



# Australian Cricket Pitch Curator Accreditation Program



# What is the Accredited Cricket Pitch Curator Program?



## Program Summary

The Australian Sports Turf Managers Association Accredited Cricket Pitch Curator Program is designed to certify cricket pitch curators are skilled, knowledgeable and committed to the consistent preparation of turf surfaces.

Accreditation ensures that curators meet specific criteria, introduces Accredited pathways to expand learning and development, training and support opportunities for existing curators, and importantly – to increase the talent pool and develop more quality pitch curators in Australia.

The Curator Program consists of 4 Levels of Accreditation, with structured development to build from an introductory foundation level for new, inexperienced or volunteer curators - through to in-depth training on advanced aspects of turf management and preparation of pitches for curators at venues hosting National and International fixtures.

The Accreditation courses are a combination of skill and knowledge development, comprising elements of face to face learning, virtual learning modules, and online assessments to ensure skill, knowledge and competency is attained through each level of Accreditation.

Accreditation training program will be held at a local (state based) venue, facilitated by senior and experienced curators, and structured to develop a pathway for curator training to support and develop qualified and skilled pitch curators.

## Cricket Australia and the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association

The Accredited Curator Program was developed in conjunction with a Curator Working Group (CWG), comprising representatives of Cricket Australia, Head Curators and the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association, and endorsed to standardise curator training nationally, and assist with the increasing challenges faced by curators in Australia.

In 2023, Cricket Australia and the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association entered into an Agreement, endorsing the Accredited Cricket Pitch Curator Program to be implemented nationally to support current and emerging curators.

# Why do we need an Accredited Cricket Pitch Curator Program?



Australian curators are experiencing significant challenges within the industry. Sentiment expressed at recent Curator's Conferences highlighted a series of key challenges presently being experienced by curators, with the primary challenges being:

- **Widespread Resourcing Shortages**

Cricket content has increased dramatically in recent years, and staffing levels are often below suitable requirements for content being held or planned at the venue (both match day and non-match day) placing increased pressure on existing (limited) staff to prepare the volume of pitches and facilities required

- **A limited volume of emerging Curator talent**

Limited career awareness, a shortage of qualified and experienced sports turf managers with curating experience, combined with limited learning and development opportunities have resulted on dearth of emerging talent across the industry for future pitch curators.

- **Intensifying work requirements during summer**

Increased cricket content, limited staff and increased expectations from users on venue availability have resulted in existing curators and staff working excessive days/hours over peak periods, and due to expanding fixtures of women's, domestic and representative cricket, venue (and pitch) availability is requested earlier each year.

- **Limited awareness of career opportunities**

Historical tendencies toward "traditional trades" coupled with limited awareness of the sports turf industry has resulted in a low-level awareness of career opportunities available to students, parents and career advisors.

- **Mental Health challenges are increasing**

Curators regularly report a wide range of mental health challenges in recent seasons. Curators are in very high-risk categories for mental health issues – predominantly a male demographic, work alone or in small teams, are often disjointed from the organisations they work for, extreme performance expectations, are under national media, user and public scrutiny, combating nature and the environment, restricted on time and resources and are continually placed under enormous public and stakeholder pressure.

- **Increased opportunities outside of Cricket**

Curators often work in this industry because they love what they do, however sports turf management remains one of the lowest paid occupations for Trade Qualified professionals. Significant talent leakage has occurred over the past decade to alternate industries or facilities (golf course, racetrack, council) for qualified sports turf managers – substantially depleting the future curator talent pipeline and available (experienced) staff

Understanding these challenges, a **Curator Working Group (CWG)** was formed, comprising representatives of Cricket Australia, Head Curators and the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association, to develop a National Strategy to address these issues

# Overcoming the Future Challenge

## Curator Retention

Several challenges faced by cricket in Australia currently are exacerbated by the limited number of qualified and experienced curators, and a combination of limited new and an increased volume of qualified turf managers leaving the industry over the past decade available to fill this void.

