



Users' Guide

Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015



Australian Government

Australian Skills Quality Authority



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FOREWORD FROM THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER

High-quality vocational education and training (VET) is vital to Australia's economic prosperity. It provides Australians with the skills and knowledge they need to make a productive contribution to the national workforce.

To ensure high-quality training, the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) was implemented in July 2002 and has since evolved with the collaboration of the VET sector. In 2011, the *Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2011* were implemented to coincide with the establishment of a new national regulator for VET, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA).

The *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* are the next step in this evolutionary chain and have been endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) Industry and Skills Council. The Standards come into effect for applicants to become RTOs from 1 January 2015, and for existing RTOs from 1 April 2015. Regulators other than ASQA may have different implementation dates. As with previous standards, the onus remains firmly on RTOs to comply with the current Standards at all times.

To coincide with the release of the revised Standards, ASQA has strengthened the information and guidance it provides to RTOs, in order to help them demonstrate and maintain compliance. This guide is an example of ASQA's revised approach. ASQA also engages with providers about the Standards through its website at www.asqa.gov.au, Infoline and face-to-face and online information sessions.

While this guide is not intended to constitute a checklist for providers, it does include information about each Standard, how each training organisation can demonstrate compliance with that Standard and examples of what compliance may look like. Equipped with this information, each training provider can apply the Standards in the context of their own operational model.

I urge all RTOs and aspiring RTOs to use this guide. This guide can assist you to demonstrate and maintain compliance with the national Standards, which will ensure Australia's VET sector continues to offer the highest possible quality training now and into the future.



CHRIS ROBINSON

Chief Commissioner
Australian Skills Quality Authority



ABOUT THE *STANDARDS FOR REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATIONS (RTOs) 2015*

NATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE STANDARDS

The Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) Industry and Skills Council is responsible for endorsing vocational education and training (VET) standards. The Council consists of the Australian, state and territory ministers with responsibility for industry and/or skills within their jurisdiction. Therefore, the Standards have been endorsed by a body representing the interests of all Australian states and territories, as well as the Commonwealth of Australia.

All registered training organisations (RTOs) in Australia are responsible for ensuring they fully comply with the Standards at all times as a condition of their registration. In regulating the Standards, ASQA acknowledges there are some new requirements that will take time for some RTOs to fully implement. Details of arrangements for transitioning to the Standards are published on ASQA's website at www.asqa.gov.au.

The Standards are enabled by the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (NVR Act)*, which aims to:

- provide national consistency in regulation of the VET sector, using a standards-based quality framework and a risk-based approach
- promote quality, flexibility and innovation in VET
- promote Australia's reputation for VET locally and overseas
- promote a VET system that meets Australia's social and economic needs
- protect students undertaking or proposing to undertake VET in Australia, and
- ensure access to accurate information regarding the quality of VET.

PURPOSE OF THE STANDARDS

The purpose of the Standards is to:

- describe the requirements that an organisation must meet in order to be an RTO in Australia
- ensure that training delivered by RTOs meets industry requirements (as set out in the training package or accredited course) and has integrity for employment and further study, and
- ensure RTOs operate ethically and consider the needs of both learners and industry.

The Standards describe outcomes RTOs must achieve, but do not prescribe methods to achieve these outcomes. This allows RTOs to be flexible and innovative in their VET delivery. It is an acknowledgement that each RTO is different and needs to operate in a way that suits their clients and learners. RTOs take a multitude of forms, including very large TAFE institutes and other public providers; enterprise RTOs that are part of larger organisations and only train staff of those organisations; community-based providers; commercial colleges; and many more. These organisations are diverse in size, structure, governance and the scope and volume of services provided. By describing outcomes rather than inputs, the Standards encourage flexibility and innovation while assuring the quality of training.

HOW THE STANDARDS ENSURE VET GRADUATES ARE JOB-READY

To ensure VET graduates are job-ready, the Standards focus on ensuring industry influences how VET is delivered in Australia. RTOs must engage with industry when developing training and assessment strategies and ensure their trainers and assessors hold current industry skills and knowledge.

Industry expectations of the skills and knowledge of VET graduates are expressed in training packages and VET accredited courses. The Standards ensure graduates meet these expectations by requiring learners to demonstrate their skills and knowledge through training and assessment. Learners do this through training that allows them the opportunity and the time to develop and practice these in a holistic and meaningful way.

The Standards require rigorous assessment to ensure learners:

- have absorbed the knowledge
- developed the skills, and
- are able to combine skills and knowledge to perform in the workplace to expected industry standards (as expressed in the training package or accredited course).

Quality training and assessment depends on the skills and knowledge of trainers and assessors. Therefore, high-quality delivery of qualifications for trainers and assessors is of vital importance. The Standards require that RTOs and people delivering these qualifications meet a high standard. The Standards specify that trainers and assessors are skilled VET practitioners with current industry skills and knowledge, so learners receive the training they need and graduates are properly assessed before being issued with a qualification or statement of attainment. While the Standards allow flexibility in how industry skills and knowledge are obtained and demonstrated, they also set clear expectations about this, and about the VET competencies that must be held by trainers and assessors.

Learners and employers must be able to make informed choices about which training and provider will meet their needs. The Standards ensure RTOs provide sufficient, accurate information to allow learners to make sound choices. While the Standards do not prescribe the way information is provided, they set clear expectations about what information is to be provided prior to enrolment. This is the case regardless of the medium used to advertise training, how learners are recruited or who is actually providing the information. The Standards make it clear that the RTO is solely responsible for all advertising and recruitment done on its behalf.

Third parties delivering training and assessment or other services on behalf of RTOs present a heightened level of risk to the compliance of RTOs. The Standards require that these arrangements are clearly articulated in a written agreement and that RTOs monitor the activities of third parties. The Standards also clarify that RTOs are wholly responsible for the quality of training and assessment provided by third parties.

It is important that a balance is achieved between the need to regulate the VET sector and doing so in a way that minimises the regulatory burden and maximises transparency. The Standards achieve this by describing outcomes, allowing RTOs to comply with the Standards in a way that best suits their organisation and their learners.



STRUCTURE OF THE STANDARDS

Each Standard consists of:

- the **Standard** itself, which provides a broad statement about the required outcomes of that Standard
- a **context statement**, which provides background information to aid understanding, but is not part of the Standard itself and does not describe any compliance requirements, and
- one or more **clauses** that describe the outcomes an RTO is required to achieve to comply with that Standard (for an RTO to comply with the Standard, it must fully comply with all of the clauses in the Standard).

The Standards also include a glossary (refer to Appendix 1). Where a word is defined in the glossary, it has that defined meaning with regard to the Standards.

BENEFITS OF A QUALITY VET SECTOR

Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As the people being trained and/or assessed by an RTO, learners have the greatest stake in the quality of VET. Learners often rely on VET outcomes to gain employment or career advancement. While learners cannot always be expected to fully understand the complexities of the sector or what constitutes quality, they must be able to make informed choices about training that best meets their needs. Learners must have confidence that, no matter which provider they choose, they will receive quality training and assessment that is responsive to industry needs and to their needs.
Industry/ employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employers rely on RTOs to provide essential skills and knowledge to both new entrants and existing workers. The Standards require RTOs to maintain strong engagement with industry to ensure their services remain relevant to the needs of employers, and graduates are job-ready.
Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collectively, the governments of Australia and its states and territories are responsible for policy on how VET is regulated. Governments are also significant purchasers of VET through public funding programs. The Standards represent the expectations that governments place on RTOs and provide government with confidence to invest in training that contributes to a skilled Australian workforce.
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• VET is a significant contributor to Australia's economy domestically, being the primary mechanism to meet the skilling needs of the Australian community. VET also contributes greatly to the valuable export education market. An appropriate regulatory model ensures that the VET sector can remain viable in the long term. This gives the community confidence that RTOs are delivering quality training and assessment that is highly regarded both locally and overseas.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RTOs are dependent on the value that other stakeholders place on the Australian VET sector. To ensure the sector is able to provide high-quality training and assessment, a balanced approach to regulation is required. The Standards provide a rigorous (yet flexible) outcomes-focused regulatory framework that encourages innovation and flexibility, while ensuring quality Standards are met.

ABOUT THE *STANDARDS FOR VET REGULATORS 2015*

As well as the standards applying to RTOs, the Industry and Skills Council has endorsed the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015*. The purpose of these Standards is to ensure:

- integrity of nationally recognised training by regulating RTOs and VET accredited courses
- consistency in the VET regulators' implementation and interpretation of the standards applying to RTOs and VET accredited courses, and
- accountability and transparency of VET regulators.

The Standards for VET Regulators describe a series of outcomes that regulators must achieve, but do not prescribe the way in which these outcomes are to be achieved.

The Standards require ASQA to:

- use a risk-based approach to regulation, implementing processes that are fair, transparent, responsive and consistent and which uphold the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness
- use auditors and accreditation assessors who meet agreed competency requirements
- develop and implement a code of conduct for auditors and course accreditation assessors to ensure contemporary best practice approaches to regulation are used
- assist RTOs to comply with the *Standards for RTOs 2015* and provide information to the sector on emerging risks
- manage the scope of registration of all RTOs so that only current training products are delivered
- publish decisions to impose sanctions on RTOs, together with the reasons for the decisions
- accept and manage complaints about RTOs, and about ASQA's role as a regulator, using publicly available processes
- report and respond to requests from the Industry and Skills Council
- make service standards publicly available, and regularly review their performance against these service standards and the regulator Standards.

In regulating RTOs, ASQA applies a risk-based approach and applies the risk assessment framework as required by the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*. This means that regulatory actions and decisions are informed through data analysis and intelligence about emerging risks to quality outcomes in the VET sector. This intelligence is gathered through activities such as:

- conducting audits and other compliance monitoring activities
- undertaking strategic industry reviews
- analysing complaints about RTOs, and
- engaging with industry, industry regulators and other VET regulators.



Intelligence gathered is used to inform ASQA's regulatory strategy by:

- informing the risk rating of RTOs
- identifying specific industry areas or training products that need greater attention or a different approach, and
- informing the frequency and scope of RTO audits (RTOs that present a low risk of producing substandard training and assessment outcomes face less regulatory intervention, while those that are considered a higher risk are subject to more frequent intervention).

Some low-risk RTOs may be eligible for a delegation of regulatory authority. A delegation enables the RTO to add and remove training products on its scope of registration without applying to ASQA. In these cases, the RTO is also required to comply with the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015* as they relate to delegated activities.

The Standards for VET Regulators are available on the ComLaw website.

ASQA is accountable through external reviews as directed by the Industry and Skills Council and reports to the Industry and Skills Council on its compliance with the Standards for VET Regulators, the operations of the VET Quality Framework, and the Standards for Accredited Courses.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT RTOs

Stakeholder complaints about RTOs are an important source of intelligence about the VET sector. ASQA uses information gathered through complaints as part of its strategy for monitoring the compliance of RTOs and for gathering data on emerging risks.

ASQA accepts complaints about training providers from students, their representatives, and other members of the community. After assessing the information provided in a complaint, ASQA may:

- use the information provided in the complaint to inform future regulatory activity
- contact the provider to request further information or specific action be taken
- undertake a formal investigation.

The outcomes of a complaints investigation can include a compliance audit of a provider's registration, which may lead to a decision to suspend, cancel or place conditions on a provider's registration.

ASQA has specific confidentiality obligations in relation to registered providers. ASQA respects both privacy and natural justice considerations in handling complaints. This means that complainants will be advised how their information was used in the regulatory process, although in some instances, the advice will not be detailed and the process can be lengthy if audit activity is involved.

Information on how to lodge a complaint about an RTO is available from ASQA's website. Learners must submit a complaint through the RTO's processes prior to lodging a complaint with ASQA, unless doing so would disadvantage them.

ASQA is required to provide quarterly reports on how it has handled complaints about RTOs to the Commonwealth Minister for Industry.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT ASQA

ASQA is a Commonwealth Statutory Authority and as such follows the Commonwealth Ombudsman's *Better Practice Guide to Complaints Handling*. Any complaint received by ASQA is handled by a team independent to the operational units, which provides a measure of confidentiality for complainants.

ASQA's policy on managing complaints about its activities is available from www.asqa.gov.au.

When a complaint about ASQA is received, it is acknowledged by the independent team, who then undertake an investigation, prepare a report with recommendations and draft a response to the complainant. If a complaint is substantiated and requires action (for example, in relation to staff performance, or where the complaint acts as a prompt for making changes to an existing ASQA system), this is included in the recommendations.

The advice to the complainant provides details of the outcome of the investigation and any actions that will affect the complainant.

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

ASQA regularly surveys stakeholders and publishes the results of these surveys on its website. Outside this process, feedback on ASQA's services, both positive and negative, can be emailed to feedback@asqa.gov.au.

In the interests of transparency, information on all ASQA processes is available from ASQA's website.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Explanation and guidance on using the Standards is provided in this guide. This document was developed in response to feedback from RTOs and other stakeholders that indicated clear guidance was needed about the Standards that apply to RTOs.

This guide is intended for use by those applying to become an RTO, existing RTOs, auditors and other regulatory staff.

- *Organisations applying to become RTOs* can use this guide to understand the obligations of an RTO, and develop systems and processes in preparation for submitting an application for initial registration.
- *Current RTOs* can use this guide to understand their regulatory obligations, and to establish and maintain systems and processes that both comply with the Standards and suit the RTO and its clients and learners. RTOs can also use the guide to conduct internal reviews and guide improvement initiatives.
- *Auditors and other regulatory staff* can use this guide (in conjunction with ASQA's *Code of conduct for auditors and course accreditation assessors*) to help them make consistent judgements about the intent of the Standards and how RTOs can implement the Standards in ways that suit them and their learners.

This guide is not part of the Standards and has no legal authority. The guide does not prescribe how an RTO should be managed or what evidence must be retained to demonstrate compliance. RTOs are best placed to decide the most suitable way for their organisation to be structured and managed. As long as an RTO can present evidence that it complies with the Standards, there is no 'right way' for an RTO to conduct its operations.

The guide should not be considered as any form of checklist or to contain any prescriptive information. RTO staff and management should use the guide to obtain a clearer understanding of the Standards and the obligations of an RTO and use that knowledge to structure operations and gather and retain evidence of compliance. The Standards describe what outcomes an RTO must achieve, not how they must be achieved.

While the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* apply to all RTOs, this guide contains some information that is specific to those RTOs regulated by ASQA. RTOs not regulated by ASQA should contact their regulator for specific information regarding VET legislation, regulatory requirements and regulatory processes that apply to them.

The guide will be updated from time to time. Updated versions will be published on ASQA's website at www.asqa.gov.au/standards and any printed copies should be checked for currency against the most recent digital copy.

This is version 1.1 of this guide; information on previous versions is available from www.asqa.gov.au/standards



This image is used throughout this guide to indicate information for **organisations applying to become RTOs**.



This image is used throughout this guide to indicate a direct quote from the ***Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015***

RELATED LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

These Standards form part of the VET Quality Framework, a system which ensures the integrity of nationally recognised training in Australia. Registered training organisations are required to comply with the VET Quality Framework at all times.

The VET Quality Framework consists of the:

- Standards for Registered Training Organisations
- Australian Qualifications Framework
- Fit and Proper Person Requirements
- Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements, and
- Data Provision Requirements.

The Standards should be read together with the:

- Standards for Training Packages
- Standards for VET Accredited Courses, and
- Standards for VET Regulators.

AUSTRALIAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (AQF)

Implementation of the current AQF commenced on 1 July 2011, with all aspects of the AQF required to be fully complied with from 1 January 2015. The AQF applies across school and higher education as well as VET. While some parts of the AQF are primarily intended for course development rather than training delivery, delivery of training products must ensure learners have the opportunity to properly develop the skills and knowledge that have been described in the training package or course document. By ensuring that delivery aligns to the AQF in the same way training product design does, the skill level and employability of VET graduates is assured.

RTOs are required to be fully compliant with all aspects of the AQF. This is articulated largely through:

- Standard One (in regard to the amount of training provided), and
- Standard Three (in regard to issuance of qualifications and statements of attainment).



OVERSEAS STUDENTS

Additional requirements for delivery of training to overseas students studying in Australia are outlined in the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (ESOS Act). These are specified in the *National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007* (The National Code).

AN OVERSEAS STUDENT IS A PERSON WHO HOLDS A STUDENT VISA TO STUDY IN AUSTRALIA.

ELICOS COURSES

Some nationally recognised training products are registered as English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) courses. These courses and their providers must also comply with the *ELICOS National Standards* for delivery to overseas students.

ASQA GENERAL DIRECTIONS

ASQA issues 'general directions' to provide further guidance to providers on specific issues.

A general direction outlines the way in which RTOs must comply with the VET Quality Framework and other conditions defined in the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*. RTOs must comply with general directions as a condition of their registration.

UNIQUE STUDENT IDENTIFIER (USI) SCHEME

The USI scheme allows learners to access a single online repository of their VET achievements. This includes achievements from the beginning of 2015.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Standards for Training Packages
www.nssc.natese.gov.au/training_packages/standards_and_policies/standards_for_training_packages
- Standards for VET Accredited Courses
www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/F2013L00177
- Standards for VET Regulators
www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/F2011L01338
- Australian Qualifications Framework
www.aqf.edu.au
- Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements
www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/F2011L01405
- Data Provision Requirements
www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/F2013L00160
- Education Service for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act
www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/C2004A00757
- The National Code
www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/F2007L00646
- Information on ESOS legislative framework
internationaleducation.gov.au/regulatory-information/pages/regulatoryinformation.aspx
- ELICOS National Standards
internationaleducation.gov.au/Regulatory-Information/Education-Services-for-Overseas-Students-ESOS-Legislative-Framework/ELICOSnationalstandards/Pages/Default.aspx
- ASQA general directions
www.asqa.gov.au/news-and-publications/publications/general-directions/general-directions.html
- Student Identifiers Act
www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/C2014A00036
- Unique Student Identifier scheme
www.usi.gov.au



Standard One

The RTO's training and assessment strategies and practices are responsive to industry and learner needs and meet the requirements of training packages and VET accredited courses.



CONTEXT



Learners, employers and industry must have confidence in the integrity, currency and value of certification documents issued by RTOs, through high-quality training and assessment practices that:

- meet the requirements of training packages and VET accredited courses;
- is responsive to industry and learner needs; and
- is delivered by appropriately qualified trainers and assessors with the right support services, facilities and equipment.

The RTO's training and assessment strategies and practices must have regard to the amount of training required for the learner to gain the competencies as specified in the relevant training package or VET accredited course. The amount of training will vary depending on the existing skills and knowledge of the learner, the mode of delivery and include any work placement arrangements.

To ensure thorough and rigorous assessment practices and results, RTOs must implement a comprehensive plan of systematic validation. RTOs must use a risk-based approach to developing the plan considering risk indicators such as the potential safety concerns to clients from an assessment outcome that is not valid, the mode of delivery, changes to training packages and/or licensing requirements.

Trainers and assessors who are involved in training and assessment delivery being considered as part of the validation process may also participate in the validation process.

There are differences in the operating characteristics and business objectives of RTOs and the evidence RTOs use to demonstrate compliance with this Standard will reflect those differences.

HOW STANDARD ONE BENEFITS:

Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners benefit from high-quality training that equips them for employment and/or further study in their chosen field. • Learners are confident they hold the skills and knowledge their certification describes and are well-equipped to undertake relevant tasks safely and productively. • Graduates have enhanced employment prospects because employers are confident in their abilities.
Industry/ employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers know that graduates are capable of meeting relevant accreditation requirements and can apply the outcomes from their training directly to relevant industry frameworks straight away. • Employers know graduates are 'job ready'—capable of being productive and safe workers with current, relevant skills and knowledge from 'day one'. • Employers have active involvement in the training and assessment of their apprentices and trainees.
Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments can invest confidently in the development of skills and knowledge for the current and future workforce with minimum risk.
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community benefits from a highly skilled and productive workforce and from the subsequent economic benefits at a local, state and national level. • Quality training and rigorous assessment results in an excellent international reputation and a strong and growing export market.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers delivering quality training have prosperous businesses with an excellent reputation in the domestic and international market. • Providers that demonstrate commitment to quality outcomes enjoy low levels of regulatory intervention and can take advantage of emerging opportunities quickly. • Providers can access government funding and preferred supplier programs.

