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Preparing for the revised Standards

Guide



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Australian Government
Australian Skills Quality Authority

ASQA

(Working together)

Overview

This document outlines things to consider when assessing and self-assuring your operations against the revised Standards and should be read alongside the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations' (DEWR) [Policy Guidance](#).

Self-assurance refers to how RTOs manage their operations to ensure a focus on quality, continuous improvement and ongoing compliance with the Standards (and broader regulatory requirements). RTOs need to have systems in place to critically examine their performance against the Standards on an ongoing basis. The following table steps through how RTOs could approach this.

	Understand the intent of the revised Standards A key focus of DEWR's draft Policy Guidance is to support you to understand the intent of each Standard and the outcomes you should seek to achieve.
	Apply the revised Standards to your governance, systems and operations Different RTOs will apply the revised Standards in different ways, as appropriate to their context, organisation and student cohorts. All RTOs will need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• engage with, and understand, your student cohort to understand their learning and support needs• implement or adjust systems and governance structures to enable you to meet the Standards• review policies and processes to ensure these align with, and support achievement of, the outcomes described in the Standard• train staff in what the Standards mean for their role, including any adjustments to current practice (and provide ongoing support and professional development to enable them to comply with the Standards).
	Consider how you will adopt the revised Standards To enable you to monitor your performance, you should have: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• effective mechanisms for engaging with VET students, industry, staff and other key stakeholders to proactively seek their feedback on your performance and ways you might improve• systems in place to collect and analyse data that enables you to understand whether you are achieving the outcomes set out in the Standards. <p>You should also have mechanisms to enable your organisation to keep abreast of broader environmental shifts, including changes to regulatory requirements, government priorities, sector trends and emerging technologies, industry practice and research.</p>
	Review outcomes and adjust your practices to keep improving Regular analysis of feedback and data will enable you to identify areas where your organisation is performing well, as well as opportunities for improvement. This analysis will enable you to find ways to improve the way you do things and better meet the needs of VET students and industry. A dynamic plan or schedule for continuous improvement is a useful tool for identifying, managing and prioritising changes. Engagement with the governing persons within your organisation around your performance monitoring is critical, as is communicating to students and staff about changes that impact them.

You can continuously improve your performance by ensuring you understand the revised Standards, and develop a plan to regularly monitor and review your systems, processes and practices against the outcomes they describe.

Reflective questions are also included to prompt thinking of the practical application and understanding of the revised Standards in your operations.

The self-assurance considerations and reflective questions will be incorporated into ASQAs Regulatory Guidelines that will be progressively released throughout the transition to the revised Standards.

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Revised Standards for RTOs

1. Training and assessment	Quality training and assessment engages VET students and enables them to attain nationally recognised, industry-relevant competencies.
Training	<p>1.1 Training is engaging and well-structured and enables VET students to attain skills and knowledge consistent with the training product.</p> <p>1.2 Effective engagement with industry, employer and/or community representatives informs the industry relevance of the training.</p>
Assessment	<p>1.3 The assessment system is fit-for-purpose and consistent with the training product.</p> <p>1.4 The assessment system ensures assessment is conducted in a fair and appropriate way and enables accurate judgements of VET student competency.</p> <p>1.5 The assessment system is quality assured by appropriately skilled and credentialed people through a regular process of validating assessment practices and judgements.</p> <p>1.6 VET students with prior skills, knowledge and competencies are supported to seek recognition of prior learning to progress through the training product.</p>
Credit transfer	1.7 VET students who have previously completed an equivalent training product are supported to have their training recognised.
Facilities, equipment, and resources	1.8 Facilities, resources and equipment for each training product are fit-for-purpose, safe, accessible and sufficient.
2. VET student support	VET students are treated fairly and are properly informed, protected, and supported.
Information	<p>2.1 VET students have access to clear and accurate information, including to make informed decisions about the training product and the RTO, and are made aware of changes that affect them.</p> <p>2.2 VET students are advised, prior to enrolment, about the suitability of the training product for them, taking into account their skills and competencies.</p>
Training support	<p>2.3 VET students have reasonable access to training support services, teachers, trainers and assessors and other staff to support their progress through the training product.</p> <p>2.4 Reasonable adjustments are made to support VET students with disability to access and participate in training and assessment on an equal basis.</p>
Diversity and inclusion	2.5 The learning environment promotes and supports the diversity of VET students.
Wellbeing	2.6 The wellbeing needs of the VET student cohort are identified and strategies are put in place to support these needs.
Feedback, complaints, and appeals	<p>2.7 Effective feedback and complaints management addresses concerns and informs continuous improvement.</p> <p>2.8 Effective appeal processes are available where decisions of the RTO or a third party adversely impact a VET student.</p>
3. VET Workforce	VET students are trained, assessed and supported by people who are qualified, skilled and committed to professional development.
VET workforce management	3.1 Effective workforce management ensures appropriate staffing to deliver the services.
Trainer and assessor competencies	<p>3.2 Training and assessment is delivered by credentialed people with current skills and knowledge in training and assessment.</p> <p>3.3 Training and assessment is delivered by people with current industry skills and knowledge relevant to the training product.</p>
4. Governance	Effective governance and a commitment to continuous improvement supports the quality and integrity of VET delivery.
Leadership and accountability	<p>4.1 The RTO operates with integrity and is accountable for the delivery of quality services.</p> <p>4.2 Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood.</p>
Risk management	4.3 Risks to VET students, staff and the RTO are identified and managed.
Continuous improvement	4.4 The RTO undertakes systematic monitoring and evaluation to support the delivery of quality services and continuous improvement.