In particular, the issues relating to widespread resourcing shortages, a limited volume of emerging Curator talent, intensifying work requirements during summer and expansion of off-season training requirements present a significant challenge to the future of cricket in Australia.

Shortfalls in existing staff, have resulted in increased workloads for already-overworked staff, compounding current challenges related to curator work/life balance, hours of work and mental health.

## Impacts in the Short and Medium Term

Over the next few years, should the situation of increasing qualified and experienced cricket pitch curators not be materially addressed, cricket in Australia is likely to find itself facing the prospect of a limited numbers of experienced curators available.

The results of which, are forecasted to be:

- Impacts to the quality of facilities and cricket pitches for local, domestic and elite cricket
- Limitations on the number of venues available to present cricket content
- Decreased availability and volume of practice facilities for local, junior, pathways and elite cricket
- Significantly restricted talent pipeline of curators to prepare and manage facilities nationally
- Increases in the volume of qualified turf managers leaving the industry

## Addressing Concerns, Providing Opportunity

An opportunity to address the current challenges is available, through the implementation of a Cricket Pitch Curator Program.

The Accredited Cricket Pitch Curator Program is designed to certify cricket pitch curators are skilled, knowledgeable and committed to the consistent improvement of pitch preparation at all levels of cricket within Australia.

Content, approach and delivery has been devised to improve curating talent, offer clear pathways for career development, preparation of the next-generation of elite-venue curators and increase the available volume of experienced cricket pitch curators.

## Education and Training Promoting Careers

Accreditation ensures that curators undertaken structured learning, meet specific criteria, introduces career pathways to expand learning and development and training and support opportunities for existing curators, and importantly for the longevity of cricket in Australia – to increase the talent pool and develop more quality pitch curators in Australia.

Consisting of 4 Levels of Certification, each building on knowledge and skills of the level previous, from an introductory foundation level for inexperienced or volunteer curators, through to in-depth training on advanced aspects of turf management, and preparation of cricket pitches for Tier 1 venues hosting National and International fixtures, training programs are held at local venues, facilitated by senior and experienced curators, and structured to develop a pathway for curator training to support existing and develop future qualified pitch curators.