STANDARD ONE IS EXPLAINED IN MORE DETAIL IN THIS SECTION OF THE GUIDE, INCLUDING THE RESPONSIBILITY OF RTOs TO:

- implement a comprehensive training and assessment strategy (Clauses 1.1 – 1.4)
- engage with industry (Clauses 1.5 – 1.6)
- support learners (Clause 1.7)
- conduct effective assessment (Clauses 1.8 – 1.12)
- employ skilled trainers and assessors (Clauses 1.13 – 1.16)
- provide supervision of trainers where needed (Clauses 1.17 – 1.20)
- employ experts to teach trainers and assessors (Clauses 1.21 – 1.25)
- manage transitions from superseded training products (Clauses 1.26 – 1.27)

IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGY (CLAUSES 1.1 - 1.4)



Clause 1.1

The RTO's training and assessment strategies and practices, including the amount of training they provide, are consistent with the requirements of training packages and VET accredited courses and enable each learner to meet the requirements for each unit of competency or module in which they are enrolled.

Clause 1.2

For the purposes of Clause 1.1, the RTO determines the amount of training they provide to each learner with regard to:

- a. the existing skills, knowledge and the experience of the learner
- b. the mode of delivery; and
- c. where a full qualification is not being delivered, the number of units and/or modules being delivered as a proportion of the full qualification.

Clause 1.3

The RTO has, for all of its scope of registration, and consistent with its training and assessment strategies, sufficient:

- a. trainers and assessors to deliver the training and assessment;
- b. educational and support services to meet the needs of the learner cohort/s undertaking the training and assessment;
- c. learning resources to enable learners to meet the requirements for each unit of competency, and which are accessible to the learner regardless of location or mode of delivery; and
- d. facilities, whether physical or virtual, and equipment to accommodate and support the number of learners undertaking the training and assessment.

Clause 1.4

The RTO meets all requirements specified in the relevant training package or VET accredited course.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) is the national policy for qualifications in the Australian education and training system. The *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* requires that RTOs comply with the AQF as a condition of their registration. The AQF recognises RTOs as 'authorised issuing organisations', able to issue AQF qualifications and statements of attainment to learners who have satisfied the relevant competency requirements. All authorised issuing organisations are required to comply with the requirements of the AQF, including the volume of learning. The AQF has full effect from 1 January 2015.

Your RTO is required to develop and implement approaches—including by providing access to suitable resources, facilities and trainers—that ensure learners gain all relevant skills and knowledge.

The AQF provides a guide to the volume of learning (see table on page 16), which describes how long a learner who does not hold any of the competencies identified in the relevant units of competency or modules would take to develop all the required skills and knowledge. The volume of learning includes all teaching and learning activities such as guided learning (classes, lectures, tutorials, online or self-paced study), individual study, research, learning activities in the workplace and assessment activities. The amount of training provided by your RTO is part of the overall volume of learning and relates primarily to formal activities including classes and other activities as well as workplace learning.

Your RTO is required to comply with the AQF in applying the volume of learning to your programs. You must therefore develop and implement strategies for training and assessment that are consistent with the AQF.

In a competency-based training environment, learners aren't required to study for a specified number of weeks or months; however, your RTO must still be able to identify and explain any significant variations from the time periods described in the AQF.

If a course is structured so as to be completed in a shorter time period than that described in the AQF, you will need to clearly describe, using a rationale based on the previous skills and knowledge and the needs of learners, how a specific learner cohort:

- has the characteristics to achieve the required rigour and depth of training, and
- can meet all of the competency requirements in a shorter timeframe.

Your description must take into account the need to allow learners to reflect on and absorb the knowledge, to practice the skills in different contexts and to learn to apply the skills and knowledge in the varied environments that the 'real world' offers before being assessed.

AUSTRALIAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK VOLUME OF LEARNING INDICATORS*

Certificate I	Certificate II	Certificate III ¹	Certificate IV ²	Diploma	Advanced Diploma	Graduate Certificate	Graduate Diploma
0.5 – 1 year	0.5 – 1 year	1 – 2 years	0.5 – 2 years	1 – 2 years	1.5 – 2 years	0.5 – 1 year	1 – 2 years
600 – 1200 hours	600 – 1200 hours	1200 – 2400 hours	600 – 2400 hours	1200 – 2400 hours	1800 – 2400 hours	600 – 1200 hours	1200 – 2400 hours

Hours above are sourced from the AQF 'Volume of Learning: An Explanation'

1. Certificate III qualifications are often the basis for trade outcomes and undertaken as part of a traineeship or apprenticeship. In these cases, up to four years may be required to achieve the learning outcomes.

2. Certificate IV qualifications are often either:

- shorter duration specialist qualifications that build on existing skills and knowledge
- longer duration qualifications that are designed as entry level requirements for specific work roles.

*These indicators are considered to be a starting point only and many factors can affect the amount of training required.

A shorter course may be acceptable if, for example, the learner cohort comprises experienced workers who already have most of the required skills and knowledge. Because these learners have previous relevant experience, it may be appropriate to deliver the program over a shorter period. Assessment requirements must still be met in such programs, although some assessment may be undertaken by recognising existing skills and knowledge. Be aware that, in some cases where learners have been employed long-term in an industry, their range of skills and knowledge may be very narrow. They may not have the capacity to fully demonstrate these in a broader context or in different environments.

Where the learner cohort consists of new entrants or inexperienced workers, before assessment, you must give them the opportunity to fully absorb the required knowledge, and to develop skills over time in the different contexts they would experience in the workplace. This may require a longer timeframe than for those learners with significant industry experience.

RTOs must provide equitable access to all required educational and support services, so that no learner is disadvantaged regardless of their mode of study or location. Make any limitations regarding access to these resources clear in your pre-enrolment information so clients and learners can make an informed choice about which RTO and course of study best meets their needs.

Your RTO must provide learners with access to necessary resources, either by owning, leasing, or renting these resources, or by arranging for resources to be accessible to the learners in another way.

In the case of workplace delivery, many of the required resources may be readily available; however, some workplaces will not have access to all required resources and you will need to address any such gaps.

Training packages and VET accredited courses describe the requirements for assessment of learners, including any specific environments or equipment that must be used. Assessment methods must ensure that only properly skilled learners are determined as competent. When conducting assessment, adhere to all requirements such as the context of assessment and essential resources, as described in the unit or module.

When using 'simulated' workplace environments, ensure they fully replicate the resources, environment and any time and productivity pressures that exist in the actual workplace. It is important to ensure the development and use of simulated environments is informed by consultation with industry stakeholders. This helps to ensure relevance to real workplaces.

You must, at all times, have all resources available to deliver every training product on your RTO's scope of registration—whether you are currently delivering it or not. These resources must comply with any specific requirements in the training package or accredited course. The quantity of these resources required will depend on how many learners you are delivering to, or intend to deliver to. Your training and assessment strategies should include guidance on the level of resources needed per learner or per group.



If you are seeking initial registration as an RTO, you are expected to have access to all of the required resources, as stated in the training package or accredited course, in place at the time of submitting your application, for all training products included in your application. ASQA will conduct an audit against all training products you have applied for to establish that you have:

- access to all resources, and
- sound strategies ready to implement.

If ASQA grants your registration, future compliance audits will assess whether the strategies have been implemented.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

RTOs must develop a strategy or strategies for each training product they are registered to deliver, in the format they choose. Different strategies may need to be developed for different delivery models or target groups. The strategy may consist of multiple documents; however, there must be consistency between these documents so that the overall strategy is clearly described.

Your training and assessment strategy should not be 'static'. It needs to be regularly updated to take into account changes in industry technology and techniques, legislation, and the training package itself, as well as the availability of resources within your RTO. The strategy must also be consistent with the advertising and other material you provide to prospective learners.

You may need to develop multiple strategies where the needs of different learner cohorts require different approaches to the delivery of training and/or assessment.



RTOs should address, at minimum, the following areas in each strategy:

Training product	Ensure that you clearly identify the training product the strategy relates to. Include the code and full title to ensure this is clear.
Core and elective components (full qualifications)	If delivering a full qualification, identify core and elective components in accordance with the structure defined in the training package or course. Define which elective units or modules are being offered so you can properly plan for all delivery variables. Identify any entry requirements, as well as pre-requisite and co-requisite units, and the sequencing of delivery and assessment.
Mode of delivery	Identify how the training and assessment is to be delivered—face-to-face, online, through workplace training or a mixture of different modes.
Entry requirements	Identify any mandatory requirements for learners commencing the program, such as qualifications that must be held or periods of industry experience. It can also be useful at this stage to identify any areas where learners may need additional support (e.g. if they have low English levels) and to identify whether learners’ physical attributes may influence their ability to complete the training and assessment (e.g. if heavy lifting is required).
Duration and scheduling	Analyse the nature of your learner cohort. Use the analysis and any specific requirements of the training product to determine how your RTO will schedule training and assessment activities to ensure learners are able to fully develop the required skills and knowledge prior to being assessed. It may be necessary to indicate variations for some cohorts due to their specific learning needs.
Assessment resources, methods and timing	<p>Training packages and VET accredited courses often specify resources that must be used in assessment at a unit of competency level. Include details of how you will ensure learners have access to the resources that will give them the best chance of completing their study. Identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessment resources • assessment methods to be used • timing of assessment, and • any adjustments that may be needed to cater for different learner characteristics.
Learning resources	To ensure learners are able to obtain and absorb the required knowledge and skills prior to assessment, carefully choose and plan the learning resources you will use to guide them. Identify these resources in your strategy to ensure you obtain full coverage of all required areas.
Human resources	Either in a strategy or separately, document the human resources available to deliver the training product. This ensures suitable trainers and assessors are available for all training products on your RTO’s scope of registration. Record this at a unit of competency level to ensure any specific requirements are met, and to allow your RTO to deploy staff efficiently.
Physical resources	Compare the physical resources required to deliver a training product with the resources available to your RTO. Many units of competency include detailed specifications of resources required, so conducting this analysis at a unit of competency level ensures these requirements are addressed.

Strategies for 'stand-alone' single units or skill sets

Develop and implement a strategy in the same way as you would for a qualification, noting that some information may not be relevant, such as information on core and elective units.

Often, this type of delivery is aimed at an industry licence or accreditation. Identify all of the requirements of that licence or accreditation in the strategy (including any possible entry requirements such as minimum age) and explain how learners can readily attain the desired outcome. Identify any pre-requisite and co-requisite units, and the sequence of delivery and assessment.

Strategies for 'assessment only' pathways

Where your RTO offers an 'assessment only' pathway, develop and implement a strategy that covers:

- assessment methods, timing and resources, and
- how issues will be addressed (for example, if a learner does not achieve the competency requirements).

You may set specific requirements such as a minimum period of industry experience before commencing the program (if so, these requirements need to be made clear to prospective learners prior to enrolment).



CASE STUDY: PROVIDING WORKPLACE ASSESSMENT AT A MINE SITE

ABC Mining delivers the *Certificate III in Mine Emergency Response and Rescue* to its staff working in a large open-cut mine. Many learners have two years' experience and already hold some of the units for the qualification (e.g. first aid). Training and assessment are carried out in both on-site training facilities and the workplace. The course is delivered over 12 months, with formal training and assessment one day a week and on-the-job observation by assessors. Between one and two hours a week is allocated for each learner for observation and assistance, depending on the stage of the course and any additional support needs identified.

After selecting suitable elective units, the Training Manager discusses suitable opportunities for workplace assessment with the Mine Site Supervisor. ABC Mining decides to simulate some tasks, such as conducting rescue activities, where permitted by the training package. To ensure the simulations accurately represent workplace conditions, the Training Manager arranges access to an unused area of the site and establishes simulated environments that replicate workplace conditions.

As these activities are carried out in a team, ABC Mining ensures every learner is assessed for all components by repeating the simulations regularly, with each learner carrying out every role in the team over time. These activities are separated by formal training sessions. The activities commence with simple, routine tasks then gradually introduce further complexity and different conditions. This ensures learners are assessed on the actual skills and ability to apply knowledge to a variety of contexts in the same conditions they will experience in the workplace. It also ensures they can build on their skills over time.

Where it is suitable to observe learners undertaking regular workplace tasks, a schedule is developed with the Mine Site Supervisor that allows assessors to observe each learner on multiple occasions. These observations include the assessor asking the learner a range of questions to test their knowledge and ability to apply knowledge to different contexts.

The learning resources refer to the actual workplace procedures used on the site. This ensures the resources are up to date and relevant. Using actual workplace procedures also allows ABC Mining to conduct the course at other sites with minimal changes.

To ensure all unit requirements are addressed, and to identify opportunities to conduct holistic assessment of multiple requirements, the performance evidence and knowledge evidence requirements are documented, then 'mapped' to the assessment tasks prior to assessment being conducted.

ENGAGE WITH INDUSTRY/EMPLOYERS (CLAUSES 1.5 - 1.6)



Clause 1.5

The RTO's training and assessment practices are relevant to the needs of industry and informed by industry engagement.

Clause 1.6

The RTO implements a range of strategies for industry engagement and systematically uses the outcome of that industry engagement to ensure the industry relevance of:

- a. its training and assessment strategies, practices and resources; and
- b. the current industry skills of its trainers and assessors.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

To provide training relevant to employers and to maximise learners' opportunities for employment, advancement or further education, your RTO must engage with relevant industry stakeholders to establish appropriate contexts, methods, resources and trainers and assessors to deliver training and to conduct assessment.

Engaging with industry stakeholders (such as employers) is critical to ensuring training and assessment is aligned to current methods, technology, products and performance expectations for the workplace tasks specified in the training package or VET accredited course.

Use the information gathered through the engagement process to:

- design strategies for training and assessment, and
- select suitable resources, trainers and assessors.

Implement your strategies and monitor your practices to ensure your RTO's training continues to meet industry needs.

When monitoring the implementation of your strategies, continue to engage with industry and seek feedback about how you have provided training and assessment, including feedback on the resources used for both training and assessment. The monitoring process should also confirm industry's ongoing expectations for current industry skills and knowledge of trainers and assessors.

By engaging with industry, you can be sure that your training and assessment practices and resources continue to meet the needs of industry, particularly in areas where technology and/or techniques change rapidly. There is no specific method or approach you must use to engage with industry. However, you should document your RTO's engagement strategies and activities to demonstrate the alignment between industry needs and your strategies, resources and practices.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

RTOs must be able to demonstrate that all strategies for training and assessment have been developed in response to information obtained through engaging with industry stakeholders. This information could include the qualification, course or skill set that best meets the skill and knowledge needs of industry. It may also include the most relevant electives for the training (in accordance with any packaging rules for the training product). The mode of study and the training and assessment methods to be used must also reflect the needs of industry.

You must be able to demonstrate that industry representatives have had input into:

- the skills and knowledge you require trainers and assessors to hold, and
- the resources your RTO uses for training and assessment.

RTOs must consider specific industry needs when developing and implementing strategies. For example, some industries or occupations may require a reasonable level of English, such as security officers, allied health professionals, childcare educators or other job roles where it is important that graduates are able to communicate effectively in Australian workplaces. In such cases, it may not be appropriate to deliver a qualification entirely in a language other than English and may be appropriate to specify a minimum written and/or oral English level as an entry requirement.

While RTOs can choose their preferred approach or method for engaging industry stakeholders, the information obtained must be systematically used to develop and review training and assessment strategies and practices.

You must retain evidence that you have:

- consulted relevant industry stakeholders
- incorporated stakeholder feedback into the development and ongoing review of strategies.

Taking shortcuts — like developing a generic strategy from a template and asking an employer to ‘sign off’— will not be effective, and does not demonstrate that the strategy was informed by industry. Documenting and retaining evidence of industry engagement activities and their outcomes will help you to demonstrate compliance with the clauses of the Standard.

As industry engagement is an ongoing activity, retaining evidence of recent engagement (as well as historic activity) will demonstrate that your RTO has consistently carried out industry engagement activities.



If your organisation is seeking registration as an RTO, you must provide evidence that you have sought and incorporated input into your training and assessment strategies from relevant industry stakeholders.

You must also provide evidence that you have developed strategies for ongoing engagement with relevant industry stakeholders.



CASE STUDY: TRAINING TOMORROW'S MARINERS

DEF Education delivers three qualifications from the Maritime Training Package. The RTO operates from a former workshop adjacent to a slipway and a number of marine repair businesses. The RTO has been approved by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) for the delivery of maritime licensing qualifications.

Prior to commencing operations and applying for registration as an RTO, the organisation met with local AMSA officers to discuss industry needs. DEF Education identified that:

- due to increases in marine tourism there is a shortage of workers with certain licence classes in the area, and
- qualifications leading to licensing for Coxwain Grade 1 NC, Master (Inland Waters) and Marine Engine Driver Grade 3 NC would be suitable to deliver to new entrants to the industry.

While these qualifications have no formal entry requirements, many tasks in certain qualifications require the ability to operate in confined spaces, and in hot and noisy conditions. To ensure suitability of learners, the strategy identifies that learners must confirm that they have a reasonable level of physical agility and the ability to operate comfortably in confined spaces, and that they have passed the required eyesight test prior to their enrolment being accepted. As the expected outcomes for the identified client cohort (maritime licenses) require a 'self-declaration of medical fitness' prior to issue, potential learners are required to complete this prior to enrolment to ensure they are able to achieve their desired outcomes.

DEF education considered possibilities for training new entrants to the industry using vessels operating in the local marine tourism industry, but concluded that it was not practical for safety reasons.

After consultation with local employers, the RTO purchased two vessels that are representative of the type of vessel commonly used in the local area and more broadly in the marine tourism industry:

- an eight-metre open boat powered by a 250 hp outboard engine, previously used for dive trips, and
- a 15-metre boat powered by twin 220 kW diesel inboard engines and a small diesel-powered generator set, previously used for extended dive and cruising trips.

To provide access to a range of equipment and machinery for basic skill development, the RTO purchased a variety of engines and other mechanical and safety equipment. This equipment includes electronic and other navigational equipment. The engines and equipment were set up in various simulations of on-board environments to allow learners to familiarise themselves with relevant equipment and tasks safely.

The two vessels purchased are used by all learners, who undertake various voyages during their training and assessment. These voyages enable learners to undertake all required tasks and to complete the requirements of the AMSA *Task Book* (which documents the amount of sea service, the tasks undertaken and the type of vessel the in which the voyage was undertaken).

In response to industry concerns that graduates of some RTOs didn't have the full range of skills and experience required, DEF Education discussed the sequencing of training and assessment, as well as assessment methods, with local employers. The discussions aimed to develop sequencing/assessment methods that would ensure learners gain exposure to a wide range of contexts and scenarios.

The RTO also monitors emerging technology and regulatory requirements so that it is aware of any changes that would require strategies or practices to be amended in response to changes in industry requirements at any time. The RTO retains records of formal meetings (through minutes) and of less formal engagement activities (through diary notes) to demonstrate how they have engaged with industry stakeholders. Version control of training and assessment strategies documents where changes are made and the reason for the changes.

SUPPORT LEARNERS (CLAUSE 1.7)



Clause 1.7

The RTO determines the support needs of individual learners and provides access to the educational and support services necessary for the individual learner to meet the requirements of the training product as specified in training packages or VET accredited courses.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

To maximise the chance of learners successfully completing their training, your RTO needs to:

- identify any support individual learners need prior to their enrolment or commencement (whichever is the earliest), and
- provide access to that support throughout their training.

This may include providing:

- Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) support
- assistive technology
- additional tutorials, and/or
- other mechanisms, such as assistance in using technology for online delivery components.

If support attracts an additional cost to the learner, you must make this clear in pre-enrolment information.

If there are limitations to the support your RTO is able to provide, these limitations need to be made clear in information provided to potential learners.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

RTOs must be able to demonstrate that: they identify, for each learner, any additional support required and that this support is made available, either directly or via arrangements with a third party.

At minimum, support should include:

- identifying particular requirements (such as literacy, numeracy, English language or physical capabilities) learners would need to complete each course, and
- developing strategies to make support available where gaps are identified.

While a formal assessment process is not required, you must be able to demonstrate how your RTO identifies support needs (for example, by requiring learners to complete a self-assessment as part of the enrolment process).

Where additional support requirements have been established, you must be able to demonstrate that this support has been made available.



If you are seeking registration as an RTO, you must be able to demonstrate you have strategies in place to identify any support needs and to make this support available to learners.



CASE STUDY: GETTING THE CALCULATIONS RIGHT

GHI Training identifies that a qualification requires the ability to carry out complex calculations quickly and accurately. On their website, this information is provided so potential learners are aware of this requirement. The website also includes information about optional tutorials (available at extra cost for learners who need additional support in this area).