Quality Area 1

Training and Assessment

Outcome:

Quality training and assessment engages VET students and enables them to attain nationally recognised, industry-relevant competencies.

Focus Area – Training

In self-assuring against Standard 1.1, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- your process or system for designing training, including any quality assurance you have in place to ensure training is fit-for-purpose and consistent with the requirements of the training product
- the inputs that have informed your training design, including the mode(s) of delivery, structure and pacing, training techniques, activities and resources
- how you monitor and evaluate training delivery to ensure it is effective, engaging and appropriately structured and paced for the student cohort
- how you understand your student cohort, their needs and preferences, and how to engage them
- how you adjust the training structure, pacing and delivery based on the identified needs of different student cohorts
- how you identify and monitor work-integrated learning, work placements and other community-based learning opportunities to ensure students have sufficient opportunity to gain the necessary skills and knowledge.

In self-assuring against Standard 1.2, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- your process for identifying relevant stakeholders and appropriate engagement mechanisms to ensure your RTO's training continues to meet industry needs
- how you systematically identify and implement changes to the training based on the outcomes of engagement with industry, employers, and community representatives
- the quality assurance mechanisms you have in place to ensure that training reflects current industry practice.

Reflective questions for Focus Area – Training

1

How do you know your training design and delivery is fit-for-purpose and consistent with the requirements of the training product?

2

How do you identify relevant stakeholders and engage with them to seek advice and feedback to ensure your training reflects current industry requirements, expectations and practice, and that of employers and community representatives?

3

What has informed your decision that the structure and pace of the training is appropriate to support students to achieve the outcomes set in the training product? How do you adjust this for different student cohorts?

4

How do you know trainers are appropriately skilled and resourced to deliver training in an effective and engaging way?

5

How do you monitor student feedback, engagement and progression and use this to inform improvements to training design and delivery?

6

How do you monitor whether work placements provide students with sufficient opportunity to gain the necessary skills and knowledge?

Focus Area – Assessment

In self-assuring against Standard 1.3, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- your process for designing assessment, including the quality assurance mechanisms you have in place to ensure your assessment system is fit-for-purpose and consistent with the requirements of the training product
- the inputs that have informed your assessment, including the assessment tasks, tools and materials and performance benchmarks
- how you monitor assessment outcomes to ensure assessment is fit-for-purpose and enables valid assessment of a student's competency
- how you ensure all assessment tools are reviewed and any necessary changes made, prior to their use

In self-assuring against Standard 1.4, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- the systems / processes you have in place to ensure that assessment is conducted in a way that is fair, flexible, valid and reliable
- how you routinely check that assessment is conducted in line with the principles of assessment
- how you know that individual assessment judgements are justified based on the rules of evidence.

In self-assuring against Standard 1.5, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- your process for designing and adopting a validation program for the training products on your scope of registration
- what validation activities are aiming to identify in assessment practices and judgements, and when a validation activity may need to be expanded
- how you determine the frequency of your validation program, including when new training products are added to scope, and when changes are made to training products
- how you determine which components of a training product are to be validated
- how you determine the sample of assessments
- how you determine who is involved in validation and the processes that are in place to ensure that only appropriately skilled and credentialed people undertake validation
- how you adjust the assessment system for a training product based on the outcomes of validation.

In self-assuring against Standard 1.6, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- how you ensure individuals are aware of the opportunities to be assessed for recognition of prior learning
- how you ensure assessment of recognition of prior learning is conducted in accordance with the Standards and is robust enough to identify proven competencies
- how you have used the principles of fairness, consistency and transparency in designing your recognition of prior learning policy and practices
- how you use documented outcomes from recognition of prior learning assessments.