**Ensuring that each Curator is accredited in skill, knowledge and ability by the governing body**

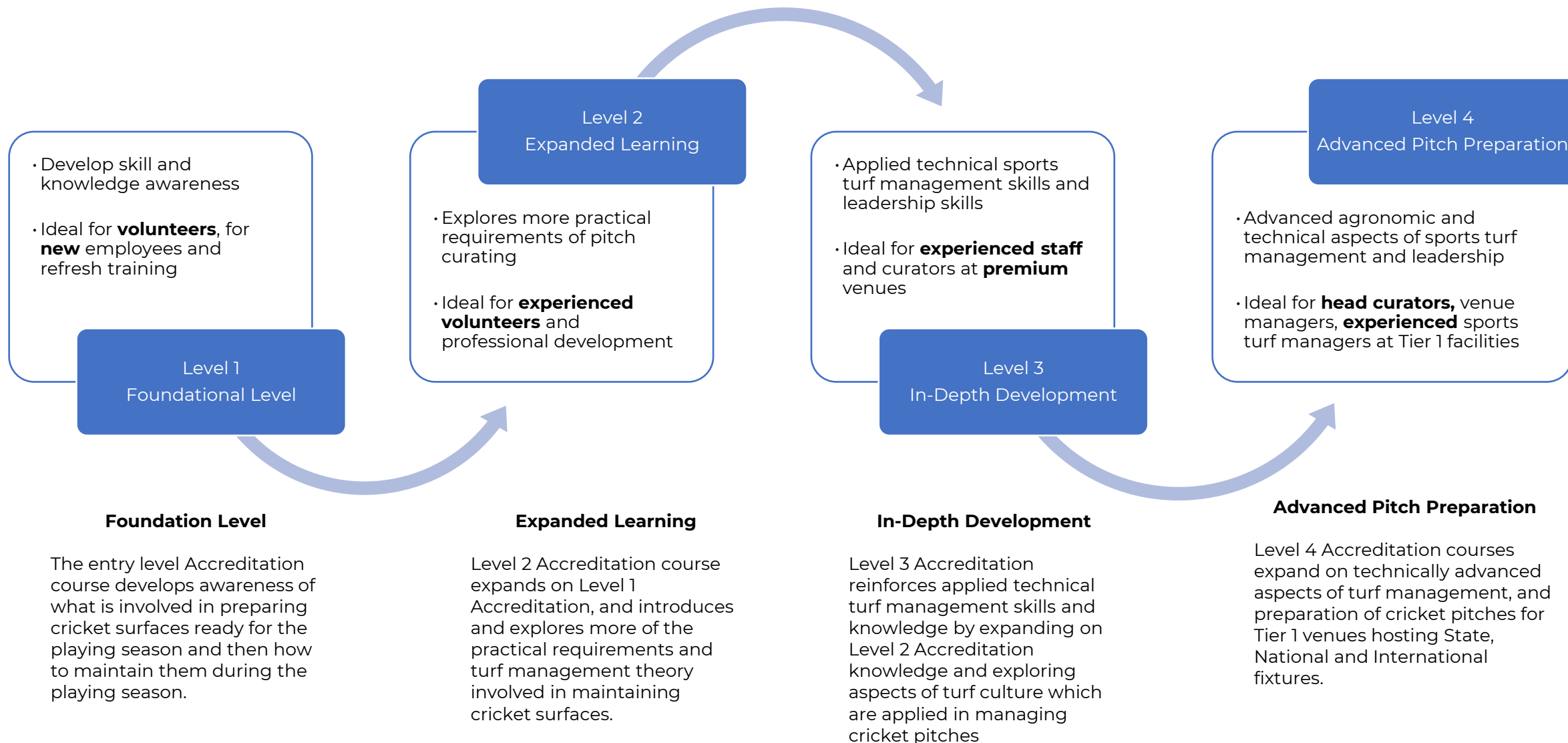




# Accredited Cricket Pitch Curator Program



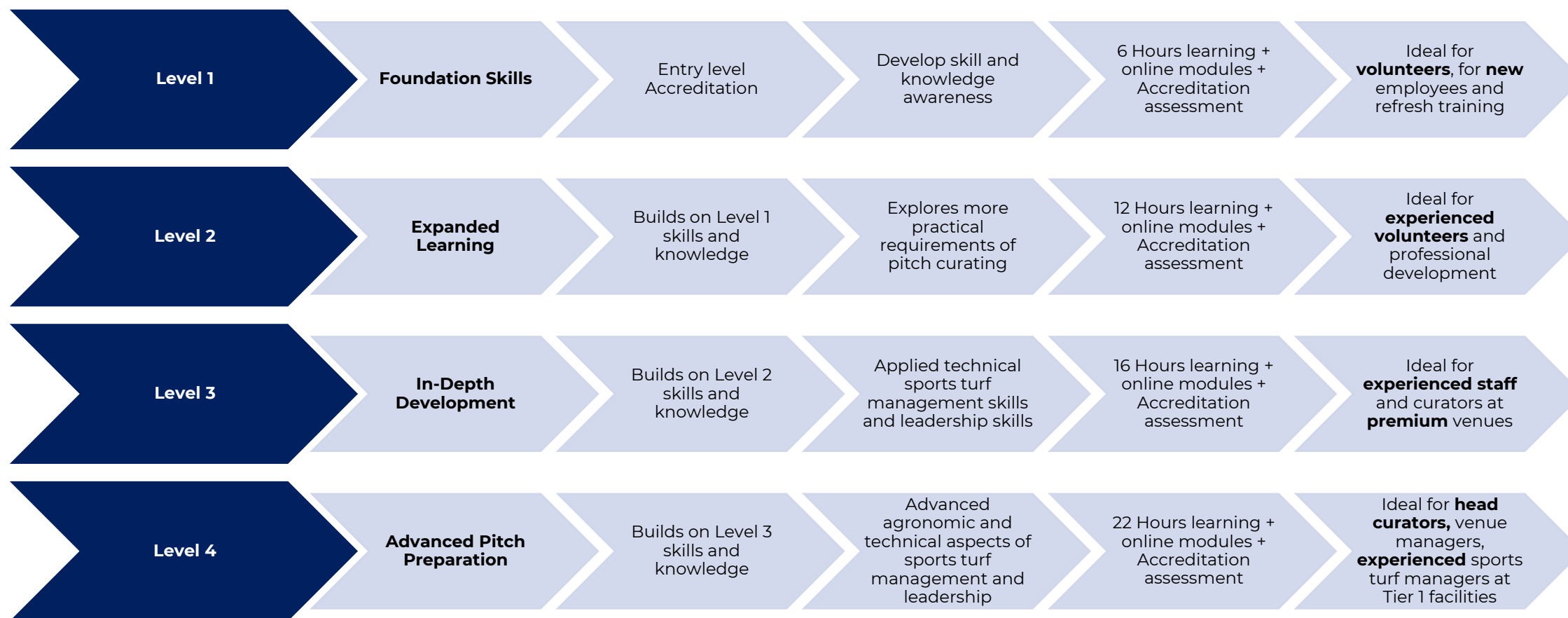
A structured pathway for curator training to support and develop qualified pitch curators



# Developing a Career & Education Pathway for Curators



A 4-Tiered structured pathway for curator training to support and develop qualified pitch curators



- Curators looking to advance their careers have a structured learning opportunity and recognised accreditation to assist prospects
- Cricket Australia and cricket facilities have a recognised accreditation confirming skills and knowledge to appoint new curators