As part of the RTO's enrolment process, learners undertake a short assessment based on the type of calculations they will need to be able to complete. Assessment results determine whether the learner will need additional support or whether the learner should undertake further study in this area before enrolling in the course.

If a learner is identified as needing additional support, the RTO arranges tutorials to allow the learner to increase their skills prior to when these components are scheduled in the course.

CONDUCT EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT (CLAUSES 1.8 - 1.12)



Clause 1.8

The RTO implements an assessment system that ensures that assessment (including recognition of prior learning):

- a. complies with the assessment requirements of the relevant training package or VET accredited course; and
- b. is conducted in accordance with the Principles of Assessment contained in Table 1.8-1 and the Rules of Evidence contained in Table 1.8-2.

TABLE 1.8-1: PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

Fairness	<p>The individual learner's needs are considered in the assessment process.</p> <p>Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual learner's needs.</p> <p>The RTO informs the learner about the assessment process, and provides the learner with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.</p>
Flexibility	<p>Assessment is flexible to the individual learner by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• reflecting the learner's needs;• assessing competencies held by the learner no matter how or where they have been acquired; and• drawing from a range of assessment methods and using those that are appropriate to the context, the unit of competency and associated assessment requirements, and the individual.

Validity	Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner. Validity requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessment against the unit(s) of competency and the associated assessment requirements covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance; • assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application; • assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations; and • judgement of competence is based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessment requirements.
Reliability	Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.

TABLE 1.8-2: RULES OF EVIDENCE

Validity	The assessor is assured that the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.
Sufficiency	The assessor is assured that the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement to be made of a learner's competency.
Authenticity	The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner's own work.
Currency	The assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past.

**Clause 1.9**

The RTO implements a plan for ongoing systematic validation of assessment practices and judgements that includes for each training product on the RTO's scope of registration:

- a. when assessment validation will occur;
- b. which training products will be the focus of the validation;
- c. who will lead and participate in validation activities; and
- d. how the outcomes of these activities will be documented and acted upon.

Clause 1.10

For the purposes of Clause 1.9, each training product is validated at least once every five years, with at least 50% of products validated within the first three years of each five year cycle, taking into account the relative risks of all of the training products on the RTO's scope of registration, including those risks identified by the VET regulator.



Clause 1.11

For the purposes of Clause 1.9, systematic validation of an RTO's assessment practices and judgements is undertaken by one or more persons who are not directly involved in the particular instance of delivery and assessment of the training product being validated, and who collectively have:

- a. vocational competencies and current industry skills relevant to the assessment being validated;
- b. current knowledge and skills in vocational teaching and learning; and
- c. the training and assessment qualification or assessor skill set referred to in Item 1 or 3 of Schedule 1.

Industry experts may be involved in validation to ensure there is the combination of expertise set out in (a) to (c) above.

Clause 1.12

The RTO offers recognition of prior learning to individual learners.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

Your RTO must develop and implement a system to ensure that:

- assessment judgements are consistently made on a sound basis, and
- validation of assessment judgements is carried out.

An assessment system includes not only the actual materials used directly in conducting assessment, but also policies, procedures and other supporting documents that inform the way assessment is conducted within your RTO.

For a learner to be assessed as competent, your RTO must ensure the learner demonstrates their:

- ability to perform relevant tasks in a variety of workplace situations, or accurately simulated workplace situations
- understanding of what they are doing, and why, when performing tasks, and
- ability to integrate performance with understanding, to show they are able to adapt to different contexts and environments.

A learner must:

- be assessed against all of the tasks identified in the elements of the unit or module, and
- demonstrate they are capable of performing these tasks to an acceptable level.

Through the above process, the learner must demonstrate they hold all of the required skills and knowledge, as specified in the unit or module assessment requirements.

When developing assessment materials, use the information from the unit or module elements, performance criteria and assessment requirements to determine what competence looks like. Use this information to set benchmarks for measuring the learner's performance using 'observable behaviours'. This will ensure the learner has:

- actually undertaken all the required tasks, and
- demonstrated their ability to do so in different contexts and environments.

Assessment must always be based on the performance of the individual learner. If assessment tasks are undertaken as a group, each learner must be assessed on each component of the task. Do not assume that because a group of learners completed a task, each of them is competent.

Recognition of prior learning is simply a form of assessment of a learner's competence. Recognition of prior learning uses evidence from formal, non-formal and informal learning (rather than from specific assessment activities directed by the RTO). This evidence is often combined with assessment activities sometimes known as 'challenge testing'. As such, recognition of prior learning must be conducted with the same rigour as any other form of assessment.

Assessment requirements

Each unit of competency contains assessment requirements grouped into three areas:

- performance evidence
- knowledge evidence
- assessment conditions.

Performance and knowledge evidence describe what a learner must demonstrate in order to be considered competent. Assessment conditions describe the conditions under which a learner must demonstrate this, including any specific requirements for resources, trainers and assessors and the context for assessment.

Some training packages and courses may not have been updated to this format. In these cases, 'required skills and knowledge' and 'evidence guide' or similar terms are used.

When planning assessment, ensure you address all of the requirements of the unit or module. This does not mean you have to develop separate assessment activities for each item, but that, as a whole your assessment activities must cover every area required. To achieve a 'competent' result, learners must meet all the requirements of the unit.

If your RTO applies any form of grading to learners, ensure that this is applied only after the learner has been assessed as fully competent and is in addition to a determination of competent or otherwise.

As similar requirements are often expressed in multiple units of competency, you can often 'cluster' a number of units together for assessment to avoid repeating assessment of the same tasks. If you do this, take care to address all relevant environments and contexts in the assessment process and to meet any pre-requisite requirements for every unit or module in the cluster. Analysis of each individual requirement across the cluster of units will reveal where such assessment methods are appropriate and where discrete assessment activities may be required.

Implementing the principles of assessment

No matter what assessment pathway or methods you use, the principles of fairness, flexibility, validity and reliability must be met.

Fairness

- At enrolment or prior to commencement of training, make recognition of prior learning available to all learners. Ensure any required adjustments are made to the training and assessment program for each learner.
- Consider the learner's needs in the assessment process and make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the learner (such as providing oral rather than written assessment). However, don't compromise the rigour of the assessment process (e.g. if there is a requirement to complete documentation in a unit of competency, oral assessment will not be appropriate).
- Ensure the learner is fully informed of the assessment process and performance expectations before undertaking assessment.
- If a learner is unable to complete the required task to the level described in the assessment requirements, consider whether they need further training before being reassessed. Sound enrolment processes will help to identify the needs of learners and avoid learners being enrolled in a course that they will not be able to complete.
- Have an appeals process to provide an avenue for learners to challenge an assessment decision and to have a decision reviewed objectively.



Flexibility

- At enrolment or prior to commencement of training, make recognition of prior learning available to all learners. Ensure any required adjustments are made to the training and assessment program for that learner.
- Take the learner into account in the assessment process, and recognise that they may already have demonstrated some aspects of the unit through other means. If individual learners have demonstrated current skills and knowledge, they should not be required to be reassessed in those areas, unless the previous demonstration of skills or knowledge is in a significantly different context or environment.
- Use a range of assessment methods to help produce valid decisions and recognise that learners demonstrate competence in a variety of ways.

Validity

- As part of your assessment, require learners to demonstrate skills and knowledge across a range of environments and contexts relevant to the unit or module. Assessing in a variety of contexts shows that the learner is able to apply the skills and knowledge in other situations, and can apply their knowledge in a practical way.
- Ensure that assessment tasks and methods match assessment requirements. For example, if assessing a practical skill such as keyboarding, questions about how a keyboard operates may not be valid as this knowledge is not required in order to carry out the task. Instead, use questions that demonstrate knowledge of why the learner is doing the task in a particular way.

Reliability

- Make assessment decisions consistently across different learners and different assessors in the same unit or module.
- Have a well-designed assessment system that includes measures to minimise variation between assessors. The same evidence presented by different learners or to different assessors should result in the same decision.
- Develop evidence criteria (i.e. decision-making rules) to judge the quality of performance. This will help assessors make consistent judgements about competence. Evidence criteria could include:
 - model answers (where appropriate)
 - descriptions of observations needed to assess skills and application of knowledge in a practical activity.
- Benchmarks for practical activities must necessarily be broad enough to allow for variations in the precise task being undertaken and any variations in the context, but must include 'observable behaviours'—the behaviours which must be exhibited by the learner when carrying out the task.

Implementing the rules of evidence

The evidence used to make a decision about competence must be valid, sufficient, authentic and current.

Validity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that evidence is directly related to the competency being assessed. • Ensure there is a direct relationship between the assessment tasks or activities learners undertake, the evidence presented and the assessment requirements.
Sufficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather enough evidence to make a valid judgement of competence or otherwise. • The quantity of evidence may vary between learners. Some may take longer or need to complete a greater number of tasks to demonstrate competence. Others may, despite repeated opportunities, not be able to achieve competence.
Authenticity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that evidence gathered 'belongs' to the learner being assessed and provides evidence of that person's skills and knowledge. • Verify that the person you are enrolling, training and assessing is the same person that will be issued with a qualification or statement of attainment. This can be particularly challenging if you deliver distance training, including through online methods, where there are more opportunities for learners to submit the work of others than there are in a 'traditional' classroom setting. This does not remove your responsibility to verify the identity of a learner enrolled in a face-to-face course, but it is clearly easier to do this through direct interaction with the learner. Regardless of the delivery method, you must be able to demonstrate how you have verified the identity of the learner. • If substantial portions of the evidence submitted are gathered through independent study (e.g. assignments or projects) rather than direct observation, consider using online systems to check work submissions for plagiarism and identical content in other submissions.
Currency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide how valid the evidence is, given the time that has passed since the evidence was generated. Currency is important in determining if a learner is competent. Currency is a particular risk with recognition of prior learning, as you may be presented with a range of evidence gathered over a number of years. This does not mean evidence that is not recent is not valid; however, you must ensure there is sufficient evidence of the person's competence at the time you make the assessment decision. • You must determine whether the evidence is recent enough to show the learner is competent at the time you make an assessment decision. For example, a computer programmer who has 10 years' experience but has not been directly involved in hands-on programming work for the past three years may not have current skills in or knowledge of contemporary programming methods. However, the programmer may be able to update their skills and knowledge through a 'gap training' program. This varies to some extent between industries and, as a person with current industry skills and knowledge, an assessor is well placed to make this judgement.



Validation of assessment

Validation is a review of assessment judgements made by your RTO. Validation is generally conducted after assessment is complete. The process must be undertaken in a systematic way.

Validation may include engagement with industry to confirm your RTO's assessment system:

- produces valid assessment judgements, and
- ensures graduates have the skills and knowledge required by industry, as expressed in the training package or accredited course.

The requirement in the Standards to undertake validation of assessment judgements does not prohibit your RTO from undertaking similar activities, such as moderation, or any other process aimed at increasing the quality of assessment. Information in this guide refers only to the validation activity required by the Standards. This activity is a quality review and is not intended to be used to make adjustments or changes to assessment outcomes.

When developing your plan for validation, remember that:

- Each training product on your RTO's scope of registration must undergo validation at least once every five years.
- You must ensure your plan allows for validation of at least 50 per cent of the training products in the first three years of that cycle.
- You may need to validate certain training products more often where specific risks have been identified, for example, if your RTO's industry consultation identifies areas of particular risk.

ASQA may from time to time determine specific training products that must have particular attention paid to them and this advice will be published to www.asqa.gov.au.

Sampling approach to validation

Your RTO must systematically conduct validation activities to confirm assessment judgements are being made correctly. While you are not required to validate every assessment judgement, a valid sampling approach provides a quality review process and allows a reasonable inference to be made that assessment judgements have been valid overall.

Make sure that the sample of assessment judgements selected for validation is random and that it is representative of all assessment judgements. This will allow you to reliably predict the likelihood of any assessment judgement being valid. There are a number of tools available online that can assist you in determining the required sample size — this is likely to be smaller than you would think, particularly where large numbers of assessment judgements have been made. (One such tool is located at www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html. You can find others by searching the Internet for 'statistically valid sample size')

People undertaking validation

Choose validators who are independent of delivery and assessment of the training product being validated and the assessment judgements being considered to maintain professional distance and integrity.

People involved in validation must have:

- appropriate vocational competencies
- current industry skills and knowledge
- an appropriate training and assessment qualification or assessor skill set, and
- current knowledge and skills in vocational teaching and learning.

Validation may be undertaken through a 'team' approach where, collectively, team members hold the required qualifications, skills and knowledge. Trainers and assessors can be involved in validation activities, as long as they are not directly involved in deciding the validation outcome for their assessment decisions.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

The type of evidence you should retain to demonstrate your assessment systems' effectiveness depends to some extent on the context in which it is to be used.

- In the case of an organisation seeking to register as an RTO or to add a new qualification to their scope of registration — you must provide documentation on the assessment system accompanied by assessment materials fully addressing the relevant unit of competency, module or cluster.
- Where learners have completed the unit being examined—you must provide completed assessment items (including the evidence considered when the assessment was conducted, who the assessor was, and the outcome).

At an ASQA audit, an RTO would only be requested to produce those assessment records they are required to retain. ASQA's *General direction—retention requirements for completed student assessment items* requires that RTOs retain all completed assessment items relating to each unit or module for six months from the date on which the decision on competence for the individual unit or module was made. If you can't retain the actual item (e.g. construction projects or perishable items), retain evidence, such as photographs, showing that the standard of the item or work completed justifies the assessment outcome. Completed assessment items such as assignments should not be handed back to learners until the six-month period has expired.

You can compare assessment evidence to the requirements of the unit of competency or cluster of units to determine whether:

- the decision was based on sound assessment practices, and
- the decision was made after consideration of evidence against all of the relevant requirements, including the principles of assessment and rules of evidence.

An RTO with a well-designed assessment system and accompanying validation processes that have been fully implemented will be able to demonstrate that their assessment judgements:

- are valid
- align with the requirements expressed in the unit of competency or module, and
- comply with the Standards.

Where assessment is completed via recognition of prior learning, the requirements of the Standards do not change, although the variety of evidence gathered and considered in making an assessment decision may be greater than when assessment is completed through 'traditional' assessment activities. Similarly, distance and online delivery methods may change the type of evidence considered, although the same requirements apply. Regardless of the mode of delivery or engagement, all assessment must meet the same standards.

Part of the evidence that assessment has been conducted adequately will be the evidence criteria that are used by assessors to judge the quality of performance and make their decisions. This could be in the form of model answers or responses, samples of work items that meet specifications or more general guidance for assessors as to what the characteristics of satisfactory responses or behaviours look like. How prescriptive such material is depends on the nature of the unit—units from lower AQF level qualifications will tend to be more prescriptive with 'correct' responses, while those at higher levels may have broader guidelines.



When applying to become an RTO, you must demonstrate that your organisation has developed all required assessment systems and materials for the scope of registration applied for.

As no assessment decisions will have been made and the validation activities required by the Standards will not have been undertaken, new RTOs need only be able to demonstrate how validation activities will be undertaken in a systematic way.



CASE STUDY: TOP MARKS FOR JKL TRAINING'S ASSESSMENT

JKL Training delivers a range of qualifications, mostly through face-to-face delivery at its CBD location. However, assessment via recognition of prior learning is also carried out for some corporate clients who need their staff to hold certain skill sets to meet regulatory requirements.

JKL Training has developed an assessment system containing a range of procedures. The procedures outline:

- how to develop assessment materials
- how to test and approve assessment materials before use
- how to undertake assessment, and
- how to record and retain assessment evidence.

This system means that:

- JKL Training requires assessors to verify that all assessment tasks have been completed satisfactorily for each learner prior to submitting assessment results for finalisation by the Training Manager.
- All completed assessment work is scanned and saved to a network drive, accompanied by all completed assessment tools and checklists, including the assessor's final verification. In cases where assessment work cannot be saved in this way (e.g. physical items), photographs which demonstrate the characteristics of the piece of work are taken and saved with the rest of the assessment material.

Because the assessment process is planned and systematic and because sound records are retained of assessment, JKL Training is able to easily demonstrate that all assessment decisions have been made correctly and validation activities are able to be conducted efficiently and quickly. Because all records are stored digitally, JKL Training avoids expensive storage fees and backup copies of all records are made automatically.

Every six months, JKL Training holds a validation workshop. At the validation workshops:

- A random sample of assessments completed over the past six months is reviewed.
- The assessments are reviewed by one or more assessors who were not involved in the training or assessment for those courses.
- Validators use a validation checklist and note their decision as either 'confirmed' or 'not confirmed'.
- Where judgements are not confirmed by the validator, reasons are recorded in the checklist.
- Any assessment judgements 'not confirmed' are reviewed within 30 days to ensure any required improvements are made to assessment processes or materials.
- These workshops also include sessions to examine the assessment system itself, to ensure it has produced graduates with the required skills and knowledge. These sessions involve industry stakeholders who provide their views on whether the assessment system has produced suitable graduates.

EMPLOY SKILLED TRAINERS AND ASSESSORS (CLAUSES 1.13 - 1.16)



Clause 1.13

In addition to the requirements specified in Clause 1.14 and Clause 1.15, the RTO's training and assessment is delivered only by persons who have:

- a. vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered and assessed;
- b. current industry skills directly relevant to the training and assessment being provided; and
- c. current knowledge and skills in vocational training and learning that informs their training and assessment.

Industry experts may also be involved in the assessment judgement, working alongside the trainer and/or assessor to conduct the assessment.

Clause 1.14

The RTO's training and assessment is delivered only by persons who have:

- a. prior to 1 January 2016, the training and assessment qualification specified in Item 1 or Item 2 of Schedule 1, or demonstrated equivalence of competencies; and
- b. from 1 January 2016, the training and assessment qualification specified in Item 1 or Item 2 of Schedule 1.

Clause 1.15

Where a person conducts assessment only, the RTO ensures that the person has:

- a. prior to 1 January 2016, the training and assessment qualification specified in Item 1 or Item 2 or Item 3 of Schedule 1, or demonstrated equivalence of competencies; and
- b. from 1 January 2016, Item 1 or Item 2 or Item 3 of Schedule 1.

Clause 1.16

The RTO ensures that all trainers and assessors undertake professional development in the fields of the knowledge and practice of vocational training, learning and assessment including competency based training and assessment.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

To provide training that reflects current industry practice and valid assessment, your RTO's trainers and assessors must maintain the currency of their skills and knowledge in their industry area and in vocational education and training. It is also acceptable for an appropriately qualified trainer and assessor to work with an industry expert to conduct assessment together.

From 1 January 2016, your trainers and assessors must hold one or more of:

- *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment*
- a qualification in adult education at a diploma or higher level.

Anyone who provides assessment only (i.e. does not deliver training) must hold one or more of:

- *Assessor Skill Set*
- *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment*
- a qualification in adult education at a diploma or higher level.

Prior to 1 January 2016, transition arrangements allow trainers and assessors to demonstrate they hold equivalent competencies. (It is the responsibility of your RTO to retain evidence of such equivalence, which may include, for example, a mapping of other qualifications to the *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment* or a diploma or higher qualification in adult education, or an analysis of how a trainer and assessor's skills and knowledge compares with the qualification.) Such an analysis should include a comparison of how the trainer and assessor's skills and knowledge are equivalent to all of the requirements of the *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment* or a diploma or higher qualification in adult education. Where a trainer and assessor holds a diploma or higher level qualification in adult education, no further analysis is required to be undertaken.



While there is no prescription as to **how** trainers and assessors must maintain their currency in industry skills, it is the responsibility of your RTO to retain evidence that shows:

- your trainers' and assessors' current industry skills and knowledge, and
- that trainer and assessor knowledge directly relates to the training and/or assessment they are providing.

The industry skills and knowledge held by trainers and assessors must be consistent with:

- information gathered through your industry engagement activities, and
- any specific requirements expressed in relevant training packages and accredited courses.

Your RTO must ensure that **all** trainers and assessors undertake professional development in VET, and specifically in competency-based training and assessment. (This includes trainers and assessors employed or contracted by your RTO and those engaged by a third party delivering training and assessment on behalf of your RTO. However, arrangements about how this is paid for are a matter of negotiation between your RTO and the people concerned.) The Standards do not prescribe how often professional development must occur, but it must be sufficient to ensure they have current knowledge and skills in vocational training, learning and assessment. Simply delivering training and assessment does not constitute professional development.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

Evidence relating to the industry skills of trainers and assessors can take many forms.

If a trainer and assessor holds the qualification they are delivering and has recent extensive industry experience, this may be sufficient to demonstrate they hold both vocational competencies and current industry skills.

