



MEDIA RELEASE

ASQA cancels the registration of Productivity Partners Pty Ltd

19 June 2017

The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) has cancelled the registration of Productivity Partners Pty Ltd (registered training organisation (RTO) number 30169) as a provider of vocational education and training (VET) services, including to overseas students.

ASQA Chief Commissioner Mark Paterson said the RTO, which trades under the name Captain Cook College, had been scrutinised following the receipt of complaints regarding unscrupulous recruitment practices and the quality of training.

“ASQA conducted a significant inquiry into Productivity Partners, gathering evidence about the RTO’s practices from 2013 – 2016,” Mr Paterson said.

“The information gathered demonstrated that there was specific and systemic non-compliance with the requirements of the VET Quality Framework and ASQA made the decision to issue a notice of intention to cancel the RTO’s registration,” Mr Paterson said.

Examples of non-compliance included:

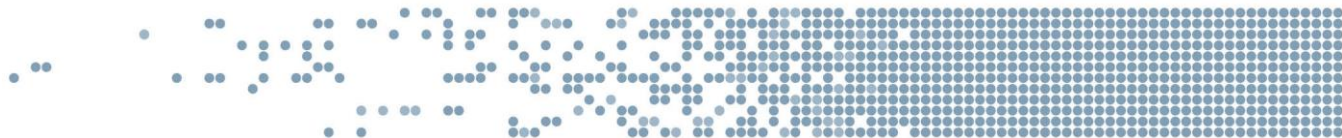
- widespread and systemic non-compliance with the marketing/recruitment and enrolment practices undertaken by the RTO and by third parties operating on behalf of the RTO;
- failure to monitor its third parties to ensure that marketing and advertising was ethical, accurate and factual;
- provision of inaccurate information to prospective learners by third parties acting on behalf of the RTO in order to pressure students into enrolling;
- failure to appropriately assess and consider the needs of a prospective learner prior to enrolment;
- failure to determine the individual learner's support requirements and provide access to educational and support services once enrolled; and
- insufficient trainers and assessors to deliver the qualifications to the number of students enrolled;

“The RTO’s response to the notice of intention to cancel contained limited evidence and did not refute many of the findings made by ASQA,” Mr Paterson said.

Mr Paterson said Productivity Partners had lodged an application to withdraw its registration however, in light of the seriousness of its regulatory findings, ASQA decided to pursue a formal cancellation.

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ASQA's decision will take effect from 21 July 2017 unless it seeks a review of the decision in the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT).

Productivity Partners is the ninth training provider to have its registration cancelled following scrutiny as part of ASQA's 2016 VET FEE-HELP Strategic Review. The others are:

- ASCET Institute of Technology (RTO number 20770);
- Smart City Vocational College Pty Ltd (RTO number 6494);
- Australian Vocational Learning Institute (RTO number 21289);
- Conwal and Associates Pty Ltd (RTO number 31190); and
- Asia Pacific Training Institute Pty Ltd (RTO number 21378);
- MHM Australasia Pty Ltd (RTO number 6980);
- Gurkhas Institute of Technology (RTO number 22088); and
- ACT Education Group (RTO number 40264).

Three providers have had courses removed or suspended from its scope of registration as part of the Strategic Review. They are:

- Franklyn Scholar (Australia) Pty Ltd (RTO number 7134) – courses removed from scope of registration;
- Merage Group Pty Ltd (RTO number 91798) – suspension of scope of registration; and
- The Australian Academy of Business Pty Ltd (RTO number 32128) – suspension of all diploma-level and higher qualifications from scope of registration.

The decisions against ASCET Institute of Technology, Smart City Vocational College, Australian Vocational Learning Institute, Conwal and Associates, Asia Pacific Training Institute and MHM Australasia have come into effect.

Gurkhas Institute of Technology, Franklyn Scholar (Australia) and Merage Group have each sought a review of ASQA's decision in the AAT, and these matters are ongoing.

Merage Group has been granted a stay of the decision pending the outcome of the review. Gurkhas Institute of Technology has applied for a stay of ASQA's decision. This application is yet to be considered by the AAT.

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