# Model Illustration: Level 1 – Foundation Skills



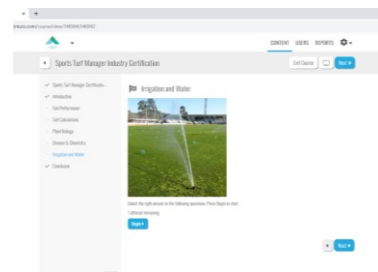
Ideal for volunteers maintaining local turf wickets, for new employees and employee refresh training



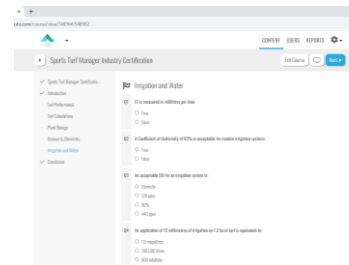
Each Level will consist of Face to Face training, online learning modules and Course Assessments



Face to Face Training



Online Learning Modules



Course Assessments



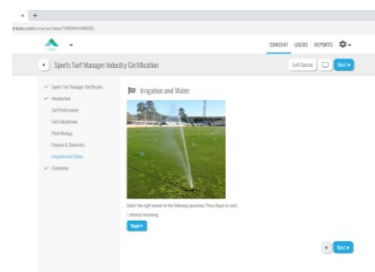
Accreditation

# Model Illustration: Level 1 – Foundation Skills

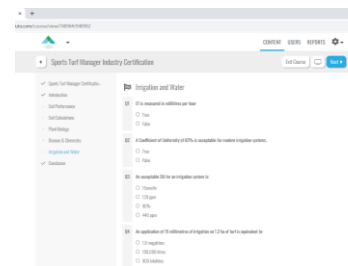
Ideal for volunteers maintaining a local turf wicket, for new employees and refresh training