In some cases, people may have significant industry experience but not hold any formal qualifications—in such cases, you would need to analyse the skills and knowledge they deliver and compare this to their industry skills and knowledge. Consider all units of competency (including electives) in this analysis to ensure that you are meeting the requirements for trainers and assessors specified in the training package or accredited course.

To confirm trainers and assessors have current industry skills, and all training and assessment is delivered by people who are themselves competent practitioners, RTOs should ideally ensure that trainers and assessors are regularly exposed to industry workplaces and participate in workplace tasks. Training and assessment should only be provided by those who have current industry skills and knowledge and is best provided by those who can undertake all of the tasks defined in the elements of units of competency and modules to industry standards.

RTOs must retain evidence that all trainers and assessors have undertaken relevant professional development in VET. The Standards do not prescribe what format this evidence takes, but you may choose to include registers of development activities undertaken.

In all cases, RTOs are expected to take appropriate steps to verify information. This may include:

- contacting the provider named on the person's qualification to confirm that the document is genuine
- conducting referee checks at the time of employment to confirm relevant industry experience.

You should retain evidence of:

- how you have appropriately verified this information, and
- the results of your engagement with industry to confirm the required skills and knowledge for trainers and assessors.

TRAINER AND ASSESSOR REQUIREMENTS—ALL TRAINING PRODUCTS (CLAUSES 1.13 - 1.16)

All of:

- Vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered
- Current relevant industry skills
- Current knowledge and skills in VET
- Ongoing professional development in VET

From commencement of standards

From 1 January 2016

Providing both training and assessment

One or more of:

- *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment*
- Diploma or higher qualification in adult education
- Equivalent competencies to one of the above

One or more of:

- *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment*
- Diploma or higher qualification in adult education

Providing assessment only

One or more of:

- Assessor Skill Set
- *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment*
- Diploma or higher qualification in adult education
- Equivalent competencies to one of the above

One or more of:

- Assessor Skill Set
- *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment*
- Diploma or higher qualification in adult education



When applying to become an RTO, you must provide evidence that:

- trainers and assessors are available to the organisation to deliver all training products applied for and that they meet all of the requirements of the standards, and
- your organisation has processes in place to ensure all trainers and assessors will undertake relevant professional development in VET



CASE STUDY: MAKING SURE THE TRAINER IS TRAINED

MNO Community College employs seven part-time trainers and assessors as staff members and engages another three contractors as needed. To ensure their trainers and assessors have all the required skills and knowledge, the provider requires anyone employed or contracted as a trainer and assessor to hold the *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment* prior to being engaged. As part of the induction process (for both employees and contractors), all qualifications are verified with the issuing RTO where possible and comprehensive referee checks are carried out. MNO Community College keeps records of these activities in the person's human resources file.

MNO Community College requires that all trainers and assessors undergo a minimum of 20 hours of formal professional development in training and assessment each calendar year (MNO Community College pays the cost of this for employees, but not for contractors). Both staff members and contractors must seek prior approval to have professional development counted towards their 20 required hours, allowing MNO Community College to ensure the development activity is suitable. Both staff members and contractors must undergo a skills and knowledge evaluation in their industry area at least annually (which most demonstrate by providing evidence of work conducted in the industry). Any trainers not currently working in the relevant industry are required to provide alternative evidence of current skills and knowledge. Again, any additional activities required are paid for by MNO Community College for staff members only.

As part of its industry engagement strategy, MNO Community College meets annually with industry representatives to review the required industry skills and knowledge for trainers and assessors to ensure they continue to meet industry expectations.

PROVIDE SUPERVISION OF TRAINERS WHERE NEEDED (CLAUSES 1.17 - 1.20)



Clause 1.17

Where the RTO, in delivering training and assessment, engages an individual who is not a trainer or assessor, the individual works under the supervision of a trainer and does not determine assessment outcomes.

Clause 1.18

The RTO ensures that any individual working under the supervision of a trainer under Clause 1.17:

- a. holds the skill set defined in Item 4 of Schedule 1 or, prior to 1 January 2016, is able to demonstrate equivalence of competencies;
- b. has vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered and assessed; and
- c. has current industry skills directly relevant to the training and assessment being provided.

Clause 1.19

Where the RTO engages an individual under Clause 1.17, it ensures that the training and assessment complies with Standard 1.

Clause 1.20

Without limiting Clauses 1.17 - 1.19, the RTO:

- a. determines and puts in place:
 - i. the level of the supervision required; and
 - ii. any requirements, conditions or restrictions considered necessary on the individual's involvement in the provision of training and collection of assessment evidence; and
- b. ensures that trainers providing supervision monitor and are accountable for all training provision and collection of assessment evidence by the individual under their supervision.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

Where your RTO uses a person who does not hold the required competencies as a trainer and assessor, that person needs to be supervised by a qualified trainer to maintain the quality of your training and assessment. Your RTO needs to consider what level of training and assessment skills and knowledge such a person has and make arrangements for appropriate supervision and guidance. For example, a person who has recently completed the *Enterprise Trainer—Presenting Skill Set* but who has little or no experience as a trainer will require a program of close supervision and mentoring, until they have demonstrated a reasonable level of skill, after which the supervision requirements could be reduced. Regardless of their skills and knowledge, a person that does not hold the required competencies:

- must be supervised, and
- must not determine assessment outcomes.

Regardless of the training and assessment competencies held by a person, training must only be provided by those who have current industry skills and knowledge. Training is best provided by those who can undertake all of the tasks defined in the elements of units of competency and modules to industry standards.

Assessment decisions may only be made by a qualified assessor. A qualified assessor may make assessment decisions in conjunction with the person being supervised, who may gather some or all of the relevant evidence.

The supervising trainer and assessor:

- is responsible for the quality of training delivered, and
- makes all final decisions about assessment outcomes.

From 1 January 2016, people working under such supervision arrangements must hold the:

- *Enterprise Trainer Skill Set* (in either mentoring or presenting), and/or
- *Enterprise Trainer and Assessor Skill Set*.

From 1 January 2016, a person without one of these skill sets is not permitted to deliver training in VET.

Prior to 1 January 2016, transition arrangements are in place, which allow people working under supervision as trainers to demonstrate they hold equivalent competencies. During that period, it is the responsibility of your RTO to retain evidence of such equivalence, which may include, for example, an analysis of how a trainer's skills and knowledge compares with one of the relevant skill sets. Such an analysis should include a comparison with how the trainer's skills and knowledge combine to be equivalent with all of the requirements of one of the relevant skill sets.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

An RTO that does not have any people delivering training or assessment under supervision does not need to retain evidence in this area.

The level of formality needed in supervision arrangements will depend on many factors, including the number of people working under these arrangements. Regardless, RTOs must retain evidence of not only what the arrangements are, but that they have been fully implemented.

If you have a large number of people working under supervision, a formal framework of supervision, review and monitoring may be needed. If the arrangements are for a very small number of people or for a short time only (e.g. while a new trainer completes a qualification), more informal arrangements (such as a weekly review/feedback session) may be appropriate.

Evidence that supervision arrangements have been implemented could include:

- completed review documentation showing that a trainer and assessor has monitored training by observing training sessions and providing feedback to the person being supervised
- completed assessment materials showing that the supervising trainer and assessor has made final assessment decisions, and/or
- interviews with both people to confirm that the arrangements have actually been implemented as planned.



REQUIREMENTS FOR INDIVIDUALS WORKING UNDER SUPERVISION—ALL TRAINING PRODUCTS EXCEPT TAE (CLAUSES 1.17 - 1.20)

All of:

- Vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered
- Current relevant industry skills.

From commencement of standards

One or more of:

- *Enterprise Trainer and Assessor Skill Set*
- *Enterprise Trainer—Presenting Skill Set*
- *Enterprise Trainer—Mentoring Skill Set*
- Equivalent competencies to one of the above

From 1 January 2016

One or more of:

- *Enterprise Trainer and Assessor Skill Set*
- *Enterprise Trainer—Presenting Skill Set*
- *Enterprise Trainer—Mentoring Skill Set*



When applying to become an RTO:

- If your organisation does not intend to have any people delivering training or assessment under supervision, you do not need to provide evidence in this area.
- If you intend to have people delivering training or assessment under supervision, you must provide evidence that suitable supervision arrangements have been developed



CASE STUDY: WATCHING THE TRAINERS

PQR Education delivers a range of 'trade' qualifications to apprentices. The RTO recruits trainers and assessors directly from industry, preferably those who wish to continue working in their trade part-time. This means that PQR often has new trainers and assessors who do not have the required qualification to provide unsupervised training and assessment.

Because new trainers are hired regularly, PQR Education has established a formal framework of supervision and mentoring for new staff. All new staff are required to undertake the *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment* with an RTO engaged by PQR Education, undertaking a customised program that focuses on the challenges in delivering trade qualifications in a mixture of workplace and offline delivery. A mentor is assigned to work with the new staff member until they have completed the qualification. This ensures very close supervision at the beginning of the program with the mentor observing at least two training sessions per week. This gradually decreases as the trainer reaches predetermined competency milestones and ceases once the *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment* has been achieved.

A formal review is held each Friday to provide feedback and to consider any assessment evidence. Review sheets are signed by both parties and retained in both HR files. When the trainer has completed the *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment*, the mentor is also required to confirm that the person has met the requirements of PQR Education to provide unsupervised training and assessment.

EMPLOY EXPERTS TO TEACH TRAINERS AND ASSESSORS (CLAUSES 1.21 - 1.25)



Clause 1.21

Prior to 1 January 2016, to deliver any AQF qualification or skill set from the Training and Education Training Package (or its successor) the RTO must ensure all trainers and assessors delivering the training and assessment:

- a. hold the training and assessment qualification at least to the level being delivered; or
- b. have demonstrated equivalence of competencies.

Clause 1.22

From 1 January 2016, to deliver any AQF qualification or skill set from the Training and Education Training Package (or its successor), the RTO must ensure all trainers and assessors delivering the training and assessment hold the training and assessment qualification at least to the level being delivered.

Clause 1.23

From 1 January 2017, to deliver the training and assessment qualification specified in Item 1 of Schedule 1, or any assessor skill set from the Training and Education Training Package (or its successor), the RTO must ensure all trainers and assessors delivering the training and assessment:

- a. hold the qualifications specified in Item 5 of Schedule 1; or
- b. work under the supervision of a trainer that meets the requirement set out in (a) above.

Clause 1.24

The RTO must ensure that any individual working under supervision under Clause 1.23 b) holds the qualifications specified in Item 1 of Schedule 1 and does not determine assessment outcomes.

Note: from 1 January 2017, the requirements set out in Clause 1.22 continue to apply to any other AQF qualification or skill set from the Training and Education Training Package (or its successor).

Clause 1.25

From 1 January 2016, the deliver any AQF qualification or assessor skill set from the Training and Education Training Package (or its successor), the RTO must have undergone an independent validation of its assessment system, tools, processes and outcomes in accordance with the requirements contained in Schedule 2 (and the definitions of **independent validation** and **validation**).

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

It is critical that training products from the *Training and Education Training Package* are delivered to the highest levels of quality, so that trainers and assessors hold all the skills and knowledge required.

From 1 January 2017, people delivering the *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment* or any assessor skill set from the *Training and Education Training Package* must hold one or more of:

- *Diploma of Vocational Education and Training*
- *Diploma of Training Design and Development*
- a qualification in adult education higher than a diploma.

Alternatively, they can work under the supervision of a person that holds one of the above qualifications.

From 1 January 2016, people delivering any qualification or assessor skill set from the *Training and Education Training Package* must hold a TAE qualification at least to the level they are delivering. From that date, a person who does not hold a relevant qualification is not permitted to deliver or assess any component of these qualifications or skill sets.

Prior to 1 January 2016, transition arrangements are in place allowing people delivering any qualification or assessor skill set from the *Training and Education Training Package* to demonstrate they hold equivalent competencies to a TAE qualification at least to the level they are delivering. During that period, your RTO must retain evidence of such equivalence, which may include, for example, an analysis of how other study undertaken compares with the relevant qualification.



Note that none of these requirements apply to delivery of TAE units of competency within qualifications or skill sets from other training packages or within accredited courses.

As with any other training product, trainers and assessors delivering TAE training products must hold current industry skills and knowledge. While the Standards do not prescribe how trainers and assessors must maintain this currency, it is the responsibility of your RTO to retain evidence showing:

- the current industry skills and knowledge of your trainers and assessors, and
- that their skills and knowledge directly relate to the training and/or assessment they are providing.

The industry skills and knowledge held by trainers and assessors must be consistent with those identified through your industry engagement activities and with any specific requirements expressed in the *Training and Education Training Package*.

Validation is critical in ensuring that assessment is appropriately rigorous and that graduates are fully capable of carrying out the tasks that their qualification claims they can complete. From 1 January 2016, RTOs delivering or applying to deliver qualifications from the *Training and Education Training Package* must have undergone an external, independent validation of their assessment system, tools, processes and outcomes. The extent and nature of this validation activity varies depending on whether the qualification or skill set is already on the RTO's scope of registration or not, but the validation must be carried out by someone who has had no involvement with the RTO other than conducting the validation activity.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

Your RTO must retain either:

- evidence of the qualifications of trainers and assessors delivering these qualifications or skill sets, or
- evidence that trainers and assessors hold equivalent competencies (prior to 1 January 2016).

As with evidence relating to competence of trainers and assessors more generally, you must be able to demonstrate how you have verified this evidence.

From 1 January 2017, you must retain evidence that any person delivering the *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment* or any assessor skill set who does not hold the required diploma or higher level qualification is working under the supervision of a person who does.

From 1 January 2016, your application to add any qualification or assessor skill set from the *Training and Education Training Package* to your scope of registration (even if other qualifications from the *Training and Education Training Package* are already on your RTO's scope) must include evidence of:

- an external and independent validation of assessment (for any training products specified in ASQA's application process), and
- the assessment system to be adopted for the training product/s being applied for, including evidence that the assessment system for the training product/s applied for has undergone an external and independent validation and will meet these requirements when fully implemented.

From 1 January 2016, where an RTO has any qualification or assessor skill set from the *Training and Education Training Package* on its scope of registration, evidence that an external and independent validation of the assessment system has been carried out for those training product/s must be retained. This must include confirmation that the assessment system and outcomes meet the requirements of Standard One and the *Training and Education Training Package*.



If your organisation is seeking registration as an RTO, clauses 1.21 – 1.25 do not apply to you. An RTO is required to be registered for two years before it can be registered to deliver any qualification or assessor skill set from the *Training and Education Training Package*.

TRAINER AND ASSESSOR REQUIREMENTS—TAE TRAINING PRODUCTS (CLAUSES 1.21 - 1.25)

All of:

- relevant requirements of clauses 1.13 - 1.20
- vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered
- current relevant industry skills
- current knowledge and skills in VET
- ongoing professional development in VET.

From commencement of standards

From 1 January 2016

From 1 January 2017

Providing training and/or assessment – Certificate IV in Training and Assessment or any Assessor Skill Set

One or more of:

- *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment*
- *Diploma of Vocational Education and Training*
- *Diploma of Training Design and Development*
- Diploma or higher qualification in adult education
- Equivalent competencies.

One or more of:

- *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment*
- *Diploma of Vocational Education and Training*
- *Diploma of Training Design and Development*
- Diploma or higher qualification in adult education.

One or more of:

- *Diploma of Vocational Education and Training*
 - *Diploma of Training Design and Development*
 - Adult education qualification higher than diploma
- or**
- *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment* and be working under supervision of a person that holds one of the qualifications listed directly above (person cannot determine assessment outcomes in this case).

Providing training and/or assessment—any other TAE product

One or more of:

- Any TAE qualification at least to the level being delivered
- Equivalent competences.

- Any TAE qualification at least to the level being delivered.

MANAGE TRANSITION FROM SUPERSEDED TRAINING PRODUCTS (CLAUSES 1.26 - 1.27)



Clause 1.26

Subject to Clause 1.27 and unless otherwise approved by the VET Regulator, the RTO ensures that:

- where a training product on its scope of registration is superseded, all learners' training and assessment is completed and the relevant AQF certification documentation is issued or learners are transferred into its replacement, within a period of one year from the date the replacement training product was released on the National Register



- b. where an AQF qualification is no longer current and has not been superseded, all learners' training and assessment is completed and the relevant AQF certification documentation issued within a period of two years from the date the AQF qualification was removed or deleted from the National Register
- c. where a skill set, unit of competency, accredited short course or module is no longer current and has not been superseded, all learners' training and assessment is completed and the relevant AQF certification documentation issued within a period of one year from the date the skill set, unit of competency, accredited short course or module was removed or deleted from the National Register, and
- d. a new learner does not commence training and assessment in a training product that has been removed or deleted from the National Register.

Clause 1.27

The requirements specified in Clause 1.26 a) do not apply where a training package requires the delivery of a superseded unit of competency.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

Learners are entitled to graduate with a qualification that most closely represents the current skill needs of industry. A qualification being superseded or discontinued is a clear indication that industry needs have changed to the extent that the previous qualification is no longer suitable.

To best meet the needs of your learners and of industry, transfer learners from superseded qualifications into a replacement qualification as soon as possible.

Superseded training products

Ensure that all learners enrolled in a superseded training product are transferred to a current training product within one year of the replacement being published. Before you do this, ensure that the replacement training product is on your RTO's scope of registration. Where the developer responsible for the parent training package deems the replacement training product is equivalent to the superseded qualification, your RTO's scope of registration will be automatically updated by ASQA to include the replacement training product.

Your scope will be updated immediately after the endorsement process, unless your RTO:

- has 'opted out' of this process, or
- has unresolved compliance issues that prevent the scope update.

In cases where the training product is not considered equivalent to the earlier version or where your RTO has 'opted out' of automatic updates, before transferring any learner enrolments, you will need to:

- apply to ASQA for the replacement to be added to your RTO's scope of registration, and
- have that application approved.

An RTO that holds a delegation from ASQA (to manage its own scope of registration) can add the relevant training products to their scope without application.

Learners who will complete their study and be issued with a qualification or statement of attainment within the one-year transition period do not need to be transferred to a replacement training product.

One year from the date it was superseded, ASQA will remove the superseded training product from your RTO's scope of registration.

From this date, you must not:

- enrol or train learners in that training product, or
- issue a qualification or statement of attainment for that training product (except as a replacement for a previously issued qualification or statement of attainment).

Removed or deleted qualifications

In some instances, training package developers determine there is no longer sufficient demand for a qualification to justify it being maintained. The qualification is removed or deleted without being superseded by another.

In this case, there is no clearly identified replacement qualification for learners to transfer to, although you may be able to identify one that is the closest to meeting your learners' needs. Whether it is practical to transfer learners to a suitable qualification will depend on a range of factors, including how close to completion each learner is, but the guiding principle should be what will best meet the needs of the learner. If completing the qualification is the best path for the learner, your RTO must ensure that all training, assessment and issuance of certification is completed within two years of the date the qualification was removed.

You must not allow a new learner to commence training or assessment from the date a qualification is removed or deleted from the National Register.

Two years after a qualification is removed or deleted, ASQA will remove the qualification from your RTO's scope of registration. From that date, you must not:

- enrol or train learners in that qualification, or
- issue that qualification (except as a replacement for a previously issued qualification).

Removed or deleted skill sets, units, courses and modules

Where a skill set, unit, course or module (not attached to a qualification) is removed or deleted, your RTO must ensure that all training, assessment and issuance of certification is completed within one year of the date the skill set, unit or module was removed or deleted.

You must not allow a learner to commence training or assessment from the date a skill set, unit, course or module is removed or deleted from the National Register (training.gov.au).

One year after a skill set, unit or module is removed or deleted, ASQA will remove the training product from your RTO's scope of registration. From that date you must not:

- enrol or train learners in that skill set, unit, course or module, or
- issue a statement of attainment for that skill set, unit, course or module, except as a replacement for a previously issued statement of attainment.

In all cases, the date shown on the National Register is considered to be the date of publication, deletion or removal.

Sometimes, a qualification or accredited course will specify a core or named elective unit or module that has been superseded, removed or deleted from another training package. In these cases, you must continue to include the component/s as named in the qualification or course being delivered.

ASQA does not grant permission for individual RTOs to continue delivery beyond the allowable timeframes. Where ASQA has agreed that exceptional circumstances apply to a certain cohort of learners justifying delivery beyond the allowable timeframes, e.g. where apprenticeship arrangements necessitate, it will publish this information on its website. In such cases, the exemption will apply to any RTO, but only for delivery to a learner whose enrolment matches the identified criteria.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

The type of evidence available will differ, depending on how your RTO manages transitions.

