways of measuring tacit knowledge, conceptions of work, and the need for people to work collaboratively, and ensuring that mechanisms are developed for these ideas to find their way into the training system; and it will foresight skill development needs into the next decade.

Thirdly, IBSA is determined to work the principles of innovation into everything it does, and to build acceptance and recognition by industry and the VET system that IBSA has a role to play in bringing about cultural change in enterprises and providers.