



# THE ANZSCO COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

## *A Clarification of its Relevance to the Aesthetics Industry*

The ANZSCO Review has created concerns within the industry about what it means and how it will impact the profession in the future with a great deal of anxiety that jobs can be lost with incorrect classifications.

This report aims to present APAN's position in an easy-to-follow summary of our interpretation and provide you with clarity to assist with any confusion. We will do this by first addressing several commonly asked questions as listed below:

1. Who is commissioning the ANZSCO Report and what is their objective?
2. What exactly is the ANZSCO Report?
3. Why do the current ANZSCO Codes need updating?
4. Is the outcome a Regulation?
5. Current ANZSCO Code Skills Level Classifications.
6. How are both the Beauty and Dermal Clinicians affected?

Let's review each question:

### **WHO IS COMMISSIONING THE ANZSCO REPORT AND WHAT IS THEIR OBJECTIVE?**

The ANZSCO Report has been commissioned by the **Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)** to undertake a comprehensive review of how occupations are classified. They have several objectives including:

- **Determining accurate classifications or changes to various occupations:** As occupations evolve over the years and expand their scope of practices, their

classifications may also change e.g. in the beauty industry, a Certificate III will be classified as a beautician, whereas a Certificate IV in Beauty Therapy would be classified as a beauty therapist. Over the past 15 years we also now have Dermal Therapists as well as Dermal Clinicians or Clinical Aestheticians, the latter of which is not formally identified by the ABS, so currently we do not have a specific wage award for these classifications.

- **Any occupations that are declining or becoming redundant:** This is particularly important to the ABS, as they wish to understand how any potential changes to occupations may impact the contemporary labour market.
- **To Codify employer group classifications for ease of reference:** More specifically the ANZSCO Codes are used for the following reasons:
  - Skilled Migration Programs
  - Workforce planning
  - Census Data Collection
  - Housing
  - Education Programs - development and funding

**The ANZSCO Codes can also be used indirectly by employer groups to:**

- Determining classification categories and the most appropriate modern awards for remuneration – this is an important one that currently needs updating, specifically for dermal clinicians.
- Developing position descriptions with occupation titles and tasks
- Determining appropriate qualifications and experience
- Describing tasks, duties, practical and clinical skills and knowledge

The ANZSCO review has undergone four rounds of public consultation from 2023-2024 and the updated classification are anticipated to be released in December 2024, in time for use by the 2026 Census.

## **WHAT EXACTLY IS THE ANZSCO REPORT?**

ANZSCO is the skill-based classification used to categorise all occupations and jobs undertaken for profit in the Australian and New Zealand labour markets. As we have already mentioned this report is commissioned by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and its primary objective is to investigate several occupations, review their scope of practice and classify them under a coding system. This information is used to disseminate all official statistics on occupations and is a foundation of Australia's statistical infrastructure.

ANZSCO is a hierarchical classification system that categorises occupations according to one of eight major groups and then into increasingly smaller sub-categories: sub-major group; minor group; unit group, before resulting in the specific occupation.

## WHY DO THE CURRENT ANZSCO CODES NEED UPDATING?

While ANZSCO has previously had some minor updates, it largely based on the original 2006 version, which based its findings on the 2001 labour market. As you can imagine, since then the beauty and aesthetics industry has experience substantial advances in modalities and educational qualifications. These include the introduction of graduate certificates and advanced diplomas in laser, IPL and dermal therapies, as well as tertiary qualifications in dermal therapies and clinical aesthetics that are currently not included in an occupation title. Additionally, cosmetic tattooists, previously only had a Unit of Competency as an option. Since 2023, this has been replaced with a full diploma for cosmetic tattooists.

Some of these changes have been in place both recently, as well as over the past 15 to 20 years, however, very little consideration of their existence is recognised by government departments and one of the reasons being that they are not defined with ABS data until the 2021 census.

It is important to note that often a classification may not occur until the modality secures a substantial number of practitioners within that category. In the past, this has been the case with dermal therapists and dermal clinicians, however both ASDC and APAN are pursuing their recognition as the number of practitioners are now increasing. On the other hand, as the Diploma in Cosmetic Tattooing is still relatively new, we anticipate it is currently premature to pursue for ANZSCO coding consideration.

