



# MEDIA RELEASE

## Ensuring a strong and productive relationship with the Australian VET sector

14 October 2019

Ms Saxon Rice, ASQA Acting Chief Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer, recently released a communication to the VET sector.

“As Acting Chief Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer of ASQA, I want to ensure that we maintain a strong and productive relationship with the Australian VET sector. This relationship should be based on a foundation of communication, transparency and collaboration,” said Ms Rice.

“Australian vocational education and training has a world-class reputation and comprises more than four million students and around 4000 providers. We see the vast majority of these providers exhibiting quality practices and willingly meeting their regulatory responsibilities.”

“In our role as the national regulator for VET, part of our responsibility is to take strong action against the small number of providers failing to provide quality training—those providers who ultimately risk tarnishing the sector as a whole.”

Ms Rice acknowledged that the positive achievements of the sector have not always received the focus that they deserve, but noted that, “in the last financial year, the vast majority of providers have not presented any identified risks requiring regulatory scrutiny, or have been found to be compliant when audited. “

Ms Rice also spoke of how Skills Ministers have outlined clear expectations for ASQA going forward, and provided a solid framework for development.

“We have been working hard in a range of areas, particularly in responding to the findings of the reviews by Professor Valerie Braithwaite and the Hon Steven Joyce. There is more we can do, though. Along with evolving our regulatory approach, we will be working to deepen our engagement with the sector and implement a more sophisticated educative approach to move beyond the achievement of minimum standards to lift quality.”

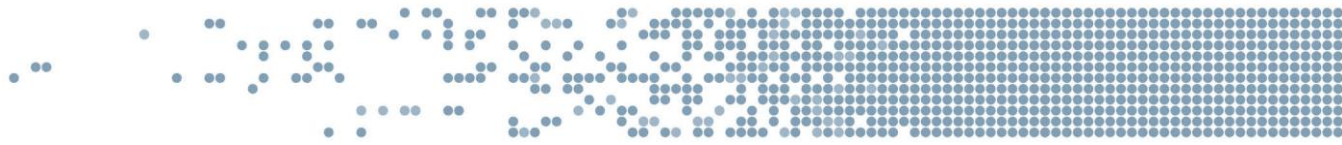
Ms Rice highlighted the shared interests and objectives between ASQA and the VET sector, and the regulator’s readiness to evolve its regulatory approach.

“We want to ensure that quality providers are receiving the support they need and that students are both protected and experiencing positive education outcomes.”

“I am keen to get on with what needs to be done to extend our oversight of the sector to include new ways of connecting with providers and providing advice that moves beyond the achievement of minimum standards. At the same time, ASQA must stay alert to serious risks facing VET in Australia and take strong action where it is warranted.”

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Ms Rice noted her awareness, and willingness to address, internal challenges in relation to timeliness at ASQA, and perceptions around consistency of the regulator’s decision-making process.

“We will build on our past achievements, work through new challenges and embrace the opportunities that lie ahead. I want to ensure that there is confidence in ASQA that our activities are reasonable, transparent and effective,” concluded Ms Rice.