



## **RESPONSE TO THE FINDINGS OF THE 2014 ASQA SURVEY OF TRAINING PROVIDERS AND STAKEHOLDERS**

As the national regulator for the vocational education and English language training sector, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) is committed to providing agile, responsive and risk-based regulation. To measure this, ASQA conducts an annual survey to assess its performance against the key performance indicators (KPIs) set out in its Portfolio Budget Statement and its strategic and operational plans.

In July 2014, ASQA invited 3,540 registered training providers (RTOs) and other training providers that it regulated at the time and 171 vocational education and training (VET) sector stakeholders to provide feedback on its performance through a survey. The survey was developed by ASQA in partnership with Australian Survey Research Pty Ltd (ASR). The survey was open for a period of three weeks. During that time 2,255 (64%) providers and 51 (30%) stakeholders completed the survey. Completion of the survey was not compulsory. While ASQA was pleased with the number of responses it received from training providers, it would have preferred to see a greater number of stakeholders provide their feedback.

As with the surveys undertaken in 2012 and 2013, the results of the 2014 survey indicate that ASQA's stakeholders and the training providers it regulates were generally happy with ASQA's performance with positive responses received in the overwhelming majority of areas surveyed. The results of the survey indicate that stakeholders and training providers see ASQA's staff and written information, such as fact sheets and *ASQA Update*, as strengths.

In the 2013 survey, training providers told ASQA that they wanted:

- its website to be enhanced
- a more personalised response from its Info Line and email enquiries service and
- new ways to receive information about how to comply with the National Standards.

As a result of this feedback ASQA:

- revised its procedures for dealing with telephone and email enquiries to give providers a more personalised response
- conducted a major review and redesign of its website and
- published six information videos for training providers on a new YouTube channel.

It was therefore pleasing to see RTO's acknowledge this work through increased satisfaction ratings in the survey.

The results of the stakeholder survey show that while stakeholder perceptions of ASQA remain generally positive, satisfaction was reduced in many areas, particularly in consultation and communication. ASR has advised that because of the small sample size of stakeholders, there is a lack of comparability with the 2013 survey. Nevertheless the results indicate that there is a



perception among VET sector stakeholders that ASQA is not doing enough to communicate with them – particularly with regard to its regulatory decisions – and that ASQA needs to do better. ASQA has already commenced work on developing initiatives to address this perception.

The survey results indicate that while RTOs and other training providers are happy that ASQA is making efforts to improve its regulation of the VET sector, they feel more needs to be done. ASQA has already started rolling out a package of regulatory reform initiatives which include:

- enhanced information and guidance for training providers to assist them in complying with the required national standards
- reduced regulatory scrutiny on providers with a track record of compliance, and
- a sharper regulatory focus on providers who remain seriously non-compliant with the required standards.

Key initiatives already implemented include:

- giving high performing RTOs the ability to manage their own scope of registration without the need to apply to ASQA and pay a fee each time they wish to add a new qualification or unit of competency to their scope of registration.
- the hosting 31 Information Session in 16 locations across metropolitan and regional Australia in November 2014 so that RTOs better understand what is required of them to meet the national standards
- publishing a formal guide to the national standards
- removing the requirement for an automatic financial viability risk assessment (FVRA) as part of the renewal of registration process for training providers in all but extreme high-risk cases and
- automatically adding equivalent training package products (qualifications and/or units of competency) to RTOs' scopes of registration without requiring an application or a fee.

ASQA is confident that RTOs and other training providers will welcome these initiatives and this will further increase satisfaction with the authority in the future.

In conclusion, ASQA thanks those training providers and stakeholders who took the time to complete its 2014 Survey. In the interests of transparency, ASQA will brief the peak training provider organisations on the results of the survey and how the results will be used within the organisation. Similarly, ASQA will publish the results of the survey on its website and in its *Annual Report*. ASQA intends to undertake another survey in mid-2015.