Evidence from a student management system showing that no students were enrolled in a superseded qualification beyond the relevant date may be sufficient, particularly if the system prevents enrolment of learners into superseded, removed or deleted training products and does not issue qualifications or statements of attainment beyond the allowable timeframes.

If your RTO is using a decision made by ASQA to allow delivery in specific circumstances beyond the usual allowable timeframes, retain evidence that all learners involved match the identified criteria for this delivery.



If your organisation is seeking registration as an RTO, clauses 1.26 and 1.27 do not apply to you, as it is not possible to be registered for superseded, removed or deleted training products.



Standard Two

The operations of the RTO are quality assured.



CONTEXT



The RTO is ultimately responsible for ensuring quality training and assessment within their organisation and scope of registration, regardless of any third party arrangements where training and/or assessment is delivered on their behalf. This includes where the RTO subcontracts the delivery of services to a third party and the third party further subcontracts the delivery of services, but the AQF certification documentation will be issued by the RTO. The RTO must have a written agreement with any party that delivers services on its behalf.

The RTO is responsible for developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating quality training and assessment strategies and practices that meet training package and VET accredited course requirements.

Evaluating information about performance and using such information to inform quality assurance of services and improve training and assessment is sound business and educational practice. The information used to evaluate RTO performance must be relevant to the operating characteristics and business objectives of the RTO and will vary from one RTO to another.

HOW STANDARD TWO BENEFITS:

Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners are confident that the quality of training is monitored to ensure it meets their needs and the needs of employers.
Industry/ employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry and employers know that RTOs consider their current skilling needs when developing training programs.
Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governments have reduced risk, knowing they are investing in an RTO that manages quality in a systematic way.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providers use their resources efficiently by systematically measuring their actions against stakeholder expectations.

Standard Two is explained in more detail in this section of the guide, including the responsibility of RTOs to:

- implement quality assurance strategies (Clauses 2.1 – 2.2), and
- monitor independent third parties (Clauses 2.3 – 2.4)

IMPLEMENT QUALITY ASSURANCE STRATEGIES (CLAUSES 2.1 - 2.2)



Clause 2.1

The RTO ensures it complies with these Standards at all times, including where services are being delivered on its behalf. This applies to all operations of an RTO within its scope of registration.

Clause 2.2

The RTO:

- systematically monitors the RTO's training and assessment strategies and practices to ensure ongoing compliance with Standard 1, and
- systematically evaluates and uses the outcomes of the evaluations to continually improve the RTO's training and assessment strategies and practices. Evaluation information includes but is not limited to quality/performance indicator data collected under Clause 7.5, validation outcomes, client trainer and assessor feedback and complaints and appeals.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

Systematic monitoring of internal systems, strategies and practices allows your RTO to quickly respond to changes in the marketplace or to stakeholder expectations.

Conduct a regular review of your training and assessment, using a range of information, including:

- quality indicator data
- validation outcomes
- client feedback
- trainer and assessor feedback, and
- complaints and appeals.

Use this data to decide whether changes to your strategies or practice are needed. You may conduct this review in conjunction with your industry engagement activities, which relate to the ongoing monitoring of training and assessment strategies and practices.

Reviews should include any arrangements where services are provided by a third party, as your RTO is ultimately responsible for the quality and compliance of all services provided under its RTO registration, regardless of where or by whom they are delivered.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

RTOs must retain evidence that:

- they have monitored and reviewed their training and assessment in a systematic way, and
- review results are used to revise systems and practice where needed.

This must include evidence that the review process has considered:

- delivery and performance data
- client feedback
- trainer and assessor feedback
- validation outcomes, and
- information from complaints and appeals.

While each RTO can decide its own process, you need to keep evidence to show monitoring has been planned and conducted in a systematic way.

Your RTO must retain evidence that its actions match the outcomes of reviews. If a review confirms the RTO is doing well, it may not require changes to its systems or processes. However, if a review indicates a need for change, your RTO should retain evidence that the change has been implemented, or justification why a change was not made.



If your organisation is seeking registration as an RTO, you must be able to demonstrate that monitoring and review of training and assessment for all training products included in the application is planned and structured to comply with this standard.



CASE STUDY: EFFECTIVE INTERNAL COMPLIANCE MONITORING MAKES GOOD BUSINESS SENSE

STU Education delivers business management qualifications at two Sydney locations: Bondi and Chatswood. Every six months, staff from each campus conduct a formal review on activities at the other campus.

The reviewers analyse:

- client feedback
- feedback from the industry engagement process
- any complaints and appeals, and
- assessment validation processes completed in the past six months.

As well as collecting information from these sources, these biannual reviews collect information through staff interviews.

The reviewers provide the CEO with a written report, including recommendations for any changes. The CEO decides which recommendations will be implemented and assigns a staff member to oversee the implementation of each change. Each change must be completed within 30 days of the decision. To ensure accountability, action steps and milestone targets are published on the RTO's Intranet along with deadlines for when changes need to be implemented.

MONITOR INDEPENDENT THIRD PARTIES (CLAUSES 2.3 - 2.4)



Clause 2.3

The RTO ensures that where services are provided on its behalf by a third party the provision of those services is the subject of a written agreement.

Clause 2.4

The RTO has sufficient strategies and resources to systematically monitor any services delivered on its behalf, and uses these to ensure that the services delivered comply with these Standards at all times.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

If you do not use independent third parties, you do not need to take any action relating to these requirements.

Your RTO is responsible for all services delivered under its registration, regardless of where these are conducted, including in other countries. This responsibility applies to all your obligations as an RTO, including:

- providing data
- cooperating with ASQA
- complying with advertising and marketing standards
- informing prospective learners
- dealing with complaints and appeals
- collecting fees, and
- recordkeeping.



You must have a written agreement with any third party that delivers services under your RTO's registration, such as:

- training and/or assessment of training products within your scope of registration
- educational and support services, or
- recruitment of prospective learners.

This does not include hiring trainers and/or assessors as contractors or arrangements for advertising your services. This also does not apply where a person contributes evidence of competency, e.g. in the case of workplace supervisors in traineeship or apprenticeship arrangements.

Activities related to the recruitment of prospective learners may only be undertaken by a third party where these activities are subject to a written agreement. If a party is directly engaging in two-way communication with individual prospective learners about undertaking training and/or assessment at your RTO, they are undertaking activities related to the recruitment of prospective learners

To help each party understand their obligations, your written agreement should explain what is expected from each party in detail. For example, as your RTO is responsible for all marketing of your RTO's services, details of how marketing undertaken by the third party will be approved by your RTO should be included in the written agreement.

The written agreement must require that any third party delivering services cooperate with ASQA in the provision of information and in the conduct of audits and other monitoring activities.

Some RTOs closely control these arrangements and require third parties to only use resources provided by the RTO or to submit completed assessment material before qualifications or statements of attainment are issued.

Other RTOs operate in a much more flexible way, sometimes to the extent of allowing third parties to issue qualifications on behalf of the RTO. Be aware that the more flexible these arrangements are, the greater the risk to your RTO and the more closely you should monitor these arrangements to ensure the third party has complied with your written agreement.

A particular area of risk that ASQA has identified is where RTOs allow third parties to issue qualifications and statements of attainment on behalf of the RTO. Unless there are significant factors that make this necessary, it is not recommended that third parties be permitted to issue qualifications or statements of attainment on behalf of your RTO.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

RTOs only need to retain evidence about these clauses if they have arrangements with third parties in place.

Your RTO must retain evidence of current written agreements for all third party arrangements. While RTOs can choose the form of these agreements, the agreements should clearly describe the obligations of each party.

RTOs must also retain evidence that they have developed and implemented strategies to systematically monitor services provided under third party agreements, to ensure that these services comply with the Standards.

The evidence required to demonstrate compliance will depend on the extent of these arrangements, for example:

- For an RTO with multiple arrangements, or arrangements for delivery outside Australia, a scheduled monitoring program may be required to make sure the monitoring is systematic and that enough resources are available.
- For an RTO with a single, tightly controlled arrangement, less formality may be needed.

Evidence could include schedules of reviews conducted and reports on these reviews. Where a review has identified non-compliance, the RTO would need to retain evidence that this has been corrected and that the RTO is now compliant.



If your organisation is seeking registration as an RTO and intending to enter into third party agreements, you must provide evidence:

- that written agreements have been or will be entered into with each party, and
- of how third party arrangements will be monitored to ensure compliance.



CASE STUDY: MANAGING RISK WHEN USING INDEPENDENT THIRD PARTIES

VWX Training's scope of registration includes 27 qualifications from various training packages. It has independent third party arrangements in place with 12 other parties and generates a significant portion of its income from these arrangements.

The RTO developed a standard agreement template and obtained legal advice to ensure the agreement was binding. The template agreement clearly describes the process for recruiting and training learners and which party is responsible for each aspect of the process.

The agreement also outlines an agreed monitoring schedule. The schedule includes:

- monthly reporting by the third party, and
- six-monthly visits to the third party's site by the RTO Quality Manager.

The Quality Manager reviews marketing on a regular basis, including by conducting a range of Internet searches to identify any marketing by third parties that may breach the agreement or the Standards.

The written agreement had previously provided third parties with access to the RTO's student management system, including the ability to generate qualifications and statements of attainment. Monitoring of the agreements and the RTO's assessment validation process, which ensures samples of assessment judgements by all third parties are included, identified that some third parties were issuing qualifications without ensuring that all assessment evidence had been retained in the student management system.

VWX Training saw this as a significant risk and immediately amended its third party agreement and processes to prevent third parties from issuing qualifications or statements of attainment. The RTO developed a new process, which requires third parties to advise administration staff when all assessment is completed. The RTO can now issue all qualifications and statements of attainment directly to the learner (following confirmation that all required assessment evidence has been retained by the third party).



Standard Three

The RTO issues, maintains and accepts AQF certification documentation in accordance with these Standards and provides access to learner records.



CONTEXT



To maintain the integrity and national recognition of training products, AQF certification must be consistent in presentation and RTOs must accept the certification issued by other RTOs. This is the purpose of nationally agreed requirements about the nature of certification content and presentation and maintenance. Learner needs should be met through timely issuance of AQF certification documentation and access to their records.

RTOs are not obliged to issue any certification that would be entirely comprised of units or modules completed at another RTO or RTOs.

HOW STANDARD THREE BENEFITS:

Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners receive certification that clearly documents their skills and knowledge in a timely manner.
Industry/ employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry and employers can access consistent documentation about the skills of their workers and have confidence that certification is genuine.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providers have confidence that certification presented for credit is valid and that their reputation will not be damaged by the issue of fraudulent qualifications.

Standard Three is explained in more detail in this section of the guide, including the responsibility of RTOs to:

- provide secure certification (Clauses 3.1 – 3.4), and
- provide credit for prior studies (Clause 3.5)



FRAUD ALERT!

The creation of fraudulent qualifications is a significant risk for the VET sector.

Your RTO must have mechanisms in place to reduce fraudulent reproduction of its certification. Protect your RTO's reputation by ensuring strong measures are in place to reduce the fraudulent issue of qualifications and statements of attainment, as people often judge the quality of an RTO by the competence of people who hold its qualifications.

At a minimum, you should include the RTO's seal, corporate identifier or unique watermark.

You can also take steps to reduce the chance of fraudulent qualifications by:

- not allowing third parties to create qualifications or statements of attainment on behalf of your RTO
- using documents that:
 - use a template with 'copy protected' text that makes otherwise hidden text visible when the document is copied or scanned
 - are printed on corporate paper (e.g. letterhead with a multi-coloured background) that makes it clear when a document is not the original
 - include an embossed seal or logo in the paper
 - use a template that includes text or graphic design components that are 'micro-printed' and cannot be reproduced using generally available equipment
 - have all important details (e.g. graduate's name, qualification name, date) printed over a multicoloured 'watermark' background, such as your RTO logo, so they are more difficult to change
 - include a bar code, QR code or serial number that links to verification information on your RTO's website
 - include information about what security measures your certification includes on your RTO's website (and reference this on the documents)
- if digital documents are issued (e.g. PDF documents), include a digital signature that will show a visible warning if the document is altered. Note that a scan of someone's signature is **not** a digital signature.

Printing certification on plain paper using templates from common word-processing applications makes it very easy for someone to recreate a document that looks identical to your certification, even more so if you issue them digitally as unprotected files. **If you do this, you are exposing your RTO to significant risk.**

PROVIDE SECURE CERTIFICATION (CLAUSES 3.1 - 3.4)



Clause 3.1

The RTO issues AQF certification documentation only to a learner whom it has assessed as meeting the requirements of the training product as specified in the relevant training package or VET accredited course.

Clause 3.2

All AQF certification documentation issued by an RTO meets the requirements of Schedule 5.

Clause 3.3

AQF certification documentation is issued to a learner within 30 calendar days of the learner being assessed as meeting the requirements of the training product if the training program in which the learner is enrolled is complete, and providing all agreed fees the learner owes to the RTO have been paid.

Clause 3.4

Records of learner AQF certification documentation are maintained by the RTO in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 5 and are accessible to current and past learners.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

Your RTO must have controls in place to ensure qualifications, statements of attainment and records of results are not issued unless the learner has completed all requirements. There is significant risk to your RTO's reputation if certification is issued inappropriately. To reduce this risk, you should have systems in place to ensure certification is only issued to learners after they have fully demonstrated competence and where evidence of this is in place. If your RTO delivers at multiple locations and/or through third party arrangements, consider centralised issuance of certification to strengthen these controls.

To ensure credibility of qualifications from the VET sector, RTOs must meet the requirements of the *AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy* and include any additional information specific to the VET sector, as per Schedules Four and Five of the Standards (refer to Appendix 2).


RTOs may include additional relevant information on AQF certification documentation, including the name and/or logo of a third party involved in the training and assessment. However, such information must be accurate and not introduce confusion about which organisation is issuing the certification.

When issuing certification:

- issue in a timely manner (AQF certification documentation must be issued within 30 calendar days of the learner's final assessment being completed or their exiting their course, providing all fees have been paid), so your learners can provide proof of their competence to employers (or potential employers) and obtain any industry licences or accreditation
- issue AQF certification documentation directly to the learner, not to another party, such as an employer
- issue learners who have completed all units or modules in a qualification with a testamur and a record of results
- issue a learner who has completed one or more units/modules (but not a full qualification) and has finished their training with your RTO with a statement of attainment (a record of results may also be issued in this case), and
- ensure learners can access records of certification issued to them.

To avoid possible delays in issuing certification, ensure that your RTO has processes in place to verify a learner's Unique Student Identifier (USI) well in advance of when certification is expected to be issued.

You are only required to issue AQF certification documentation when a learner has completed their program of training and assessment with your RTO. You are not required to issue 'interim' documentation at any time.



Your RTO must retain records of qualifications and statements of attainment issued for 30 years. Where you have gathered and retained full AVETMISS data, this would suffice. You must retain sufficient data to be able to reissue a qualification or statement of attainment for the 30-year period, regardless of the storage method used. If your organisation ceases being an RTO, you will be required to provide this information to ASQA in digital form.

Your RTO must ensure that current and past learners are able to access records of their achievements. All learners who hold a verified USI, and whose results have been reported into the USI system, will be able to access their records through the USI system. If a learner's achievements have **not** been recorded through the USI system, you will need to have processes in place to ensure that this learner can access their records in another way.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

RTOs must retain evidence that sufficient controls are in place to prevent certification being issued prior to all assessment being completed. Some electronic student management systems require evidence checklists to be completed before generating documentation. RTOs may also use manual methods, such as:

- completing a checklist before a qualification is printed or signed, or
- requiring all completed assessment to be presented to the person signing or issuing the certification.

Your RTO must retain evidence that qualifications and statements of attainment meet all the requirements of the AQF and Schedules Four and Five of the Standards (refer to Appendix 2). You may be required to provide evidence that any additional content included on certification is accurate and does not create confusion as to the organisation issuing the certification.

Your RTO must demonstrate that it has mechanisms in place to reduce fraudulent reproduction of certification. At a minimum, you must include your RTO's name, RTO code and logo on all certification.

As certification must be issued within 30 days of a learner completing their training and/or assessment, RTOs should retain evidence that this occurs and that learners receive all documents they are entitled to, including records of results where applicable.

You must also retain:

- evidence of how current and past learners can access records of certification issued to them, and
- evidence that these records are or will be retained for a period of 30 years.



If you are applying to become an RTO, you must provide evidence of:

- how your organisation will prevent certification from being issued without all required assessment having been completed
- templates for qualifications, records of results and statements of attainment that meet all requirements
- how you will ensure certification is issued within 30 days
- how learners will access records of certification issued to them, and
- how you will retain records of qualifications and statements of attainment issued for 30 years.

PROVIDE CREDIT FOR PRIOR STUDIES (CLAUSE 3.5)



Clause 3.5

The RTO accepts and provides credit to learners for units of competency and/or modules (unless licensing or regulatory requirements prevent this) where these are evidenced by:

- a. AQF certification documentation issued by any other RTO or AQF authorised issuing organisation, or
- b. authenticated VET transcripts issued by the Registrar.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

Learners must not be required to repeat any unit or module in which they have already been assessed as competent, unless a regulatory requirement or license condition (including industry licensing schemes) requires this. Where a learner provides suitable evidence they have successfully completed a unit or module at any RTO, your RTO must provide credit for that unit or module.

Credit must be granted not only for studies completed at an RTO, but at any authorised issuing organisation, such as a university. In such cases, an analysis as to the equivalence of the study completed with the relevant unit/s or module/s would need to be completed before any credit could be granted.

Before providing credit on the basis of a qualification, statement of attainment or record of results, you should authenticate the information in the document (e.g. by contacting the organisation that issued the document and confirming the content is valid).

Your RTO is not obliged to issue a qualification or statement of attainment that is achieved wholly through recognition of units and/or modules completed at another RTO or RTOs.

In some cases, licensing or regulatory requirements may prevent a unit or module being awarded through a credit process.

Note that providing credit for previous studies is not a recognition of prior learning (RPL) process. RPL is a form of assessment of the competence of a person, while providing credit is recognising the equivalence of studies previously undertaken and completed successfully.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

Evidence that learners are offered credit for study they have completed previously would demonstrate that an RTO has processes in place to meet these requirements. Examples of cases where learners have been exempted from undertaking units they have previously completed would provide evidence that the process has been implemented.



Organisations applying to become RTOs do not have to provide evidence in this area.

PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDENT IDENTIFIER SCHEME (CLAUSE 3.6)



Clause 3.6

The RTO meets the requirements of the Student Identifier scheme, including:

- a. verifying with the Registrar, a Student Identifier provided to it by an individual before using that Student Identifier for any purpose
- b. ensuring that it will not issue AQF certification documentation to an individual without being in receipt of a verified Student Identifier for that individual, unless an exemption applies under the *Student Identifiers Act 2014*
- c. ensuring that where an exemption described in Clause 3.6 (b) applies, it will inform the student prior to either the completion of the enrolment or commencement of training and assessment, whichever occurs first, that the results of the training will not be accessible through the Commonwealth and will not appear on any authenticated VET transcript prepared by the Registrar, and
- d. ensuring the security of Student Identifiers and all related documentation under its control, including information stored in its student management systems.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

The Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS) is a national data standard that ensures consistent and accurate capture and reporting of VET information about learners.

The Unique Student Identifier (USI) scheme, enabled by the *Student Identifiers Act 2014*, allows learners to access a single online record of their VET achievements. The scheme also allows for reliable confirmation of these achievements by employers and other RTOs.

The online system provides each learner with a USI.

Unless exempt, your RTO must only issue a qualification or statement of attainment to a learner after:

- the learner has provided you with a verified USI, or
- you have applied for a USI on behalf of the learner.

Some RTOs are exempt from providing full AVETMISS data under the National VET Provider Collection Data Requirements Policy. Where an exemption applies, you do not have to obtain a USI before issuing a qualification or statement of attainment. However, you must advise learners prior to enrolment or commencement of training or assessment that their achievements will not appear on their authenticated VET transcript or be available to them via the USI scheme.

Most student management systems are able to create and verify USIs automatically. To avoid any delays in issuing certification documentation, ensure that you apply for or verify the learner's USI at the time of enrolment.

Your RTO must protect the security of all information related to USIs. Put sufficient security measures in place to protect both digital and hard-copy records from loss, damage or unauthorised access. This may include storing records in locked cabinets, restricting access to data stored on networks and requiring strong passwords on all network-connected computers. Create back-up copies of records and store them securely.