Face to Face  
Training



Online Learning Modules



Course Assessments



Accreditation

1. Curators attend and undertake a practical (1-day) face-to-face Pitch Preparation training seminar

**Upon completion** of Face to Face (practical) training elements:

2. Curators complete an online module discussing and reviewing content covered at the practical training seminar
3. Curators complete an online Assessment demonstrating proficiency in areas trained
4. After successfully completing Assessment, curators receive a Statement of Attainment as a Nationally Recognised Curator – Level 1



# A National Strategy

## Standardising Training Nationally

The National body, the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association will be responsible for managing the program on behalf of Cricket Australia, including completion of administration and reporting requirements, training seminar registrations and engagement with State bodies. The Association will produce, and work with individual State Associations to refine, training guides for each level of Curator Accreditation.

Training content and topics for each Level are structured, however utilising the skills and knowledge of local curators and subject matter experts, local curators and State Associations will have flexibility to develop content for the training unique to their climate, environment and conditions.

In summary - the National Association will manage the Accreditation Program to ensure standardisation of content, knowledge and consistency of delivery of curator training nationally, and State Associations will manage the delivery of face to face training to allow flexibility and maximise engagement.

## The Importance of State Associations

The scheduling and delivery of face-to-face training sessions will be co-ordinated by the respective State Associations recognised by the ASTMA in each State. Dates, times, locations and frequency of face-to-face training will be managed by State Associations to ensure suitability in scheduling within regions.

Training or registration fees associated to face-to-face training seminars will be allocated to State Associations to ensure continued delivery and improvements to the Accreditation program, with administration – including seminar registrations, online modules and accreditation assessments managed by the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association.

State Associations are critical in ensuring the localisation of content, and localised engagement with sports turf managers. The Program has been developed to ensure a consistent approach to training topics and assessments, combined with a consistent frequency of training delivery is achieved, which can be achieved through State Associations

# Delivery of Accredited Training

## Understanding State and Local Requirements

Topics to be covered in face to face training are standardised nationally for each level of the Accredited Curator Program, however the detail related to each topic are presented as guides, allowing flexibility in training content to be developed by each State Association to accommodate local conditions.

Utilising the skills and knowledge of local Curators, State Associations' and subject matter experts, delivery of face to face training will have the flexibility to develop content unique to their climate, soils, environment and growing conditions.

Training Guides have been developed for each State to use relating to content requirements for each Level, in addition to recommended support materials and detail on areas to be assessed.

As noted, the National Association will manage the Accreditation Program to ensure standardisation of content, knowledge and consistency of training delivery nationally, and each State Associations will manage the delivery of face to face training to allow flexibility in content requirements and scheduling to maximise curator engagement.

## Training Delivery

Training under the Accredited Cricket Pitch Curator Program will be delivered by a combination of:

- Current Curators at leading Australian facilities (Accredited Level 3 and Level 4) Cricket Pitch curators
- Qualified Trainers and Assessors (in Certificate III (AHC31319) and Diploma of Sports Turf Management (AHC51019))
- Leading Agronomy consultants
- Experienced Pitch Curators
- Sports Turf Managers, Subject Matter Experts and Players



### Accredited Curator Program - Level 3

This document is to be used as a guideline for assessors to mark the assessment tasks for Accredited Curator Program - Level 3. It includes content and instructions provided to the curators for each area, followed by the example training notes for each topic.

### Level 3: Assessment Overview

Assessment for Level 3 includes the following tasks:

Assessment Requirements	Method of Assessment
1. Machinery Operation and Safety	Trainer Observation & Online Learning
2. Wicket & Outfield Preparation	Online Learning
3. Pitch Renovation	Trainer Observation & Online Learning
4. Plant Nutrition	Online Learning
5. Pests Diseases & Disorders	Online Learning
6. Practical Skills Assessment	Assessment & Online Learning

These assessments are targeted to the following groups of learners in the following context:

The Level 3 Accreditation reinforces applied technical turf management skills and knowledge by expanding on Level 2 Accreditation knowledge and exploring aspects of turf culture which are applied in managing cricket pitches.