## ARE THE ANZSCO CODES CONSIDERED AS A REGULATION?

It is important to clarify that the Australian Bureau of Statistic **IS NOT A REGULATORY BODY** and the ANZSCO Codes do not accredit qualifications. Therefore, an occupation code is not a regulated title and being listed as an occupation doesn't make it a regulated profession - we will provide our recommendations later in this report. However, the ANZSCO Codes can serve us by reflecting the various occupational divisions within our industry. As mentioned above, if these codes that are currently reviewed and more accurately define the various levels of formalised qualification, they can be very useful. Here are just a few suggestions:

- **Education and training providers** can benefit by designing qualifications with educational levels to best meet the competencies within their qualifications that will best support businesses with specific skills that they are seeking.
- **Employers** who are seeking a level of expertise and qualification for their potential employee or contractor.
- **Consumer recognition** of the specific classification that will best meet their needs.
- **Wage Awards:** Especially with the more advanced qualifications, industry bodies can more effectively represent their constituents for an appropriate classification within the Wage Awards when they are up for review.

It's also important to note that the tasks and duties are not a definitive or exhaustive list and the ABS online directory limits descriptions to a few words or a short sentence which is very limiting for an accurate description. Therefore, the Code descriptors should be viewed only as examples that briefly outline the scope of practice of the various divisions. This is why these Codes cannot be viewed as regulations or compliance standards.

For this reason, when a new category is introduced such as dermal therapist or dermal clinician, as industry bodies, we need to provide within our submissions, clear descriptor outlines, terminology and scope of practice that differentiate a new specialised occupational classification. We need to define the level of expertise and how it can address a new category of services that differs in complexity of treatment categories, treatment outcomes, risk-management, the collaborative approach with healthcare professionals and a more specialised approach to patient care and the post-treatment patient/client management that is needed. This is one of the important tasks that are the responsibility of industry bodies.

## **CURRENT ANZSCO CODE SKILLS LEVEL CLASSIFICATIONS**

Within Australia the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) is the body that provides qualification breakdown. While the ABS bases qualifications on the AQF descriptions, they are more flexible in the way they categorise occupations, taking into consideration experience and not just qualifications. **Here is how they categorise the skills levels:**

### **SKILLS LEVEL 1:**

**Qualification:** Occupations that have a level of skill commensurate with a Bachelor Degree or higher qualification.

**Experience:** At least five years of relevant experience may substitute for formal qualification

### **SKILLS LEVEL 2:**

**Qualification:** Occupations that have a level of skill commensurate with an AQF Framework Associate Degree, Advanced Diploma or Diploma.

**Experience:** At least three years of relevant experience may substitute for formal qualifications.

### **SKILLS LEVEL 3:**

**Qualifications:** Occupations that have a level of skill commensurate with an AQF Framework Certificate IV or Certificate III including at least two years of on-the-job training.

**Experience:** At least three years of relevant experience may substitute a formal qualification.

#### **SKILLS LEVEL 4:**

**Qualifications:** Occupations that have a level of skill commensurate with an AQF Framework Certificate II or III.

**Experience:** At least one year of relevant experience may substitute for formal qualifications.

#### **SKILLS LEVEL 5:**

**Qualifications:** Occupations that have a level of skill commensurate with an AQF Certificate 1 or compulsory secondary education.

**Experience:** For some occupations, a short period of on-the-job training may be required in addition to or instead of formal qualification.

As you can see, ANZSCO make provision for the recognition of experience, however additionally there is also a minimum level of qualification that is also required.

### **HOW ARE BOTH BEAUTY AND DERMAL CLINICIANS AFFECTED?**

**When it comes to Beauty this is what we have proposed:**

**BEAUTY THERAPY:** Certificate level IV in Beauty Therapy, including experience we propose that this should be an ANZSCO Skills Level 3.

**BEAUTICIAN:** Certificate Level III in Beauty Services we propose that this be classified as Level 4.

We do not agree that Certificate III in Beauty Services should be classified together with Beauty Therapy Certificate Level IV. Our reason is that Certificate III in Beauty Services does not include the appropriate underpinning knowledge that pertains to skin and skin disorders, anatomy and physiology and skin analysis. Classifying them together would allow a Beautician to pick up a skin needling device or pursue laser or IPL skin rejuvenation without the appropriate qualifications. We feel very strongly about this.

**DERMAL THERAPIST:** For this category there are several qualifications such as: Graduate Certificate in Dermal Science, Graduate Certificate in Cosmetic Laser and Dermal Therapies we propose Skills Level 2

**DERMAL CLINICIAN/CLINICAL AESTHETICIAN:** Bachelor qualifications in Clinical Aesthetics and Dermal Therapies we propose Skills Level 1.