Records of all AQF certification documentation issued by RTOs must be kept for 30 years. Where a qualification or statement of attainment is recorded in the USI scheme, your RTO will not need to retain additional records to demonstrate this, as the records required will exist within the USI scheme.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

For many RTOs, a proprietary student management system provides most or all of the evidence required to demonstrate compliance with this standard. An effective system manages verification of USIs and ensures a USI is stored in the system prior to any qualification or statement of attainment being issued. Be prepared to demonstrate that records have been stored correctly in your student management system.

You must retain evidence about the security of both digital and hard-copy records. The evidence may vary depending on the approach taken, but must show that records are secure from unauthorised access, loss or damage.

If your RTO has a full or partial exemption from reporting AVETMISS data (and therefore the USI scheme) you must retain evidence of the exemption and the training products it applies to. Where exemption applies, you must also retain evidence that you inform learners their assessment results will not appear on their authenticated VET transcript or be available to them via the USI System. For example, this might involve a declaration the learner acknowledges during the enrolment process.



When applying to become an RTO, you must provide evidence of how your RTO will ensure compliance with all requirements of the USI scheme.



Standard Four

Accurate and accessible information about an RTO, its services and performance is available to inform prospective and current learners and clients.



CONTEXT



The RTO is ultimately responsible for ensuring transparent and accurate information about RTO services and performance is accessible to prospective and current learners and clients of the RTO, regardless of any arrangements to have this information distributed on behalf of the RTO.

Transparent and accurate information about RTO services and performance enables prospective and current learners and clients to make informed decisions regarding their training and/or assessment needs.

The information about RTO services and performance provided by the RTO must be relevant to and reflect the needs of the client which will vary from RTO to RTO.

HOW STANDARD FOUR BENEFITS:

Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners can make informed choices about which RTO suits their training needs when clear and accurate information—including information about the performance of RTOs—is available.
Industry/ employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers seeking training for their staff benefit from clear and accurate information.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providers benefit from fair competition in the market, knowing that they are operating in a level playing field.

Standard Four is explained in more detail in this section of the guide, including the responsibility of RTOs to:

- provide accurate information to learners about services and qualifications (Clause 4.1)

PROVIDE ACCURATE INFORMATION TO LEARNERS ABOUT SERVICES AND QUALIFICATIONS (CLAUSE 4.1)



Clause 4.1

Information, whether disseminated directly by the RTO or on its behalf, is both accurate and factual, and:

- a. accurately represents the services it provides and the training products on its scope of registration
- b. includes its RTO Code
- c. refers to another person or organisation in its marketing material only if the consent of that person or organisation has been obtained
- d. uses the NRT Logo only in accordance with the conditions of use specified in Schedule 4
- e. makes clear where a third party is recruiting prospective learners for the RTO on its behalf
- f. distinguishes where it is delivering training and assessment on behalf of another RTO or where training and assessment is being delivered on its behalf by a third party
- g. distinguishes between nationally recognised training and assessment leading to the issuance of AQF certification documentation from any other training or assessment delivered by the RTO
- h. includes the title and code of any training product, as published on the National Register, referred to in that information
- i. only advertises or markets a non-current training product while it remains on the RTO's scope of registration
- j. only advertises or markets that a training product it delivers will enable learners to obtain a licensed or regulated outcome where this has been confirmed by the industry regulator in the jurisdiction in which it is being advertised
- k. includes details about any VET FEE-HELP, government funded subsidy or other financial support arrangements associated with the RTO's provision of training and assessment, and
- l. does not guarantee that:
 - i. a learner will successfully complete a training product on its scope of registration, or
 - ii. a training product can be completed in a manner which does not meet the requirements of Clause 1.1 and 1.2, or
 - iii. a learner will obtain a particular employment outcome where this is outside the control of the RTO.


WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

Your RTO is subject to all relevant consumer protection law that applies in any jurisdiction where your RTO operates.

Your RTO must enable informed choice for clients and learners by providing clear and factual information, whether this is done directly (including through your website) or by a third party, including an education agent or broker. Your RTO is responsible for all marketing or other material disseminated on its behalf, regardless of the channel or method used.

As the information must be accurate, your RTO must ensure it honours all commitments it makes.

Marketing material must include the following information:

RTO code	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must include your RTO code in all marketing material. The RTO responsible for the training and/or assessment and for issuing a qualification or statement of attainment must be absolutely clear to anyone viewing any marketing or advertising material. If another person or organisation is delivering training under a third party agreement with your RTO, your RTO code must be included on all marketing or other material created by that person or organisation that relates to that training and/or assessment. If another person or organisation is recruiting learners under a third party agreement with your RTO, your RTO code must be included on all marketing or other material created by that person or organisation. If you are delivering under a third party agreement with another RTO, that RTO's code must be included in all marketing or other material relating to those courses.
 <p>NATIONALLY RECOGNISED TRAINING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All nationally recognised training is listed on the National Register at training.gov.au. The Nationally Recognised Training (NRT) logo is a recognised trademark that confirms training is nationally recognised. To maintain the credibility of the logo, it must be used only in accordance with the conditions of use in Schedule Four of the Standards (refer to Appendix 2). It must be clear where training is not nationally recognised. If your RTO delivers training that is not nationally recognised (including school and higher education programs), you must clearly separate marketing or other information about this training from marketing and information about training that is nationally recognised. RTOs can obtain a copy of the NRT logo by sending an email from an RTO contact listed on the National Register at training.gov.au to enquiries@asqa.gov.au.
Code and full title of the training product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether you offer qualifications, skill sets, accredited courses or individual units, all marketing material must include the code and the full title of the training product (as listed on the National Register) to ensure that there is no confusion about what is being offered and to allow potential learners to verify the information. This also means that all RTOs are describing courses in the same way, reducing confusion in the marketplace.

You must only promote training or assessment for training products that are currently on your scope of registration.

Your marketing or advertising material must only provide accurate and factual information about your training. You must not:

- guarantee that a learner will be issued with a qualification or statement of attainment
- guarantee that any employment outcome will result from training and/or assessment at your RTO, unless you have arranged guaranteed employment for any learner that successfully completes their training and/or assessment at your RTO, or
- claim that a learner will be eligible for any licence or accreditation as a result of your training and/or assessment, unless the issuer of that licence or accreditation has confirmed this to be the case.

In developing marketing or advertising material, remember the likely audience, particularly for online marketing. Often, Australian states and territories have different regulatory arrangements and potential learners must be able to clearly see where any licensing or accreditation outcomes may apply.

Your RTO's marketing or advertising material must also be consistent with its training and assessment strategies, including any variations or additions for courses delivered to overseas students. For example, you must not claim a course takes two weeks



to complete if learners complete the course over a period of several months, including doing so by also undertaking a period of independent study.

Your RTO must not guarantee that a learner will obtain a qualification or statement of attainment by studying at your RTO. You must not guarantee that a learner is able to complete a training product where this would breach Clause 1.1 or 1.2 of the Standards (including by misrepresenting or understating the amount of training required).

If you use any reference to another person or organisation (such as testimonials or photos) in marketing or advertising material, you must gain consent from the person or organisation before you make that reference public. This applies to, for example, displaying photos of other training or educational institutions on your website, which can lead people to believe your RTO operates those facilities.

Where learners would be accessing VET FEE-HELP or any other government loan or subsidy, your RTO must provide details of the arrangements. You must provide details of:

- any costs associated (including interest or similar costs), and
- any debt that will be incurred.

You must provide details of any loss of entitlement that may occur as a learner undertakes a course at your RTO. This includes information about limited entitlement schemes (where learners are only able to access one course or there are restrictions on what courses may be subsidised after a learner completes their study at your RTO).

RTOs are not required to have marketing or advertising policies and procedures, but you should:

- ensure all marketing material is checked and approved by an appropriate person before publication, and
- monitor all marketing to ensure it remains current and accurate.

Significant numbers of complaints are submitted to ASQA and other agencies about RTOs making inaccurate or misleading statements in their marketing—being vigilant about monitoring the accuracy of your marketing will increase learner satisfaction and reduce the chance of complaints being submitted to regulators, which may lead to expensive compliance action against your RTO.

Don't forget to monitor marketing carried out on your behalf by other parties, such as training directories or brokers. Your RTO is responsible for ensuring all marketing complies with the Standards, no matter who actually creates or publishes the material.

ASQA reviews your RTO's marketing when:

- preparing for an audit
- considering applications, and/or
- investigating complaints.

ASQA's reviews include activities such as conducting Internet searches to discover marketing about your RTO other than your RTO's website.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

As evidence of applying this Standard, RTOs need to retain copies of actual advertising and marketing material, including any material created by a third party. Retaining a copy and register of all approved material, while not mandatory, makes it easier for RTOs to monitor marketing and allows this to be presented as part of an audit or in the investigation of a complaint.

If you reference another person or organisation in your advertising or marketing material, you must retain evidence that permission was obtained prior to any material containing the reference being published. This could be an exchange of emails, a signed release form or a letter giving permission to use the relevant material. If you regularly include information about learners in social media (including any photos where a learner can be recognised), a release clause in the enrolment form giving your RTO permission to use photos in public material may be useful, as long as the RTO can demonstrate that relevant learners actually agreed to the release. Learners must be able to 'opt out' of such a release if they wish.

Regardless of how the evidence is presented, it must demonstrate that all of the requirements of Clause 4.1 have been complied with in full.



If you are seeking registration as an RTO, you may not yet have marketing material developed.

Provide any developed material as evidence of what will be used. While not essential, procedures outlining how marketing material is to be developed and approved may demonstrate that an applicant has the capacity to comply with these requirements once registered.



CASE STUDY: MONITORING THE MARKET

YZA Training delivers training in allied health from four locations in New South Wales and South Australia. In addition, it has a third party agreement with BCD Health Education to deliver first aid units at workplaces in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

The RTO's Marketing Manager approves all new marketing and promotional materials, and any other public information about the RTO, before it can be used. A register is kept of all approvals, along with a complete copy of the material. This requirement is included in the subcontract agreement with BCD Health Education.

Regular monitoring is carried out on all currently approved material, particularly online material, to ensure it remains consistent with the RTO's scope of registration and operations. When material is no longer in use, it is marked as 'non-current' in the register after being confirmed as no longer in circulation.

The Marketing Manager conducts regular searches of the Internet for YZA Training, BCD Health Education and other relevant terms that would reveal any information about the RTO. On one occasion, a search discovered that BCD Health Education had entered information about first aid courses into a 'careers directory' online and did not identify YZA Training as the RTO. As this information had not been approved by the RTO, BCD Health Education was required to have the material removed. Shortly after, BCD Health Education submitted a request for advertising on the same site to be approved. As the request now included all required information and was accurate, the Marketing Manager approved the request, the information was entered in the directory and the item was added to the register for future checking.



Standard Five

Each learner is properly informed and protected.



CONTEXT



In order to ensure that learners are adequately informed about the services they are to receive, their rights and obligations, and the RTO's responsibilities under these Standards, the RTO must provide learners with information prior to commencement of services including any third party arrangements affecting the delivery of training and/or assessment. This is to occur regardless of the manner in which the learner has been engaged, and whether the learner was initially engaged by the RTO itself or a third party.

The RTO is to provide or make readily available information to the learner that outlines the services the RTO will provide the learner, along with the rights and obligations of the learner and the RTO.

The RTO may provide information to the learner through one or more documents, for example an enrolment form, policy, employment contract or agreement, induction handbook or documented practice, training plan or training contract.

HOW STANDARD FIVE BENEFITS:

Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners can make informed choices about the RTO and the training program that best suits their needs. Learners know who is delivering their training and who is issuing any qualification or statement of attainment. Learners are aware of their rights and responsibilities.
Industry/ employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers have access to well-trained workers with skills and knowledge relevant to the workplace they are entering.
Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governments are confident that funding of training is directed to where it will assist individuals achieve their goals.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RTOs have customers who have achieved their goals, guided by informed choices, leading to high satisfaction levels. RTOs receive fewer complaints, as learners are well informed about what to expect from their training and their rights and responsibilities.

Standard Five is explained in more detail in this section of the guide, including the responsibility of RTOs to:

- inform and protect learners (clauses 5.1 – 5.4).

INFORM AND PROTECT LEARNERS (CLAUSE 5.1 - 5.4)



Clause 5.1

Prior to enrolment or the commencement of training and assessment, whichever comes first, the RTO provides advice to the prospective learner about the training product appropriate to meeting the learner's needs, taking into account the individual's existing skills and competencies.



Clause 5.2

Prior to enrolment or the commencement of training and assessment, whichever comes first, the RTO provides, in print or through referral to an electronic copy, current and accurate information that enables the learner to make informed decisions about undertaking training with the RTO and at a minimum includes the following content:

- a. the code, title and currency of the training product to which the learner is to be enrolled, as published on the National Register
- b. the training and assessment, and related educational and support services the RTO will provide to the learner including the:
 - i. estimated duration
 - ii. expected locations at which it will be provided
 - iii. expected modes of delivery
 - iv. name and contact details of any third party that will provide training and/or assessment, and related educational and support services to the learner on the RTO's behalf, and
 - v. any work placement arrangements.
- c. the RTO's obligations to the learner, including that the RTO is responsible for the quality of the training and assessment in compliance with these Standards, and for the issuance of the AQF certification documentation.
- d. the learner's rights, including:
 - i. details of the RTO's complaints and appeals process required by Standard 6, and
 - ii. if the RTO, or a third party delivering training and assessment on its behalf, closes or ceases to deliver any part of the training product that the learner is enrolled in
- e. the learner's obligations:
 - i. in relation to the repayment of any debt to be incurred under the VET FEE-HELP scheme arising from the provision of services
 - ii. any requirements the RTO requires the learner to meet to enter and successfully complete their chosen training product, and
 - iii. any materials and equipment that the learner must provide, and
- f. information on the implications for the learner of government training entitlements and subsidy arrangements in relation to the delivery of the services.

Clause 5.3

Where the RTO collects fees from the individual learner, either directly or through a third party, the RTO provides or directs the learner to information prior to enrolment or the commencement of training and assessment, whichever comes first, specifying:

- a. all relevant fee information including:
 - i. fees that must be paid to the RTO, and
 - ii. payment terms and conditions including deposits and refunds
- b. the learner's rights as a consumer, including but not limited to any statutory cooling-off period, if one applies
- c. the learner's right to obtain a refund for services not provided by the RTO in the event the:
 - i. arrangement is terminated early, or
 - ii. the RTO fails to provide the agreed services.

Clause 5.4

Where there are any changes to agreed services, the RTO advises the learner as soon as practicable, including in relation to any new third party arrangements or a change in ownership or changes to existing third party arrangements.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

Your RTO must provide clear information to prospective learners to enable them to decide if your RTO and course is suitable for them, taking into account their existing skills and knowledge and any specific needs. Prior to enrolment or commencement of training or assessment activities (in this context, assessment includes the collection or analysis of evidence for recognition of prior learning activities), you must provide clear information to learners about the following:

Full course code and title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure prospective learners can research the course you are offering, state the code and full title of the training product you are offering, as listed on the National Register. Include any relevant currency information, such as whether a qualification has been superseded or removed from a training package.
Venue, length and mode/s of delivery and/or assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the prospective learner with clear information about where the training and/or assessment will be undertaken, how long it will take and mode/s involved.
Third party arrangements (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where a third party is involved in the training and/or assessment, learners have a right to know who this is. Learners should be able to contact both your RTO and the third party at any time. You must confirm to prospective learners that your RTO is responsible for the quality of training and assessment provided and for the issuing of all qualifications and statements of attainment, and that any changes to the arrangements will be communicated to them. You must also provide information on how learners can lodge a complaint or appeal against either your RTO or the third party.
Entry requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure learners fully understand their obligations, inform prospective learners of any entry requirements and/or specific requirements they need to meet to successfully complete the program. You must also make it clear if the learner needs to provide any materials and/or equipment. Make it clear whether the training includes mandatory work placements. If mandatory work placements are part of the training, learners must be provided with clear information on who will arrange this.
Support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information about support services available to learners and any cost associated with them.
Fee information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If your RTO requires individual learners to pay fees (this requirement does not apply if you contract with a company to deliver training to their employees, paid for by that company), provide fee information prior to enrolment or commencement of training/assessment (whichever is earliest), about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all fees payable to your RTO, clearly describing all costs involved with the course how and when fees must be paid how to request a refund, and conditions under which a refund would be provided. Where a learner is being enrolled under any loan or delayed payment arrangement (including VET FEE-HELP), the terms of the arrangement must be clearly stated, including any debt that may be incurred; when repayment is required and under what conditions; and any associated fees, indexation or interest.



Funding entitlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If learners may be accessing any government funding entitlement that may reduce their ability to access such funding in the future (such as arrangements that limit funding to one qualification for a person), provide this information prior to enrolment.
Consumer rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inform prospective learners about their rights as a consumer, in accordance with state/territory laws.• If state or territory laws where the course is being offered require a cooling-off period, you must provide information about this.

Your RTO must also notify learners when any change occurs that may affect the services you are providing them. This includes:

- a change in ownership of the RTO, and/or
- any changes to, or new third party arrangements your RTO puts in place, for the delivery of services to those learners.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

RTOs must retain evidence showing these requirements have been complied with in full. The type of evidence will vary depending on how the information is presented to prospective learners. For example, while RTOs could provide the relevant information on their website, they would still need to demonstrate that individuals are always directed to this information prior to enrolment. Regardless of how the information is provided to prospective learners, it must be accurate and conform to the planned training and assessment described in your RTO's training and assessment strategies.



If your organisation is seeking registration as an RTO, you must demonstrate that you have developed information that will meet the requirements of these clauses.



CASE STUDY: READ BEFORE CLICKING

EFG Training accepts enrolments into a range of qualifications via its website.

Once a prospective learner has selected the qualification they wish to enrol in, they are presented with a link to information relevant to that particular qualification. To proceed, the person must complete a declaration that they have read and understood the information. Only then can they complete the enrolment process. The RTO's student management system records that the person completed the declaration and a copy of the declaration available on that date is retained in the RTO's document management system.



CASE STUDY: READ BEFORE SIGNING

Hlj Training offers a 'white card' construction induction program that runs each Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Most people don't enrol in advance, but turn up on the day expecting to be able to enrol and commence the program that day.

On arrival, learners are handed a fact sheet containing all relevant information on the program. This includes a declaration to the learner that—as Hlj Training holds an exemption from reporting data for this program—their assessment results will not appear on their authenticated VET transcript or be available to them via the USI System. The declaration includes space for a signature acknowledging that the learner has been fully informed about the course. The learner must sign this declaration before commencing the program.



Standard Six

Complaints and appeals are recorded, acknowledged and dealt with fairly, efficiently and effectively.



CONTEXT



RTOs must implement a transparent complaints and appeals policy that enables learners and clients to be informed of and to understand their rights and the RTO's responsibilities under the Standards.

Enterprise RTOs and volunteer associations that do not charge fees for the training and/or assessment and only provide training to employees or members are not required to maintain a separate complaints and appeals policy in relation to their training and assessment. These organisations must ensure, however, that their organisation's complaints policy is sufficiently broad to cover the activities as an RTO

HOW STANDARD SIX BENEFITS:

Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of the public who are affected by the actions of an RTO can have their concerns addressed promptly.
Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners have any concerns about their training or assessment addressed promptly and equitably.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RTOs that manage complaints and appeals will benefit from increased satisfaction of learners.

Standard Six is explained in more detail in this section of the guide, including the responsibility of RTOs to:

- manage complaints and appeals fairly (clauses 6.1 – 6.6).

MANAGE COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS (CLAUSE 6.1 - 6.6)



Clause 6.1

The RTO has a complaints policy to manage and respond to allegations involving the conduct of:

- the RTO, its trainers, assessors or other staff
- a third party providing services on the RTO's behalf, its trainers, assessors or other staff or
- a learner of the RTO.

Clause 6.2

The RTO has an appeals policy to manage requests for a review of decisions, including assessment decisions, made by the RTO or a third party providing services on the RTO's behalf.

Clause 6.3

The RTO's complaints policy and appeals policy:

- ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaint and appeal process
- are publicly available
- set out the procedure for making a complaint or requesting an appeal
- ensure complaints and requests for an appeal are acknowledged in writing and finalised as soon as practicable, and
- provide for review by an appropriate party independent of the RTO and the complainant or appellant, at the request of the individual making the complaint or appeal, if the processes fail to resolve the complaint or appeal.