# Benefits to Current Curators

Current Curators at leading Australian facilities involved in the Program as trainers will be recognised for their involvement

Through the provision of training and accreditation to emerging curators, trainers will be not only supporting emerging talent, but also assisting to improve curator/staff retention across the industry

As well as increasing a future turf managers' career opportunities, Curators involved in training under the Program can assist to share knowledge and experience, allowing them to feel and increased level of role appreciation and satisfaction. This sharing of knowledge can assist current and future curators to:

- Build resilience, abilities and knowledge
- develop and improve protective factors related to mental health
- provide curators with skills and confidence to understand early intervention

## Making a Difference

Through involvement in the Program, Curators will be a part of a strategy that will deliver tangible improvements to cricket in Australia, including:

- Assist in shaping the skills and knowledge of next generation talent
- Learn to value curating tradition and innovation
- Provides an opportunity to learn, and network, as well as teach
- Make a difference – with visible results
- Build positive relationships with administrators, players and the cricket community

## A focus on continual improvement

The Australian and State Sports Turf Managers Associations will work to build, support and establish unified approach to training under a National model, and together will work with state and territory Associations and experienced (Level 3 and Level 4) curators to continually maintain and develop the Curator Accreditation program.

# Supporting Cricket Australia's Strategic Plan



The Australian Sports Turf Managers Association's Accredited Cricket Pitch Curator Program aligns to, and assists to deliver on, several of Cricket Australia's Strategic Objectives outlined in the 5-year vision for Australian Cricket outlined under the Strategic Plan ***"Where The Game Grows"***.

In particular, the Curator Program will assist Cricket Australia in delivering on Measures for Success relating to the Pillars:

## **Sustainable Future**

### **08 – Drive investment in venues and facilities that enhance experiences and enrich communities**

- Build and maintain strong and effective government relations
- Increase investment in cricket infrastructure
- Optimise commercial return and cricket outcomes from key strategic venues
- Drive a coordinated national approach to investment in facilities and infrastructure

### **09 - Champion inclusion, positive social impact and sustainability**

- Drive higher cultural diversity and inclusion through cricket
- Improve cricket's environmental footprint and inspire others to take action

