



Stakeholder Liaison Group Terms of Reference 2023

Form

Stakeholder Liaison Group (SLG) Terms of Reference 2023

Purpose

The purpose of the ASQA Stakeholder Liaison Group (SLG) is to provide a vehicle for ASQA to interact with a diverse range of stakeholders from the VET sector as part of ASQA's Regulatory Operating Model through engagement and consultation with sector experts on ASQA's regulatory activities and sector education strategies.

Background

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

ASQA's strategic objective is to assure consistent, high-quality VET and recognise the importance our regulation plays in building student, community and industry trust in Australian VET, and ensuring students receive the skills and training necessary for secure work and career opportunities.

Our five strategic objectives shape our behaviour, underpin our decision making and actions and ensure we are focused at all times on effective regulation of the VET sector.

1. Our regulatory approach promotes a culture of self-assurance and continuous improvement.
2. Our regulatory approach is best practice, integrated, risk-based and proportionate.
3. Our regulatory approach is transparent and accountable.
4. We engage, collaborate and partner with stakeholders to improve regulatory outcomes.
5. Our people and operations are supported and capable to deliver this plan and continuously improve.

Objectives of SLG

The objective of SLG is to collaborate and engage with a diverse range of stakeholders to enhance the reputation of the VET sector, support and protect students, and improve regulatory outcomes and a regulatory approach which promotes a culture of self-assurance and continuous improvement.

This will be achieved by:

- Fostering strong working relationships with other key VET stakeholders that support our functions.
- Establishing partnerships and strategic engagements that improve regulatory outcomes –

collaborating to identify risks and designing regulatory approaches and education strategies that are well-informed and take account of the current and emerging environment in which we are operating.

In advancing these objectives, ASQA will also facilitate feedback loops between the SLG and the peak provider associations that comprise the Provider Roundtable, which is ASQA's primary forum for strategic engagement and consultation with the VET, dual sector and English language provider associations on regulatory design, reform and benefits realisation. The SLG is not an ASQA governance committee, is consultative in nature, and is not empowered to make binding decisions or determinations.

Membership

Members of the SLG possess individual leadership, operational and VET sector expertise and experience. Members will have demonstrated motivation to the promotion of quality VET, and a commitment to developing confidence in the broader VET sector and in ASQA as the national VET regulator. Membership of the SLG reflects the diversity of ASQA's regulated community (including the nature and modes of training delivery, scale, locations, diversity of student populations, and provider performance).

The SLG comprises:

- ASQA Director, Education and Services (Chair)
- ASQA senior executive/s and relevant personnel
- training providers that are broadly representative of the diversity of ASQA's regulated community, including the following cohorts:
 - two TAFE providers delivering training to domestic students – this may include a dual-sector institution
 - two community education providers
 - two enterprise Registered Training Organisations (RTO)
 - one school that is an RTO
 - up to five private RTOs – this may include a provider registered on CRICOS to deliver ELICOS training
 - up to three VET sector consultant/s.

The SLG membership is maintained through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process open to ASQA-regulated VET providers and VET sector consultants. The term of membership is generally two years. To support the goal of continuity, existing members will be required to submit an EOI at the end of the two-year period to renew their membership.

The Chair may consider and agree to a replacement in the event that a member resigns mid-term.

Where members change their role within the sector, continuation as a member of SLG must be approved by the SLG Chair to ensure ongoing broad representation of the regulated community.

Substitute attendees for quarterly and subgroup meetings are permitted only as an exception and with the Chair's advance permission.

SLG subgroups will be made up of SLG members and may also include other key stakeholders/subject matter experts as appropriate and at the discretion of the SLG Chair.

The SLG will undertake an annual review of its effectiveness, including its Terms of Reference.

Member conduct

Members agree to:

- respect the views of other members and constructively contribute to conversations
- advance the purpose of the SLG and not the concerns or interests of any particular training provider or organisation
- conduct themselves consistent with the ASQA SLG Member Code of Conduct (see Appendix A)
- disclose any matters that could be perceived to be, or are, conflicts of interest, or material changes that may potentially impact on their role on the SLG to the Chair on a confidential basis (members will be required to complete the ASQA [fit and proper person declaration](#))
- respect the confidentiality of discussions and the information provided by other participants (Chatham House rules) and not communicate matters without the permission of the Chair, except for the purposes of feedback loops facilitated by ASQA between the SLG and the Provider Roundtable
- not speak to media about matters discussed by the SLG, and direct media queries to the ASQA Communications team via media@asqa.gov.au

Meetings

The full SLG membership will meet formally twice each year – once on-line and once face to face.

At the start of each financial year, ASQA will call for nominations from SLG members for participation in sub-groups aligned to the annual regulatory risk priorities. Members should consider participation based on area of expertise and experience. The sub-group meetings will be scheduled on an as needs basis with prior notice to all participants.

Members may be invited to submit meeting agenda items and ASQA commits to providing relevant papers and other related information in support of the agenda items well ahead of meeting dates.

Meetings will chiefly be held via a business communication platform hosted by government (such as Microsoft Teams).

Out-of-session activities

Additional meetings and SLG subgroups (working groups) may be convened as required and members may be asked to contribute to or review proposed regulatory activities to test ASQA's approach.

Minutes from all meetings will be circulated to the full SLG membership. The Minutes are a confidential record of the meeting.

Additional information may be circulated by ASQA out-of-session and members can request follow-up briefing meetings in need by contacting educationservices@asqa.gov.au

Secretariat

ASQA will provide Secretariat services to the SLG.

SLG member correspondence and queries are processed through educationservices@asqa.gov.au

SLG Terms of Reference – Appendix A

Appendix A: ASQA SLG Member Code of Conduct

As a member of the ASQA SLG, I acknowledge the Terms of Reference and agree to:

- participate in good faith to contribute my sector insights, information and experience to support the objectives of the SLG
- behave honestly and with integrity in connection with my role on the SLG
- respect the views of others and treat members with respect and courtesy
- not disclose or distribute information that is discussed at SLG meetings unless permission is obtained from the SLG Chair, except for the purposes of feedback loops facilitated by ASQA between the SLG and the Provider Roundtable
- not engage with the media in relation to matters discussed by the SLG unless permission is obtained from the SLG Chair
- take reasonable steps to avoid any conflict of interest (real or apparent) and disclose to the Chair details of any personal interest in connection with the SLG (as per the ASQA SLG Member Disclosure Declaration)
- disclose material changes to their business operations, including adverse decisions by ASQA or other government agencies that have (real or apparent) impact on their role on the SLG (as per the ASQA SLG Member Disclosure Declaration at Appendix B)
- not improperly use inside information to gain, or seek to gain, a benefit or an advantage; or to cause, or to seek to cause, detriment to ASQA
- attend meetings and provide apologies with sufficient notice where attendance is not possible
- agree to ASQA publishing my name as an SLG member
- acknowledge that the SLG is consultative in nature and is not an ASQA governance or decision-making committee.

I understand that where an individual member breaches this Code of Conduct, the Chair may withdraw that individual's membership of the SLG.

Name

Position title

Organisation name

Signature Date / /