Clause 6.4

Where the RTO considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, the RTO:

- a. informs the complainant or appellant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required, and
- b. regularly updates the complainant or appellant on the progress of the matter.

Clause 6.5

The RTO:

- a. securely maintains records of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes, and
- b. identifies potential causes of complaints and appeals and takes appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.

Clause 6.6

Where the RTO is an employer or a volunteer organisation whose learners solely consist of its employees or members, does not charge fees for the training or assessment, and does not have in place a specific complaints and appeals policy in accordance with Clauses 6.1 & 6.2, the organisation has a complaints and appeals policy which is sufficiently broad to cover the services provided by the RTO.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

Your RTO must have a policy for dealing with complaints about your organisation, third parties, staff or other learners. You must also have an appeals policy, in case your RTO is requested to review or reconsider a decision it has made (e.g. an assessment decision).

You must make these policies publicly available, for example, by including them on your RTO's website or displaying them in common areas for staff and learners.

Make the process for lodging a complaint or appeal clear and explain what will happen as a result. Ensure people are not disadvantaged. Specifically, do not:

- require them to complete overly complex forms, which can be a barrier to learners expressing their concerns, or
- require learners to provide extensive written information as part of the complaints process.

Allowing learners to easily engage with the staff of your RTO about any concerns they have can stop minor issues becoming larger.

Your RTO's process must follow the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness by allowing anyone subject to a decision by your RTO, or anyone who has allegations made against them, to tell their side of the story before a decision is made.

Ensure that the decision maker is independent of the decision being reviewed (e.g. an assessor should not consider or decide an appeal against an assessment decision they made).

If the person making the complaint or appeal is not happy with the outcome, make arrangements for an independent third party to review the complaint or appeal. Disclose any costs associated with a third party review in your policy, so all parties are aware of any costs they may need to pay. Note that ASQA is **not** able to act as the independent third party for reviewing complaints.

Deal with complaints and appeals promptly. Identify the timeframes that will apply to resolution of complaints and appeals, so that complainants know how long it should take to get a response from your RTO at all stages of the process. This will minimise the chance of complainants referring their complaint to ASQA, which can incur additional costs to your RTO. If a complaint or appeal (including any review process) will take more than 60 days to finalise, write to the people involved explaining the delay.

Record all complaints and appeals received, and document outcomes. Use this information to review your RTO's processes and practices to ensure the issue doesn't happen again.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

RTOs must retain evidence that they have a publicly available policy or policies to deal with complaints and appeals. If the RTO uses third parties to deliver services, the policy or policies must be made available to prospective learners of the third parties.

Where complaints or appeals have been received, RTOs must keep evidence of how the matter was dealt with and the outcome (including the timeframes). The RTO will need to show that it has identified the cause of the complaint or appeal and what steps it has taken to prevent the situation happening again.



If your organisation is seeking registration as an RTO, you must provide documented policies for dealing with complaints and appeals (or a combined policy) and demonstrate how these will be published. The policies must address all the requirements of Standard Six.



CASE STUDY: USING COMPLAINT OUTCOMES FOR BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT

Hij Training publishes a combined complaints and appeals policy on its website. On enrolment, all learners are directed to the policy and must confirm that they understand their rights in this area.

While complaints can be submitted online, the policy sets out that people are able to speak with a staff member about their concerns and the staff member will complete the form on their behalf if required.

Any complaints are directed immediately to the RTO's Training Manager, who either investigates them or refers them to the General Manager if there is any conflict of interest (e.g. if the complaint is about the conduct of the Training Manager). The RTO conducts separate interviews with both the person making the complaint and the person the complaint is about.

In the case of appeals against assessment decisions, the Training Manager initially reviews the decision and the evidence used to make the decision. The assessor and the learner are interviewed separately to find out whether there is any relevant information not contained in the learner's file.

Regardless of the outcome, all parties are to be notified of the outcome within 30 days.

A mediator can be provided by the Australian Mediation Association. Hij Training agrees to pay the cost of one mediation session of up to two hours and advises that, should the matter require further mediation, it will be at the cost of the complainant or appellant.

Once complaints and appeals are finalised, they are presented to the management team at their monthly meeting, where they are reviewed to see if there is a need to change any procedures or practices.

All complaints and appeals are recorded on a register that includes relevant details to allow analysis of matters over time and identify any common factors that may need action.



Standard Seven

The RTO has effective governance and administration arrangements in place.



CONTEXT



Business viability is critical to the ongoing sustainability of an RTO and the investment it makes in its services. If RTOs are not viable, then this negatively impacts on the quality of its training and assessment outcomes and on learners.

Operational and financial business standards therefore provide important protective measures for the learner and RTOs, as well as acting as a disincentive for underprepared organisations to enter the market.

The factors determining the viability of an RTO are dependent upon the business objectives and operating characteristics of the RTO. For example, the factors determining the business viability of an enterprise RTO embedded within a major Australian business may be different to those impacting upon a private provider or a publically-owned TAFE Institute.

HOW STANDARD SEVEN BENEFITS:

Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners know their provider is stable and well-governed, so are confident it will continue to operate and be properly resourced to deliver training. Learners know that their exposure to financial loss is limited in the case of a provider closing or not being able to provide the training.
Industry/employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers of learners are confident that providers can adequately resource the training and assessment of their staff and that providers will continue to operate through the life of training contracts.
Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governments are confident of investing in training provided by RTOs knowing they are viable and properly governed.

Standard Seven is explained in more detail in this section of the guide, including the RTO's responsibility to:

- ensure authorised executive officers are in place (Clause 7.1)
- assess financial viability risk (Clause 7.2)
- protect prepaid fees by learners (Clause 7.3)
- hold public liability insurance (Clause 7.4), and
- provide accurate information about performance and governance (Clause 7.5)

ENSURE AUTHORISED EXECUTIVE OFFICERS ARE IN PLACE (CLAUSE 7.1) AND ASSESS FINANCIAL VIABILITY RISK (CLAUSE 7.2)



Clause 7.1

The RTO ensures that its executive officers or high managerial agent:

- are vested with sufficient authority to ensure the RTO complies with the RTO Standards at all times, and
- meet each of the relevant criteria specified in the Fit and Proper Person Requirements in Schedule 3.

Clause 7.2

The RTO satisfies the *Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements*.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

To operate effectively, managers must have authority to ensure that their RTO complies with the Standards at all times. If your RTO is part of a larger organisation, it is particularly important that the people actually managing the RTO are able to make decisions that ensure compliance.

All executive officers (who the NVR Act defines as anyone who manages the RTO, or owns more than 15 per cent of it) and the 'high managerial agent' of your RTO must satisfy the *Fit and Proper Person Requirements 2011* outlined in Schedule 3 (see Appendix 2) at all times. You must make a 'fit and proper person' declaration, in accordance with ASQA's requirements, when:

- you apply for initial registration or to renew registration as an RTO, or
- you employ a new manager.

You also need to advise ASQA if anything happens that means one or more people may no longer meet the requirements.

Your RTO is required to present an acceptable level of financial risk at all times. Each RTO's financial viability risk is assessed by ASQA to evaluate the likelihood of business continuity, and the RTO's capacity to achieve quality outcomes, as outlined in the *Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements 2011*. Every initial registration application process includes this assessment, and ASQA may also require an RTO to submit to a financial viability risk assessment at any other time.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

Evidence to demonstrate compliance varies depending on the structure of the organisation:

- For a sole trader, it is obvious that the relevant authority is in place and no evidence would be required.
- For a larger RTO with multiple managers, providing organisational charts, position descriptions, duty statements and delegation documents are some ways to demonstrate that managers have sufficient authority.

There is no requirement for policies or procedures to demonstrate compliance.

Evidence would usually be provided with applications for initial or renewal of registration or notifications of new managers rather than during an audit or other regulatory activity. ASQA's registration and notification processes guide RTOs about any evidence required at that point. These processes can be accessed on ASQA's website at www.asqa.gov.au/news-and-publications/publications/forms.html.

ASQA may request evidence if your RTO is considered to present an unacceptable level of risk.



When applying to become an RTO, you must provide relevant evidence with your application.

The application process provides guidance to applicants about the specific evidence required to demonstrate that all executive officers and high managerial agents meet the *Fit and Proper Person Requirements* and that the RTO meets the *Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements*.

PROTECT PREPAID FEES BY LEARNERS (CLAUSE 7.3)



Clause 7.3

Where the RTO requires, either directly or through a third party, a prospective or current learner to prepay fees in excess of a total of \$1500 (being the threshold prepaid fee amount), the RTO must meet the requirements set out in the Requirements for Fee Protection in Schedule 6.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

'Prepaid fees' (sometimes referred to as 'fees collected in advance') means fees collected before the relevant services have been provided. These include payments made at any time before, during or after the learner enrolls. Your RTO may collect up to \$1500 in prepaid fees from a learner without needing to take any action to protect these fees, as explained in Schedule 6 (refer to Appendix 2).

RTOs registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) must satisfy both the requirements of this clause and of the Tuition Protection Service (TPS) under the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000*. The TPS requires that not more than 50 per cent of the fees for an overseas student be prepaid. This applies even if 50 per cent of the course fees would be less than the threshold prepaid fee amount.

The requirements that apply to prepaid fees include all fees that a learner is required to pay, including enrolment fees, tuition fees, materials fees and any other fee component that is a mandatory payment for the course.

RTOs are only required to protect prepaid fees from individual learners and prospective learners. These requirements do not apply, for example, where an employer engages an RTO to provide training and/or assessment to its staff.

Government entities and Australian universities

If your RTO collects more than the maximum \$1500 per learner in prepaid fees, you must have and implement a policy that details how, if your RTO is unable to provide the services which have been paid for, learners will be:

- placed into an equivalent course without having to pay any additional fees for the portion of the course they have paid in advance, or
- refunded for all fees paid in advance over \$1500.

As required by Standard Five, you must notify learners of the fees they must pay and when they are due and provide access to your RTO's fee protection policy.

All other RTOs

Where your RTO collects more than \$1500 per learner in prepaid fees, you must take action to protect the prepaid fees that exceed \$1500 for any learner. In these instances, you must have at least one protection measure in place for each learner; however, this does not have to be the same measure for all learners (see Schedule 6 for types of protection measures).

If you never hold more than \$1500 in prepaid fees from any learner, you do not have to take further action to protect the fees of learners.

Consider how best to structure your fee payment schedule:

- If you offer a 10-week course that costs \$2000, the course costs \$200 per week. Therefore, you could collect \$1500 at the time of enrolment and the remaining \$500 after week seven without needing to have any protection measures in place.
- If you wanted to collect the total course cost at the time of enrolment, you would have to have one or more of the measures in Schedule 6 in place.
- There are many other options you could choose, such as collecting weekly fees, or collecting a deposit of up to \$1500 at the time of enrolment and then a weekly amount equal to the calculated weekly cost of the course.



If your RTO is required to have fee protection measures in place, it can:

- hold an unconditional bank guarantee to cover at least the amount of prepaid fees in excess of \$1500 for any learner
 - If choosing this option, your RTO needs to ensure the guarantee is structured so that you can refund learners' fees that have been prepaid in excess of \$1500 in circumstances where the RTO is no longer able to deliver the training and assessment. For example, you may have an arrangement where an independent party has authority to access the guarantee.
 - You may be required to demonstrate how the amount of the guarantee was arrived at and how you monitor and ensure that this level is always greater than the amount of fees required to be protected. This option does not need to be approved by ASQA, but you must be able to demonstrate how the guarantee meets the standard, if requested by ASQA. Note that ASQA is not available to act in administering any such guarantee or acting as beneficiary and that any costs associated with the guarantee must be met by the RTO.
- hold membership of a Tuition Assurance Scheme approved by ASQA that applies to all relevant students, and/or
- put in place another measure approved by ASQA
 - to apply for approval of an alternative measure for fee protection, complete the 'Application for alternative fee protection measures' form available from ASQA's website.

The requirements for protection of prepaid fees apply no matter how the fees are collected. Any fees collected by a third party to your RTO (including by an education agent or broker) are subject to the same conditions and your RTO is responsible for ensuring that protection measures are in place and implemented as required. These requirements apply to fees prepaid by learners, regardless of when your RTO actually receives the payment.

If you are using a commercial 'shopping cart' system to collect online payments, ensure that the system does not allow learners to prepay more than the maximum amount allowed by the arrangements you have in place. This may be as simple as specifying all course fees in the shopping cart and allowing only single purchases.

As required by Standard Five, you are required to notify learners of the fees they must pay and when they are due.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

Government entities and Australian universities

RTOs in this category can demonstrate compliance by providing their fee protection policy and demonstrating how this is accessible to learners. If the RTO has needed to enact the policy, it could show the process that was followed.

All other RTOs

Where an RTO is not collecting more than \$1500 in prepaid fees from any learner, this could be demonstrated through marketing and enrolment material that includes fee schedules that, collectively, show the RTO does not require more than \$1500 to be prepaid for any course. In this case, no further evidence would be required.

Where an RTO is collecting more than \$1500 in prepaid fees from any learner, retain evidence to show how any fees above the threshold prepaid fee amount are protected. Evidence might be in the form of:

- confirmation of current membership in one or more approved Tuition Assurance Schemes (TAS) that includes all of the relevant courses and delivery locations
- evidence that the RTO holds a current bank guarantee for a suitable amount (calculated based on the total amount of prepaid fees in excess of \$1500 per learner the RTO would hold at any time).

It may be that your RTO uses a combination of measures for different courses or different learners. In this case, you must retain evidence of how all learners' fees are protected.

If ASQA has approved an alternative fee protection measure, retain evidence of current approval of that measure and your compliance with the measure.

Regardless of the method/s your RTO uses for protection of learner prepaid fees, as required by Standard Five, you must retain evidence of how learners have been advised of:

- all payment terms, and
- the circumstances under which refunds may be issued

Information provided to potential learners, learners or clients must be consistent with the RTO's arrangements.



If your organisation is seeking registration as an RTO, you must confirm whether you plan to collect more than \$1500 in prepaid fees from learners at any time. If you intend to do this, you must demonstrate how one or more fee protection measure/s will be implemented for all relevant learners.

Note that ASQA will not accept an application for alternative fee protection measures from organisations seeking registration as an RTO.



CASE STUDY: FEE PROTECTION MADE SIMPLE

KLM Training offers qualifications in the security industry from its head office in Perth and a range of individual units and skill sets from its Perth office and several sites across WA.

Payment of fees is required prior to commencement of the training.

For example:

- The *Certificate II in Security Operations* offered by the RTO is priced at \$975, so does not require any fee protection measure for learners in this course.
- The *Certificate III in Security Operations* is priced at \$1675 and is run over five weeks. Learners are required to pay a deposit on enrolment of \$75. They are then invoiced for \$800 due to be paid on the first day of training and a further \$800 due at the start of the third week of training.

KLM Training does not collect more than \$1500 in advance for any learner, so does not have to implement any fee protection measures.



CASE STUDY: CONSISTENCY BRINGS SIMPLICITY

NOP Training operates from a head office in Melbourne, and has branches in Sydney, Canberra and Albury. The RTO has third party arrangements with organisations in Launceston, Hobart and Bendigo. Over 100 different qualifications are offered, mostly in the business, IT, health and community service areas.

Regardless of the cost of the course, NOP Training has implemented a consistent fee model across all courses. All courses require payment of a non-refundable fee on enrolment (\$100). The balance of the fees are divided into two equal payments, one due on the first day of training and the other due either at the start of week six or at the start of the last week of training for courses shorter than six weeks. These same arrangements apply across all four of the RTO's branches, and all courses offered by third parties. While NOP Training could collect the entire fees up-front from some individual learners, implementing a consistent payment framework avoids confusion, provides a consistent cash flow and ensures compliance with the Standards.

Where NOP Training is contracted to provide training to staff groups from various companies, full fees are payable prior to training, as they are paid for by the employer rather than the learner.

NOP Training does not collect more than \$1500 in advance for any learner, so does not have to implement any fee protection measures.



CASE STUDY: GUARANTEE BRINGS FLEXIBILITY

QRS Training offers three qualifications from the Sport, Fitness and Recreation Training Package. The duration of the courses ranges from six weeks to 18 months, and fees range from \$4900 up to \$12,000. All fees must be paid prior to the commencement of training for all courses. The courses all operate on a 'rolling intake' model, with new students starting each Monday.

QRS Training calculated that, as it had 200 students undergoing training at any time, all at different stages, it was holding approximately \$400,000 in advance at any time. To safeguard prepaid fees by learners, QRS Training arranged a bank guarantee for \$400,000 to cover all fees paid in advance.

Should the provider not be able to meet its financial obligations, conditions allow the guarantee to be called upon by the RTO's solicitor. Having a bank guarantee in place means that QRS Training do not need to restrict the amount of fees learners are required to pay at any time.

HOLD PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE (CLAUSE 7.4)



Clause 7.4

The RTO holds public liability insurance that covers the scope of its operations throughout its registration period.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

Your RTO must hold public liability insurance to cover all training and/or assessment activities it provides as an RTO.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

RTOs can retain evidence that they hold public liability insurance by keeping a copy of a certificate of currency or similar. Quotes and invoices are not sufficient evidence to prove that insurance is actually in place.

The evidence provided must:

- identify that the RTO is covered by the policy, and
- either confirm that training and assessment activities are covered, or that there are no restrictions on the activities covered.



If your organisation is seeking registration as an RTO, you are required to confirm that you will obtain suitable public liability insurance as soon as registration is granted. This will be checked at the post-initial audit approximately 12 months after your RTO commences operations.

PROVIDE ACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE (CLAUSE 7.5)



Clause 7.5

The RTO provides accurate and current information on its performance and governance consistent with the Data Provision Requirements as updated from time to time.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

The *Data Provision Requirements 2012* outline information that your RTO is required to submit. Apart from information required with applications, this falls generally into two categories:

- Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS) data, and
- Quality Indicator data.



National VET Provider Collection data

The Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS) for VET providers is a national data standard that ensures the consistent and accurate capture and reporting of VET information about students, providers, courses and training outcomes. The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) is the custodian of the Standard, which forms the basis for collecting data for the National VET Provider Collection.

Information on AVETMISS is available from NCVER's website.

Your RTO must obtain and report full AVETMISS data for all learners, unless it is exempt under the *National VET Provider Collection Data Requirements Policy*.

Most student management systems can record and report AVETMISS data without additional entry. Some systems also manage online enrolment by learners. While this significantly reduces data entry by your RTO, data should be checked to make sure it is correct.

If you do not have a student management system, a free online AVETMISS data entry tool is available from NCVER's website.

A free online AVETMISS data validation tool is available for NCVER's website.

Quality indicator data

Quality surveys

You must collect and report Quality Indicator data to ASQA, using the required learner engagement and employer satisfaction questionnaires, through either:

- the Survey Management, Analysis and Reporting Tool (no longer available for download), or
- ASQA's Quality indicator annual summary report template.

Competency completion data

RTOs that claimed the 12-month grace period exemption from reporting full AVETMISS data about their 2014 delivery activity to the National VET Provider Collection must report competency completion data in 2015 at a qualification and unit of competency level, using the Competency Completion Online System (CCOS).

Your RTO can have competency completion data pre-populated into the CCOS by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), based on submitted AVETMISS data. However, you will still need to review this pre-populated data and submit it through the CCOS.

Competency completion data will not be required from any RTO for delivery after 2014.

Further information on data submission is available on ASQA's website.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

National
VET Provider
Collection data

Due in February
each year

RTOs must retain evidence that they have submitted or will be able to submit (if the RTO has been registered less than a year) full AVETMISS data for all learners as required in the *National VET Provider Collection Data Requirements Policy* unless they are exempt. This is due annually by the end of February for the previous calendar year. .

Quality indicator
data

Due to ASQA in
June each year

Quality surveys

RTOs must retain evidence they have collected and/or submitted Quality Indicator data—or, if they have been registered for less than a year, that they will be able to submit Quality Indicator data—using the required learner engagement and employer satisfaction questionnaires. This is due to ASQA annually by 30 June for the previous calendar year.

Competency completion data

RTOs accessing the grace period for 2014 and, as a result, not submitting full AVETMISS data, must retain evidence they have submitted or will be able to submit (if the RTO has been registered less than a year) annual competency completion data using the CCOS. This is due to ASQA by 30 June for the previous calendar year.

RTOs submitting full AVETMISS data for 2014 delivery are not required to submit CCOS data for this period.