### **HOW CAN YOU PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE?**

Before we present our recommendations, let's review some important historical industry events. In 1995 IPL and Laser for hair reductions and cosmetic purposes entered the Australian beauty industry. The only training available was from supplier and distribution training on the use of their devices. This training included very little on the physics of phototherapy. There were no qualifications for these modalities.

Following this launch, Queensland Radiation Health liaised with industry associations and introduced the first Laser licensing program, that required the completing of a Laser Safety Course. We were involved in this process. Meanwhile, medical societies were pursuing the government to ensure laser skin rejuvenation be restricted to '*medical practitioners only*' in line with several countries in Europe, as well as in the USA.

Identifying these risks APAN approached several RTOs to develop nationally approved qualifications in laser and IPL, to further protect the industry. Several Graduate Certificates we subsequently developed, however with very few undertaking the qualifications because of cost factors.

In 2014 and again in 2016 the Federal Government released two funding programs to support of businesses with funding provision for qualifications to raise standards within businesses. There were 15 industries represented in this initiative.

APAN grasped the opportunity, and we were the only organisation within our industry to meet the stringent government merit criteria and be accepted as a consortium securing government funding for business owners.

We were able to secure over \$3.7 million in funding and supported over 320 businesses and their staff to gain these qualifications, with an amazing 97% successful rate of completion to a full qualification. This was a record high across all industries that participated in these two initiatives. **The two funds that we secured financial assistance were:**

- **National Workforce Development Fund (NWDF) in 2014, and**
- **Industry Skills Fund (ISF) in 2016.**

**The nominated qualifications that we applied for financial provision for our industry and which were accepted were:**

**\* *SIB70110 Graduate Certificate in IPL and Laser Hair Reduction***

**\* *NAT10038 Graduate Certificate in Cosmetic Laser and Light Therapies.***

Why is this significant? Let's consider the following:

Over the past 16 years, APAN has been involvement with several regulatory reviews in various states, as well as our involvement in the working group appointed by Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA). Throughout these reviews we ***consistently encountered*** proposals by the medical groups who opposed non-medical practitioners to perform laser skin rejuvenation procedures. **In every case we were quickly able to effectively resist these proposals based solely on the fact that the industry had developed government-approved qualifications that qualify non-medical practitioners that are shaping the future of the industry.**

Since then, the industry has been further supported by the introduction, or updates on licensing requirements by various state health departments and their radiation health divisions.

- Queensland has stepped up their licensing requirements to include additional supervised nominal hours in practical application.
- Tasmania has introduced an excellent laser and IPL licensing program that has been running successfully for several years.
- WA, who previously restricted the use of lasers to medical practitioners only, has now updated their requirements to be more aligned with Qld and Tasmanian providing options for non-medical practitioners to perform not just IPL, but also laser (following strong recommendation from APAN and other industry groups to do so).

So, our recommendation to both business owners, as well practitioners currently operating, or aspiring to expand their scope of practice in moving forward is as follows:

We can GUARANTEE that if you consistently pursue to improve your knowledge and invest in your professional development, **and** also, do not shy away from completing a **qualification** (whenever there is one for the modality you practice), you can rest assured that your rights to practice that modality will NEVER be taken from you. There will never be a regulation that states that a government approved qualification that has been developed for the specific modality that you practice is no longer acceptable and has been regulated against - **this will never happen**.

For those who hold a lesser qualification and wish to step up their services, please consider completing a unit of competency within a qualification. You can contact APAN if you need to discuss this further.

On the other hand, if you only hold a Certificate III in Beauty Services, please look to step up your qualifications for the safety of your client, your peace of mind and for protecting your reputation. Do the right thing and it will pave the way for your on-going success.

## IN SUMMARY

By staying true to the industry's Ethical Code to *always operate within your scope of practice*, you will safeguard your future, and you will have nothing to fear.

To ensure that you are always provided with accurate information, become a member of a credible industry body. APAN is a standards body/association. We are committed to strongly support and represent your needs with regulatory bodies in ways that will best benefit our members, and we love to provide you with help, above and beyond your expectations.

Membership is an important part of being professional - it should not be viewed as an option, but as evidence of your commitment to excellence and in maintaining the highest level of industry standards for the safety and benefit of your clients and the reputation of your profession.

**Please join us. APAN has several categories visit [www.apanetwork.com](http://www.apanetwork.com) and join us today or phone 07 55930360 for further information.**