



MEDIA RELEASE

Skills regulator announces regulatory strategy

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Learner protection, the amount of training being provided and the capability of trainers and assessors will be target areas for the national skills regulator over the next 14 months.

The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) has today released its regulatory strategy which will guide its work through to June 30, 2017. The release of this strategy coincides with the release of ASQA's *Regulatory Risk framework*, which outlines an enhanced, modern risk based regulatory approach that targets both provider and systemic risks.

Chief Commissioner Chris Robinson said the authority was taking a similar approach to the Australian Tax Office and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission in naming the systemic areas it would be targeting.

"Outlining clear priorities is integral to the operation of an effective risk-based regulator and ensures that resources are directed to the issues that have greatest potential to undermine the credibility and reputation of the vocational education and training (VET) sector," Mr Robinson said.

"We're also hoping that publicising our target areas will positively influence providers by encouraging them to proactively review their operations to identify and address areas of concern."

Mr Robinson said the regulator's focus on learner protection was a continuation of the work undertaken in 2015 regarding the Australian Government's VET FEE-HELP scheme.

"There is particular concern within the VET sector that some RTOs are failing to provide accurate and comprehensive information to learners prior to their enrolment about their rights and obligations in relation to entering and exiting training agreements," he said.

"The amount of training being provided is a critical issue for ASQA and one that it has discussed in a number of the national strategic reviews undertaken since 2014.

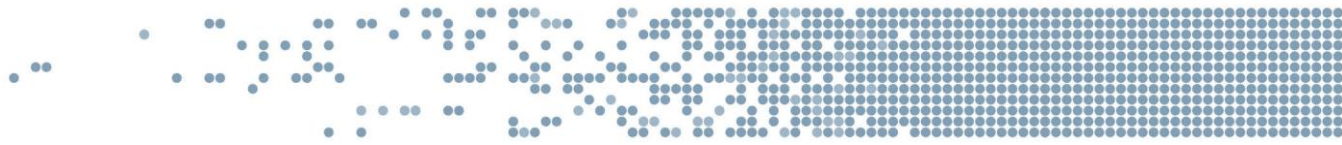
"It is essential to the integrity of VET that RTOs provide learners with sufficient training to acquire new knowledge and skills and the opportunity to practice those skills in a suitable environment."

The capability of trainers and assessors is also another critical concern for ASQA, Mr Robinson said.

"The capability of the VET workforce directly affects the quality of qualifications delivered and assessed across the sector," he said.

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“The *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment* qualification is an important part of this issue and that’s why ASQA will apply additional regulatory scrutiny to RTOs of concern delivering this training product.”

Mr Robinson said ASQA would also focus on further strengthening collaboration and coordination responses with state, territory and Australian Government funding, regulatory and program agencies.

“Through our targeted audits of VET FEE-HELP providers undertaken in 2015, we have seen the benefits of enhanced collaboration between key agencies in addressing issues,” he said.

“ASQA will also develop an enhanced regulatory approach that utilises a broader suite of regulatory tools to deal with providers.”

The strategic initiatives and target areas outlined in the Regulatory Strategy complement ASQA’s ongoing commitment to focus regulatory efforts on the small but concerning group of providers in the VET market engaging in practices that pose a threat to confidence in the quality of the VET sector.

Since it was established in July 2011, ASQA has undertaken more than 5,700 audits of training providers. As a result of its regulatory scrutiny, ASQA has made more than 900 regulatory decisions, including 377 decisions to terminate a provider’s registration.