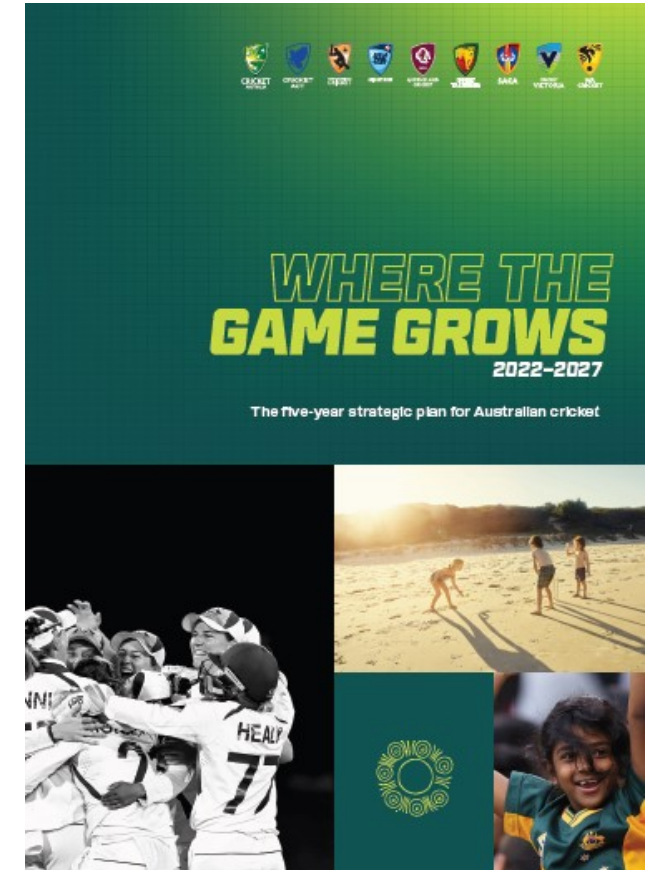
## **Enablers**

### **Attract and retain the best talent**

- People enjoy their work, and are supported to continue to stretch, learn, progress and develop
- Invest in priority capabilities for Australian cricket to deliver on its strategic ambition
- Ensure a diverse and inclusive workforce within the Australian cricket system

### **Purpose Led Partnerships**

- Deepen our partnerships with purpose-driven organisations that support the vision of Australian cricket



# Alignment to Existing Programs



Through establishment of an Accreditation and Pathway Program aligned to existing Programs facilitated for Coaches and Umpires, the Curator Program provides the establishment of a national Program for Cricket Australia, supported and delivered by the industry peak body for turf management in Australia and recognised State Associations

## Additional Program Benefits

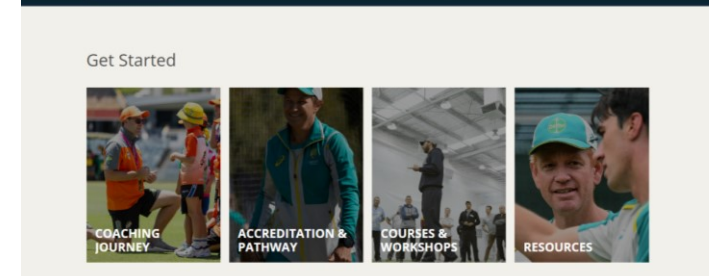
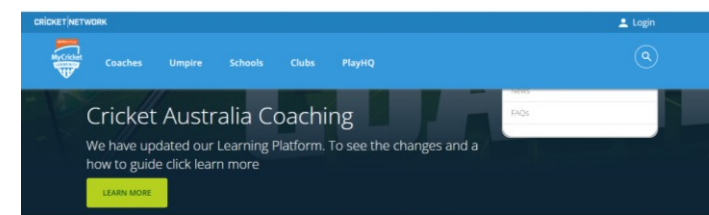
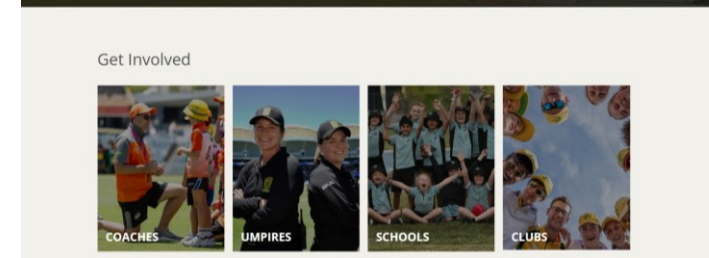
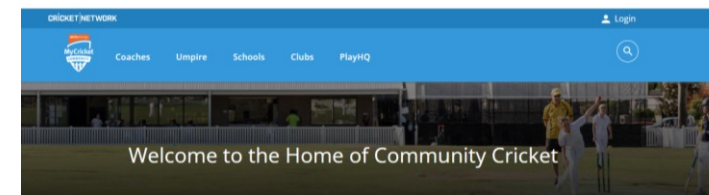
- Establishing a defined pathway for Australian Curating talent
- Supporting cricket Curators and supporting the industry
- Safeguarding skills quality now, and into the future
- Increasing and improving Australian curator talent pool
- Establishment of (and access to) a national Accredited Curators List for all Level 1 - 4 Curators in Australia

## Alignment to Existing Cricket Australia Programs

Details and information relating to the Curator Program can be established on the Cricket Australia Community website; a similar approach taken with **Coaches** (<https://www.community.cricket.com.au/coach> and **Umpires** (<https://www.community.cricket.com.au/umpire>) programs.