Reflective questions for Focus Area – Assessment

1	How do you know your assessment system is fit-for-purpose and consistent with the requirements of the training product?
2	How do you monitor your assessment system and assessment outcomes and make any necessary changes to assessment tools and other materials?
3	How does the design of your assessment system support assessment in line with the principles of assessment and rules of evidence?
4	What systems and processes do you have in place to plan regular and structured validation of training products on your scope of registration?
5	How do you ensure individuals know about and understand when recognition of prior learning is an option for them?

Focus Area – Credit Transfer

In self-assuring against Standard 1.7, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- how you ensure students are aware of the opportunities to seek credit transfer
- how you have used the principles of fairness, consistency and transparency in designing your credit transfer policy and practices
- how you use documented outcomes from credit transfers.

Reflective questions for Focus Area – Credit Transfer

1	What processes do you have in place to ensure individuals know about and understand when credit transfer is an option for them?
2	How do you ensure that your credit transfer policy is consistently applied?
3	What systems and processes do you have in place to determine credit transfer, including equivalency?

Focus Area – Facilities, resources and equipment

In self-assuring against Standard 1.8, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- how you identify facility, resourcing and equipment needs
- how you determine whether your facilities, resources and equipment are sufficient for the student cohort
- the strategies you have in place to ensure the ongoing suitability and safety of your facilities, resources and equipment
- how you support students to access resources and equipment
- how you work with employers to identify risks associated with work-integrated learning and put strategies in place to address these.

Reflective questions for Focus Area – Facilities, resources and equipment

- 1 Do the training product requirements include specific facilities, resources, or equipment?
- 2 What other factors influence the facilities, resources and equipment required? For example, how has industry, employer, community, staff and student feedback influenced the facilities, resources and equipment to be used?
- 3 How do students access the facilities, resources and equipment? Do all students have equitable access?
- 4 What risks are associated with the facilities, resources, and equipment and how are these risks managed to ensure the safety of students and staff?
- 5 Are there any specific risks associated with facilities, resources or equipment used for work-integrated learning, work placements, or other community-based learning? If so, have these been identified and how are they being managed?

Quality Area 2

Learner Support

Outcome:

VET students are treated fairly and are properly informed, supported and protected

Focus Area – Information

In self-assuring against Standard 2.1, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- your systems for identifying the information needed by students and mechanisms for communicating this to them
- your quality assurance mechanisms for ensuring that information provided is clear, accurate, current and helpful to inform students' decisions (including where information is provided by third parties).
- how changes are made to marketing materials (to ensure information is accurate, consistent and current) and communicated to students

In self-assuring against Standard 2.2, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- your system for identifying the foundational skills and competencies (and any other prerequisites) required to participate in a learning product
- how you review the skills and competencies of prospective students to ensure the training product is suitable for them prior to enrolment
- the support and advice you offer prospective students where they do not have the skills and competencies to participate in the training product, and how you will identify alternative training products suited to them.

Reflective questions for Focus Area – Information

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| 1 | How do you identify the information prospective students need prior to enrolment to make decisions about the training product and the RTO? |
| 2 | How do you ensure that information provided to prospective students is clear, accurate, current and sufficiently detailed to support informed decision-making and is easily accessible to prospective students? |
| 3 | What mechanisms do you have in place to ensure students are informed of changes that impact them? |
| 4 | How do you identify the skills and competencies (and any other prerequisites) required to participate in a learning product? |
| 5 | What systems do you have in place for reviewing the skills and competencies of prospective students and advising them about the suitability of training products prior to their enrolment? |

Focus Area – Training support

In self-assuring against Standard 2.3, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- how you identify student needs to determine the training support services to be provided to each student
- the different ways in which you can support students to progress through the training
- how you monitor student progress and take on feedback, and adjust the training support services provided to individuals based on this.

In self-assuring against Standard 2.4, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- how you encourage and support students to disclose their disability (or the impact of their disability) to enable you to identify potential adjustments required
- how you engage with students (and their support people, trainers and assessors, etc. as appropriate) to understand the impact of a student's disability and identify potential adjustments
- the different ways in which you might support students with disability to participate in training and assessment on an equal basis
- how you balance the interests of all affected parties to determine whether adjustments are reasonable.

