



MEDIA RELEASE

Statement regarding regulation of the training sector

5 June 2015

The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) rejects any conclusion that it has not acted to investigate and take appropriate action in relation to concerns regarding the quality of vocational training and assessment.

Since it was established on 1 July 2011, ASQA has:

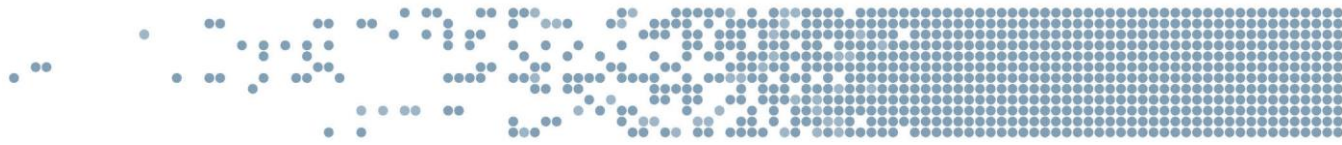
- conducted almost 4,700 audits of the training and assessment activities of registered training organisations (RTOs);
- issued 470 notices of intention to cancel or suspend RTO registration; and
- made 218 decisions to cancel or suspend registration and 141 decision to refuse reregistration of existing RTOs, affecting in total 261 different RTOs.

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At the Senate Estimates hearing of 3 June 2015, questions were raised regarding RTOs owned by Vocation Limited. In order to ensure the response it provided to these questions has been understood, ASQA advises as follows:

- Vocation Ltd is not a RTO.
- Vocation Ltd is a holding company which acquired ownership in whole or in part of 12 higher education and vocational training providers.
- Of these RTOs, nine are or were regulated by ASQA, one is regulated by Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA), one is regulated by ASQA and TEQSA, and one was regulated by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA).
- At the time of the acquisition by Vocation, each RTO was a separate legal entity holding its own scope of registration, and with its own management, staffing and training regimes.
- Of the RTOs regulated by ASQA:
 - three voluntarily withdrew their registration, unrelated to any interaction with ASQA,
 - one withdrew its registration following an ASQA audit that identified non-compliance with the required national Standards;
 - two have gone through a completed ASQA audit process and found compliant with the VET Quality Framework; and
 - four are currently the subject of significant ASQA regulatory scrutiny which, while well-advanced, is not quite finished.



During the Estimates hearing, questions were asked comparing ASQA's actions in relation to the Vocation-owned RTOs to that taken by the Victorian regulator. In particular, the situation regarding the 'recall' or 'cancellation' of qualifications was raised. It should be noted:

- The legislative schemes and powers of the VRQA, under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, and ASQA, under the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* (NVR Act), are different; and
- ASQA is given power to cancel qualifications in specified circumstances and only after providing procedural fairness steps for each person whose qualification is sought to be cancelled, by giving the affected person the opportunity to respond in writing prior to the decision to cancel.

The policy framework for Australia's Vocational Education and Training (VET) system is based on the regulation of RTOs, rather than the regulation of each individual learner. The wholesale cancellation of qualifications has not been a feature of the VET system. The NVR Act provisions assume, cancellation is a specific response to particular circumstances and, if based on a concern that an individual's actual competencies do not meet the certified competencies awarded to the individual, this would be preceded by an individual reassessment of the person's actual competencies.

Vocation-owned RTOs have been on ASQA's radar since last year and all of its operating RTOs regulated by ASQA have been subject to extensive audit and regulatory scrutiny.