## Reaccreditation

- Curator accreditation is valid for five (5) years and Curators are required to complete an up to date on-line learning program to retain their accreditation for Level 1 and Level 2 Curators.
- To obtain re-accreditation, Level 3 and Level 4 Curators, can either:
  - Attend a 1-day reaccreditation course to ensure skills and knowledge remain relevant to advancements in pitch preparation, technology and practices.
  - Assist in delivering a minimum number of Level 1 and/or Level 2 Training courses over the period to ensure skills and knowledge remain relevant
- There is a small cost to complete reaccreditation course and Curators will receive a new certificate at the end of the reaccreditation course.





# Experience and Prior Learning



State and National Turf bodies have a long history of delivering Curator training in Australia.

The form and frequency of this training varies from State to State, however it is important to note that a number of curators have undertaken face-to-face practical training prior to the establishment of the Accredited Cricket Pitch Curator Program

Therefore, the Accreditation Program has established a method of qualifying this previous training in order to recognise existing curator training experiences appropriately.

A Prior Learning (PL) process establishes the recognition of previous training, and contributing towards the completion of the Curator Accreditation

## Establishing Prior Learning

The Accredited Cricket Pitch Curator Program will not require Curators who have undertaken face-to-face pitch preparation training through a recognised State Association within a defined “appropriate timeframe”, from having to complete a similar level of in-person training again.

It will be the responsibility of each State Association to determine their individual definition of an appropriate timeframe, however the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association recommends that:

- Any curator who has attended a recognised face-to-face pitch preparation training through a State Association within the past 12 months, be exempt from this requirement in completion of Level 1 and Level 2 training, and be automatically enrolled to undertake Online Learning and Course Assessment if they wish to gain Curator Accreditation
- State Associations wanting to allow a timeframe other than the 12 months recommended, will be required to obtain approval from the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association

Prior Learning for Levels 3 and 4 will be at the discretion of the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association and the Cricket Australia Curator Working Group (CWG) upon establishment of the Accreditation Program, where:

- Curators will be assigned a Level based on their current position/experience/tenure/venue, previous curator training delivery experience, or will be asked to provide PL information and evidence to the Association to verify assignment.

# About the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association



Established in 1981, the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association represents over 1,700 members as the peak industry body for sports turf management in Australia.

A not-for-profit incorporated Association, the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association represents professional Sports Turf Managers across Cricket Curators, Golf Courses, Sportsfields & Grounds, Racetracks, Lawn Tennis, Councils, Turf Equipment Technicians and other related fields, the association supports members through education, facilitating Industry Awards, advocacy, and research & development into professional and environmentally sustainable Turf Management.

The Australian Sports Turf Managers Association works to improve the knowledge, welfare and professional standards of its members and other industry professionals as well as the production of quality turf playing surfaces at Sport & Recreation facilities across Australia.

In 2022, the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO #46011) by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), recognised to deliver formal education and National Qualifications under the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF).

The Australian Sports Turf Managers Association currently operates various education and industry-based Programs, including:

- National Qualifications for training and assessment in:
  - Certificate III Sports Turf Management (AHC31319)
  - Diploma of Sports Turf Management (AHC51019)
  - Nationally Recognised Skill Sets
- The annual Australian Sports Turf Management Conference & Trade Exhibition
- National Sports Turf Management Industry Awards
- Sports Turf Education Seminars and Programs, including the Future Turf Managers Initiative
- Australian Sports Turf Management Industry Magazine (ATM)
- National First Green Community & School Engagement Program
- Sports Turf Manager Mental Health & Wellbeing Program
- Women in Turf Program



# Australian Cricket Pitch Curator Accreditation Program

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the Australian Sports Turf Managers Association

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