Reflective questions for Focus Area – Training Support

- 1 How do you identify student needs and monitor a student's progress to determine the training support services to be provided to each Student?
- 2 How do you define 'reasonable access' to training support services and 'timely responses' to queries and monitor your RTO's performance against these?
- 3 How do you encourage and support students to disclose the impact of their disability?
- 4 How you engage with students (and others, as appropriate) to collaboratively identify and agree reasonable adjustments to be made?

Focus Area – Diversity and inclusion

In self-assuring against Standard 2.5, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- how you proactively support and encourage participation by a diverse range of students
- how you ensure that your systems, policies, procedures and practices are inclusive and culturally safe
- the strategies you have in place to prevent discrimination and identify and respond to instances of discrimination where these occur
- strategies for recruiting staff and governing persons that reflect the diversity of the Australian community
- the training and support provided to staff and governing persons to build and continuously improve their cultural competence
- how you monitor the learning environment to ensure it is culturally safe and how you identify opportunities for improvement.

Reflective questions for Focus Area – Diversity and inclusion

- 1 How do you support and encourage participation by a diverse range of students?
- 2 How do you ensure your systems, policies, procedures and practices are inclusive and culturally safe?
- 3 What strategies do you have in place to prevent discrimination and identify and respond to instances of discrimination where these occur?
- 4 How do you support and build the cultural competence of your staff?
- 5 How do you monitor the learning environment to ensure it is culturally safe and identify opportunities for improvement?

Focus Area – Wellbeing

In self-assuring against Standard 2.6, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- how your student cohort, training mode, strategies and content may influence the types of wellbeing support services needed to support students at different stages of their learning journey; recognising needs may change over time.
- how staff are informed of the RTOs wellbeing support strategies, supported to identify when individual students need wellbeing support (relevant to their role) and supported to refer students to available supports
- how you monitor the appropriateness and effectiveness of the strategies you have to support student wellbeing and to inform continuous improvement.

Reflective questions for Focus Area – Wellbeing

- 1 What systems and processes do you have in place to identify the wellbeing needs of the student cohort?
- 2 How do you determine the right strategies and wellbeing services to support the student cohort?
- 3 How do you ensure students are made aware of the available supports?
- 4 How do you seek feedback from students about the RTOs wellbeing support strategies and supports?

Focus Area – Feedback, complaints and appeals

In self-assuring against Standard 2.7, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- how you encourage and support people to provide feedback and make complaints
- how your complaints management system ensures procedural fairness
- how you understand the root cause of a complaint and take appropriate action
- how you document and communicate the outcomes of complaints
- how feedback and complaints are reviewed and used to inform continuous improvement.

In self-assuring against Standard 2.8, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- which decisions are subject to appeal and to independent review
- how students are made aware of their appeal rights
- how you ensure the appeals management system is procedurally fair, timely and transparent

- how relevant staff (undertaking appeals) are informed of and trained in the appeals management system
- how you identify independent parties to review appeal decisions
- the processes you have in place to ensure objectivity and compliance with the appeals management system
- how outcomes from appeals are used to inform continuous improvement.

Reflective questions for Focus Area – Feedback, complaints and appeals

- 1 How do you ensure students and others are made aware of the processes for feedback, complaints and appeals?
- 2 How do you ensure your complaints and appeals management systems are fair, timely and effective?
- 3 How are the outcomes of complaints and appeals used to continuously improve?

Quality Area 3

VET Workforce

Outcome:

VET students are trained, assessed and supported by people who are qualified, skilled and committed to professional development

Focus Area – VET workforce management

In self-assuring against Standard 3.1, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- the different roles within your RTO and the skills and knowledge needed for each role
- any changes your RTO (or the sector more broadly) is likely to experience over the next five years and how these might impact on your staffing profile / needs / access to skilled staff
- your strategies for attracting, recruiting and retaining high quality staff
- how you support staff to continue their professional development and career progression.

Reflective questions for Focus Area – VET workforce management

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| 1 | How do you know that you have the right number and mix of staff to deliver quality training and assessment? |
| 2 | What are the keys risks to your workforce over the next five years and what strategies do you have in place to mitigate these risks? |
| 3 | How do you identify and address gaps in the number and/or capability of your staff? |
| 4 | How do you monitor and review the performance of your staff to identify opportunities for improvement / professional development? |
| 5 | How do you facilitate access to continuing professional development for your staff? |

Focus Area – Trainer and assessor competencies

In self-assuring against Standard 3.2, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- how you determine the scope of each trainer and assessor's role and responsibilities in line with these Standards and the Credential Policy
- how you monitor compliance with the Credential Policy and oversee the quality of training and assessment delivered by people working under direction
- how you monitor and regularly review the performance of trainers and assessors to identify opportunities for professional development
- the ways in which you support staff to access continuing professional development to maintain their current skills and knowledge in training and assessment.

