



Provider Roundtable Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Provider Roundtable is ASQA's primary forum for strategic engagement and consultation with the peak VET, dual sector and English language provider associations on regulatory design, reform and benefits realisation.

Background

As the national VET Regulator, ASQA's purpose is to ensure quality vocational education and training and English language education so that students, employers, the community and governments can have confidence in the integrity of national qualifications issued by providers.

ASQA's strategic objective is to achieve its purpose over the next four years through its regulation and partnership with others. Our 2021–22 Corporate Plan commits us to engaging and partnering with stakeholders constructively and with mutual respect. This is underpinned by the principles of best practice outlined in the Australian Government's Regulator Performance Guide: continuous improvement and building trust; risk-based and data driven; and collaboration and engagement.

The Regulator Performance Guide sets out that best practice regulators are transparent and responsive communicators, implementing regulations in a modern and collaborative way, consulting effectively with affected key stakeholders at all stages of the regulatory cycle.

ASQA recognises that the membership-based peak provider associations play a crucial role in ASQA's strategic objective and in working collaboratively to protect the quality of the VET and English language sectors.

Provider Roundtable members are committed to working collaboratively in recognition of our shared responsibility for the quality of VET and English language education.

Based on the principle of our shared responsibility for the reputation and quality of the VET sector, key goals under the Terms of Reference are:

- the development of collaborative strategies that support quality VET outcomes and improved approaches to regulation
- the provision of continuous feedback on the implementation of reform strategies
- enhanced confidence and trust in the work of the national VET regulator, and
- recognition of quality outcomes and strengthened provider self-assurance and continuous improvement.

Alignment and interface between Provider Roundtable and SLG

The Provider Roundtable is ASQA's primary forum for strategic engagement and consultation with the peak VET, dual sector and English language provider associations. The purpose of the ASQA Stakeholder Liaison Group (SLG) is to engage and consult with sector experts on ASQA's regulatory engagement and education and interactions with regulated entities as part of ASQA's Regulatory Operating Model. SLG members, some of whom hold peak provider association membership, are selected to participate in the SLG through an Expression of Interest process. ASQA facilitates feedback loops to support the alignment and interface between the two consultative groups, which serve distinct but complementary purposes.

Objectives

Stakeholder engagement supports ASQA's strategic objective and government priorities for quality VET outcomes and continuous improvement of the regulatory framework.

The objective of the Provider Roundtable is to provide a forum for its Members to:

- Support providers to meet standards through an enhanced focus on self-assurance and continuous improvement through a regulatory approach that prioritises greater education and guidance support.
- Contribute to broader reforms by developing a shared understanding of 'quality outcomes', and how these should be reflected in provider performance as assessed by ASQA.
- Engage on regulatory approaches that support self-assurance, the proportionate application of regulatory action where non-compliance is identified, and provider confidence in ASQA's assessment process and outcomes.
- Discuss key risks to the quality of VET outcomes to inform timely and effective responses.
- Build a common understanding of ASQA's role and regulatory approach, what stakeholders can and cannot expect of ASQA and areas of shared stakeholder responsibility.
- Identify opportunities to improve regulation in a way that does not diminish the intended outcomes expected of ASQA's regulatory activity.
- Provide feedback to ASQA on the performance of its operations, the feedback from providers and the opportunities to build confidence in ASQA's work.
- Engage on strategies to ensure meaningful reporting on provider performance, and enhance the information ASQA publishes in respect of regulatory decisions to improve the transparency of decision-making.
- Engage on matters relating to risk-based and routine monitoring, to support public confidence in the regulation of the sector.
- Support the six strategic deliverables that ASQA is pursuing over the next four years to achieve its purpose.

Provider Roundtable Members understand the importance of 'benefits realisation', which is identifying, executing and sustaining benefits in the form of measurable improvements.

The effectiveness of the Provider Roundtable will be evaluated through the ASQA Performance Framework, in particular through provider and course owner surveys.

Membership

The Provider Roundtable is chaired by the CEO of ASQA and is comprised of senior representatives from:

- Adult Learning Australia
- Community Colleges Australia
- English Australia
- Enterprise Registered Training Organisation Association
- Independent Higher Education Australia
- Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia
- TAFE Directors Australia
- Australian Skills Quality Authority.

Meetings

Scheduled meetings

- The Provider Roundtable meets formally four times a year with meetings set well in advance
- Four weeks ahead of each meeting, members are invited to submit meeting agenda items (some of which may be handled bilaterally out-of-session as appropriate)
- ASQA commits to providing a quarterly Regulatory Report
- Information provided to Roundtable Members can be shared unless it has been annotated in writing as 'in-confidence' and/or is verbally noted as such by the Chair.

Out-of-session activities

- Additional meetings may be scheduled as required
- Information may also be circulated by the secretariat out-of-session and members can request follow-up briefing meetings

Communiqués

- An agreed Communiqué will be released on ASQA's website within a week of each quarterly meeting
- The draft Communiqué will be provided within two working days of each quarterly meeting and members will be given two working days to provide feedback

Minutes

- Draft Minutes will be circulated within two weeks of each quarterly meeting for members' feedback
- The draft Minutes will be revised to incorporate members' feedback and will be confirmed at the subsequent meeting
- The Minutes are a confidential record of the meeting

Secretariat

- ASQA will provide Secretariat services to the Provider Roundtable
- Roundtable member correspondence and queries are processed through engage@asqa.gov.au