In self-assuring against Standard 3.3, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- how you determine the industry skills and knowledge required for trainers and assessors, as relevant to each training product
- how you identify and address any gaps in trainer and assessor industry skills and competencies
- how you identify relevant industry experts and define their roles and responsibilities in relation to training and assessment
- how you oversee the quality of training and assessment delivered by industry experts.

Reflective questions for Focus Area – Trainer and assessor competencies

- 1 How do you assure yourself that each person delivering training and assessment is appropriately credentialled?
- 2 How do you know that your system for monitoring those working under direction (including industry experts) is effective?
- 3 How do you monitor and regularly review the performance of trainers and assessors to identify opportunities for professional development?
- 4 How do you identify the types of industry competencies, skills and knowledge relevant to each training product on your scope of registration?
- 5 How do you identify and address gaps in your trainers and assessors' industry competencies, skills and knowledge?
- 6 How do you ensure your use of industry experts adds value to training and assessment?

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Quality Area 4

Governance

Outcome:

Effective governance and a commitment to continuous improvement supports the quality and integrity of VET delivery

Focus Area – Leadership and accountability

In self-assuring against Standard 4.1, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- the systems and processes for ensuring governing persons are fit and proper and suitable for the role
- the information that governing persons need in order for them to make informed decisions about the RTO's compliance with the Standards (including how they receive and review such information)
- how the governing persons establish, communicate and lead the culture of the organisation (with a focus on integrity, fairness and transparency).

In self-assuring against Standard 4.2, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- the roles and responsibilities of staff and others within the RTO, including how these are documented, communicated and understood within the organisation
- the lines of accountability, particularly as they relate to risks to students and compliance with the Standards
- how staff and governing persons are supported to understand the Standards, including any relevant changes to regulatory requirements
- how you will know whether third parties are aware of (and meeting) their obligations under the Standards and how you will take action if they are not.

Reflective questions for Focus Area – Leadership and accountability

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| 1 | How do you ensure governing persons are suitable, fit and proper? |
| 2 | What systems and processes are in place to ensure governing persons are acting diligently and are well informed? |
| 3 | How do you ensure the governing persons are familiar with the Standards and their responsibility to monitor the organisation's performance against the Standards? |
| 4 | How does the organisation identify, communicate and monitor its values and culture? |
| 5 | What systems and processes do you have in place to identify, communicate and monitor roles, responsibilities and accountabilities within the RTO? |
| 6 | How do you ensure staff are familiar with the Standards (and any changes to regulatory requirements) and their responsibilities in relation to compliance? |
| 7 | What systems and processes do you have in place to oversee and ensure third party compliance with the Standards? |

Focus Area – Risk management

In self-assuring against Standard 4.3, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- how you identify the key risks to your RTO, students and your continued compliance with the Standards
- how you determine the most appropriate risk mitigation strategies for identified risks
- how you review the effectiveness of your risk management system
- the systems and strategies you have in place to address financial risks, conflicts of interest and risks to young students (where applicable).

Reflective questions for Focus Area – Risk management

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|---|---|
| 1 | What informs your understanding of the key risks to your RTO, students and your continued compliance with the Standards? |
| 2 | What are the key risks to your RTO, students and your continued compliance with the Standards and how will these be managed? |
| 3 | How do you monitor the RTO's financial position and ensure governing persons are aware of (and managing) financial risks? |
| 4 | How do you ensure staff and third parties are aware of the types of conflicts of interest that need to be disclosed and how these are to be documented and managed? |
| 5 | If you deliver to VET students under the age of 18, what practices do you have in place to embed the principles of child safe organisations? |

Focus Area – Continuous Improvement

In self-assuring against Standard 4.4, RTOs may wish to consider (among other things)

- the inputs to your monitoring, including measures / performance indicators, data sources and mechanisms for collecting stakeholder feedback
- how frequently you will review data and undertake evaluation activities
- how you will involve relevant stakeholders in the design and implementation of monitoring and evaluation activities
- how you will document, report and use the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation
- how you will adjust your systems, processes and practices in response to the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation.

Reflective questions for Focus Area – Continuous improvement

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|---|--|
| 1 | How do you monitor and evaluate your performance against the Standards? |
| 2 | How do you involve stakeholders, including staff and students? |
| 3 | What systems do you have in place to collect and analyse data and feedback from students, staff, industry, employers, regulators and others? |
| 4 | How are the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation used to improve your performance and the quality of the services? |