RTOs are not required to submit CCOS data for delivery on or after 1 January 2015.



When you apply to become an RTO, you will need to demonstrate that your organisation has the means to collect and submit complete AVETMISS data.

This may be in the form of an installed student management system with this capacity. Note that a quote for such a system is not sufficient evidence—be prepared to demonstrate that the system has been installed, configured and is available to relevant staff.

You will also need to provide evidence of how your organisation will collect and report learner engagement and employer satisfaction quality indicator surveys.



Standard Eight

The RTO cooperates with the VET Regulator
and is legally compliant at all times.



CONTEXT



RTOs need to comply with the requirements of the RTO Standards as well as other relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory legislation. This is critical if RTOs are to deliver training products that have integrity and which fulfil their obligations to their clients.

It is important that third party arrangements are documented and transparent to facilitate the Regulator's knowledge that such arrangements exist. This will enable them to factor this into the risk profile they apply when enforcing compliance with the Standards and to review, in the context of RTO audits, the terms of the third party arrangements and the effectiveness of the arrangements in facilitating compliance with these Standards.

HOW STANDARD EIGHT BENEFITS:

Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners are assured each provider is monitored by a regulator that has accurate, up-to-date information about the provider. • Learners are confident their provider complies with relevant legislation and regulatory requirements. • Learners are aware of requirements that relate to their training. • Learners can make informed choices about providers using accurate and up-to-date information.
Industry/ employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers and other industry stakeholders are assured providers are monitored by a regulator that has accurate, up-to-date information about the provider.
Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments are assured providers are monitored by a regulator that has accurate, up-to-date information about the provider.

Standard Eight is explained in more detail in this section of the guide, including the RTO's responsibility to:

- provide requested information to ASQA (Clause 8.1 and 8.2)
- notify ASQA regarding third party agreements (Clause 8.3)
- make an annual declaration on compliance with the Standards (Clause 8.4), and
- comply with all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements (Clause 8.5 and 8.6)

PROVIDE REQUESTED INFORMATION TO ASQA (CLAUSE 8.1 AND 8.2)



Clause 8.1

The RTO cooperates with the VET Regulator:

- by providing accurate and truthful responses to information requests from the VET Regulator relevant to the RTO's registration
- in the conduct of audits and the monitoring of its operations
- by providing quality/performance indicator data
- by providing information about substantial changes to its operations or any event that would significantly affect the RTO's ability to comply with these standards within 90 calendar days of the change occurring
- by providing information about significant changes to its ownership within 90 calendar days of the change occurring, and
- in the retention, archiving, retrieval and transfer of records.



Clause 8.2

The RTO ensures that any third party delivering services on its behalf is required under written agreement to cooperate with the VET Regulator:

- a. by providing accurate and factual responses to information requests from the VET Regulator relevant to the delivery of services, and
- b. in the conduct of audits and the monitoring of its operations.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

Your RTO must cooperate with ASQA in responding to requests for information, undergoing audits and managing records.

You must notify ASQA within 90 days of changes to the following:

- executive officer or high managerial agent
- financial administration status e.g. liquidators being appointed
- legal name or type of legal entity
- ownership, directorship or control
- anything that may affect the fit and proper person status of an influential representative of the RTO
- any fundamental funding/revenue source (e.g. government funding contract allocation)
- the RTO's business strategy driven by a change to government policy
- delivery to apprentices or trainees employed under a training contract, or
- any other significant event.

Notify ASQA of changes using the *Notification of Material Change or Event* form, which includes advice about what information and evidence must be attached in each case (available from ASQA's website).

Make sure you notify ASQA immediately if the contact details for your RTO change. The contact details published on the National Register are what ASQA will use to contact your RTO. ASQA is not able to provide any information about your RTO's registration to anyone other than the published contacts. Use the *Notification of change of provider details* form to advise ASQA of any changes.

You must securely retain all completed assessment items relating to each unit or module for six months from the date the decision on competence for the individual unit or module was made. If you can't retain the actual item (e.g. construction projects or perishable items), retain evidence, such as photographs, that the standard of the item or work completed justifies the assessment outcome. **Completed assessment items, such as assignments, should not be handed back to learners until the six-month period has expired, although you could provide them with a copy.**

ASQA auditors will not require you to provide completed assessments that are more than six months old (unless you have been specifically directed by ASQA to retain these records for longer), but you may have to retain these records for longer if you deliver training under a funding contract or are subject to additional record retention requirements. Find out more about these requirements on ASQA's website.

Note that other record keeping obligations may exist.

Your RTO must collect and report on a range of data about your business and operations, including:

- Total VET Activity data, and
- Quality Indicator data.

If requested, you must provide ASQA with the following types of information about your RTO:

- business registration records e.g. Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) reports
- information demonstrating that the organisation satisfies the *Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements*
- information demonstrating relevant people associated with the organisation satisfy the *Fit and Proper Person Requirements*
- information on strategies, resources and other materials used to conduct training and assessment
- documents demonstrating trainer and assessor credentials
- information about delivery operations such as modes, venues, funding, student types and activity conducted
- evidence about record management systems
- public liability insurance coverage
- the names of current or past students, who may be surveyed about satisfaction levels, and
- any other information required to demonstrate compliance with the VET Quality Framework.

Should your organisation stop operating as an RTO, you will need to transfer sufficient digital records to ASQA to confirm what each learner has completed. Information about withdrawing your registration is available from ASQA's website.

If your RTO uses third parties to provide services, you must ensure they cooperate with ASQA in undertaking audits and in retaining and providing records or other information. Your RTO is responsible for ensuring any third party meets these requirements.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

RTOs are not required to have policies or procedures in this area. In general, compliance with these clauses would be demonstrated by the RTO cooperating with ASQA in the normal course of business by providing relevant information.



If your organisation is seeking registration as an RTO, you are not required to provide specific evidence in this area.

However in submitting an application to become an RTO, your organisation is committing to comply with these requirements.

NOTIFY ASQA REGARDING THIRD PARTY AGREEMENTS (CLAUSE 8.3)



Clause 8.3

The RTO notifies the Regulator:

- of any written agreement entered into under Clause 2.3 for the delivery of services on its behalf within 30 calendar days of that agreement being entered into or prior to the obligations under the agreement taking effect, whichever occurs first, and
- within 30 calendar days of the agreement coming to an end.



WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

Your RTO must notify ASQA whenever it starts or ends a third party agreement using a *Notification of Material Change or Event* form. The form is available from ASQA's website.

Remember that this requirement covers agreements for a third party to provide any of the following:

- training
- assessment
- educational and support services (this does not include student counselling, mediation or ICT support), and/or
- activities related to the recruitment of prospective learners.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

RTOs are not required to have policies or procedures in this area. In general, compliance with these clauses would be demonstrated by the RTO cooperating with ASQA in the normal course of business by providing relevant information.



If your organisation is seeking registration as an RTO, you are not generally required to provide specific evidence in this area.

However, if you are intending to use third party arrangements, you may be required to provide evidence that written agreements are in place.

MAKE AN ANNUAL DECLARATION ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE STANDARDS (CLAUSE 8.4)



Clause 8.4

The RTO provides an annual declaration on compliance with these Standards to the VET Regulator and in particular whether it:

- a. currently meets the requirements of the Standards across all its scope of registration and has met the requirements of the Standards for all AQF certification documentation it has issued in the previous 12 months, and
- b. has training and assessment strategies and practices in place that ensure that all current and prospective learners will be trained and assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Standards.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

You are required to provide a declaration annually on whether your RTO complies with the Standards. The *Declaration on compliance* template and submission details will be available on ASQA's website in 2015.

Providing an annual declaration confirms you have systematically monitored your RTO's compliance with the Standards and whether any issues identified have been corrected.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

RTOs are not required to have policies or procedures in this area. In general, compliance with these clauses would be demonstrated by the RTO cooperating with ASQA in the normal course of business by providing the annual declaration as required.



You are required to provide a declaration on compliance with the Standards when submitting an application for initial registration as an RTO.

COMPLY WITH ALL RELEVANT LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (CLAUSE 8.5 AND 8.6)



Clause 8.5

The RTO complies with Commonwealth, State and Territory legislation and regulatory requirements relevant to its operations.

Clause 8.6

The RTO ensures its staff and clients are informed of any changes to legislative and regulatory requirements that affect the services delivered.

WHAT THIS STANDARD MEANS FOR YOUR RTO

Your RTO must comply with all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.

This includes, but is not limited to, compliance with:

- the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* and the legislative instruments it enables
- legislation, regulations and standards related to delivery of training to overseas students (if applicable)
- workplace health and safety legislation and regulations
- anti-discrimination legislation and regulations, and
- consumer protection requirements.

You must keep your staff and clients (including learners) informed about any changes to legislative and regulatory requirements that may affect the delivery of training and assessment. It is your RTO's responsibility to ensure it is aware of all relevant requirements.

A GUIDE TO COMPLIANCE

RTOs are not required to have policies or procedures in this area. In general, compliance with these clauses would be demonstrated by the RTO cooperating with ASQA in the normal course of business and maintaining compliance with the Standards.

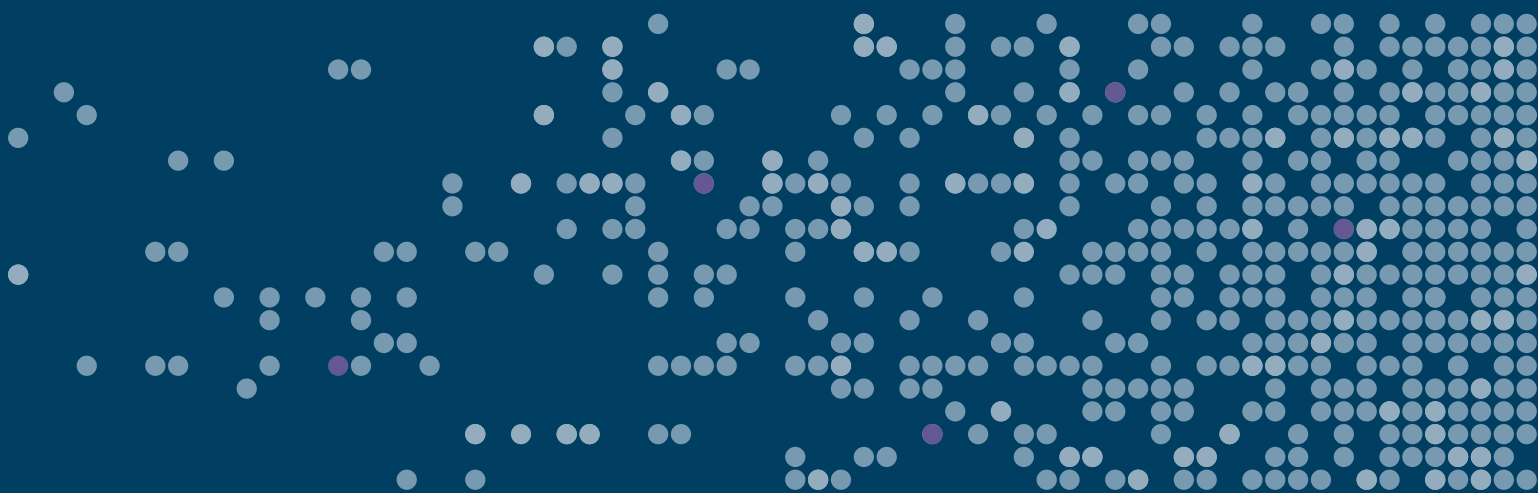
RTOs could demonstrate compliance with requirements to keep staff and clients informed by showing how they have advised of changes to legislation or other regulatory requirements, for example, through publishing updates on legislation on a staff Intranet, sending regular newsletters to staff and learners, or publishing online information about relevant changes.

Should ASQA become aware that an RTO has not complied with any legislative or regulatory requirement, ASQA may notify the relevant regulatory agency. Breaches of legislative or regulatory requirements may have an impact on the continued registration of the RTO.



If your organisation is seeking registration as an RTO, you are not required to provide specific evidence in this area.

Appendices



APPENDIX 1—GLOSSARY

Access and equity	means policies and approaches aimed at ensuring that VET is responsive to the individual needs of clients whose age, gender, cultural or ethnic background, disability, sexuality, language skills, literacy or numeracy level, unemployment, imprisonment or remote location may present a barrier to access, participation and the achievement of suitable outcomes.
Accredited short course	means a course accredited by the VET Regulator in accordance with the Standards for VET Accredited Courses that leads to an AQF statement of attainment.
AQF certification documentation	is the set of official documents that confirms that an AQF qualification or statement of attainment has been issued to an individual.
AQF qualification	means an AQF qualification type endorsed in a training package or accredited in a VET accredited course.
Assessment	means the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard required in the workplace, as specified in a training package or VET accredited course.
Assessment system	is a coordinated set of documented policies and procedures (including assessment materials and tools) that ensures assessments are consistent and are based on the Principles of Assessment contained in Table 1.8-1 and the Rules of Evidence contained in Table 1.8-2.
Assessors	are persons who assess a learner's competence in accordance with Clauses 1.13 to 1.16.
Audit	means an audit or compliance audit undertaken by the VET Regulator.
Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)	means the framework for regulated qualifications in the Australian education and training system, as agreed by the Commonwealth, State and Territory ministerial council with responsibility for higher education.
Authenticated VET transcript	has the meaning given in the <i>Student Identifiers Act 2014</i> : <i>authenticated VET transcript of an individual means a document prepared by the Registrar that sets out information:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>that relates to the VET undertaken by the individual, and</i> b. <i>that is prescribed by the regulations.</i>
Client	means a learner, enterprise or organisation that uses or purchases the services provided by an RTO.
Code	means the unique identifier for units of competency, skill sets, VET accredited courses, modules, AQF qualifications or training packages as required by the Standards for Training Packages and Standards for VET Accredited Courses.



Competency	means the consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace. It embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments.
Current industry skills	<p>are the knowledge, skills and experience required by VET trainers and assessors and those who provide training and assessment under supervision to ensure that their training and assessment is based on current industry practices and meets the needs of industry.</p> <p>Current industry skills may be informed by consultations with industry and may include, but is not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">having knowledge of and/or experience using the latest techniques and processespossessing a high level of product knowledgeunderstanding and knowledge of legislation relevant to the industry and to employment and workplacesbeing customer/client-orientedpossessing formal industry and training qualifications andtraining content that reflects current industry practice.
Data Provision Requirements	are the requirements for data provision as agreed by the Industry and Skills Council and implemented by the VET Regulator as required by its governing legislation.
Educational and support services	<p>may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">pre-enrolment materialsstudy support and study skills programslanguage, literacy and numeracy (LLN) programs or referrals to these programsequipment, resources and/or programs to increase access for learners with disabilities and other learners in accordance with access and equitylearning resource centresmediation services or referrals to these servicesflexible scheduling and delivery of training and assessmentcounselling services or referrals to these servicesinformation and communications technology (ICT) supportlearning materials in alternative formats, for example, in large printlearning and assessment programs contextualised to the workplace, andany other services that the RTO considers necessary to support learners to achieve competency.

Executive officer

means:

- a. a person, by whatever name called and whether or not a director of the organisation, who is concerned in or takes part in the management of the RTO or
- b. an administrator, receiver and manager, or liquidator of the organisation (other than a receiver and manager, or liquidator, appointed by a court) or
- c. if the RTO is a body corporate:
 - i. a person who, at any time during a period for which the organisation is registered, owns 15 per cent or more of the organisation or
 - ii. a person who, at any time during a period for which the organisation is registered, is entitled to receive 15 per cent or more of dividends paid by the organisation or
 - iii. the administrator of a deed of company arrangement executed by an organisation or
 - iv. a trustee or other person administering a compromise or arrangement made between the organisation and another person or other persons.

Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements

means the requirements made under section 158 of the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* or equivalent requirements made or adopted by the VET Regulator of a non-referring State as the case requires.

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 meaning:

Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements has the meaning given by section 158:

158 Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements

1. *The National VET Regulator must, by legislative instrument, make requirements relating to the financial viability of NVR registered training organisations.*
2. *The requirements are to be known as the Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements.*
3. *Despite subsection 14(2) of the Legislative Instruments Act 2003, the Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements may make provision in relation to a matter by applying, adopting or incorporating any matter contained in another instrument or other writing as in force or existing from time to time.*

Government entity

means:

- a. a Department of State of the Commonwealth or
- b. a Department of the Parliament established under the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999* of the Commonwealth
- c. an Executive Agency, or Statutory Agency, within the meaning of the *Public Service Act 1999* of the Commonwealth
- d. a Department of State of a State or Territory or
- e. an organisation that:
 - i. is not an entity, and
 - ii. is either established by the Commonwealth, a State or a Territory (whether under a law or not) to carry on an enterprise or established for a public purpose by an Australian law, and
 - iii. can be separately identified by reference to the nature of the activities carried on through the organisation or the location of the organisation whether or not the organisation is part of a department or branch described in paragraph (a), (b), (c) or (d) or of another organisation of the kind described in this paragraph.



High managerial agent	means an employee or agent of the organisation with duties of such responsibility that his or her conduct may fairly be assumed to represent the organisation in relation to the business of providing courses.
Independent validation	means, for the purposes of Clause 1.25, that the validation is carried out by a validator or validators who: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. are not employed or subcontracted by the RTO to provide training and assessment, and b. have no other involvement or interest in the operations of the RTO.
Industry	means the bodies that have a stake in the services provided by RTOs. These can include, but are not limited to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. enterprise/industry clients, e.g. employers b. group training organisations c. industry organisations d. industry regulators e. industry skills councils or similar bodies f. industry training advisory bodies, and g. unions.
Industry and Skills Council	means the Commonwealth, State and Territory ministerial council established by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), or its successor.
Industry engagement	for the purposes of Clauses 1.5 & 1.6, may include, but is not limited to, strategies such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. partnering with local employers, regional/national businesses, relevant industry bodies and/or enterprise RTOs b. involving employer nominees in industry advisory committees and/or reference groups c. embedding staff within enterprises d. networking in an ongoing way with industry networks, peak bodies and/or employers e. developing networks of relevant employers and industry representatives to participate in assessment validation, and f. exchanging knowledge, staff, and/or resources with employers, networks and industry bodies.
Industry regulator	means a body or organisation responsible for the regulation and/or licensing arrangements within a specific industry or occupation.
Learner	means a person being trained and/or assessed by the RTO for the purpose of issuing AQF certification documentation.
Licensed or regulated outcome	means compliance with an eligibility requirement for an occupational licence or a legislative requirement to hold a particular training product in order to carry out an activity.
Mode of delivery	means the method adopted to deliver training and assessment, including online, distance, or blended methods.
Module	means a group of learning outcomes in a VET accredited course where it can be established that it is not possible to develop an appropriate unit of competency.

National Register	means the register maintained by the Commonwealth Department responsible for VET and referred to in section 216 of the <i>National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011</i> .
Nationally Recognised Training (NRT) logo	means the logo used nationally to signify training packages and VET accredited courses.
Operations of an RTO	include training, assessment and administration and support services related to its registration, including those delivered across jurisdictions and offshore.
Person	includes a body politic or corporate as well as an individual.
Professional development	<p>means activities that develop and/or maintain an individual's skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a trainer or assessor. This includes both formal and informal activities that encompass vocational competencies, currency of industry skills and knowledge and practice of vocational training, learning and assessment, including competency based training and assessment. Examples of professional development activities include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> participation in courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, or formal learning programs participation in mentoring, professional associations or other learning networks personal development through individual research or reading of publications or other relevant information participation in moderation or validation activities, and participation in industry release schemes.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	<p>means an assessment process that assesses the competency(s) of an individual that may have been acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual meets the requirements specified in the training package or VET accredited courses.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction and is linked to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, a certificate, diploma or university degree) non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction, but does not lead to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, in house professional development programs conducted by a business), and informal learning refers to learning that results through experience of work-related, social, family, hobby or leisure activities (for example the acquisition of interpersonal skills developed through several years as a sales representative).
Record	Means a written, printed, or electronic document providing evidence that activities have been performed.
Registrar	has the meaning given in the <i>Student Identifiers Act 2014</i> : <i>Registrar means the Student Identifiers Registrar.</i>
Registration	means registration as an RTO by the VET Regulator, where that registration is then entered on the National Register
RTO	means a Registered Training Organisation.



RTO code	means the registration identifier given to the RTO on the National Register.
Scope of registration	means the training products for which an RTO is registered to issue AQF certification documentation. It allows the RTO to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. both provide training delivery and assessment resulting in the issuance of AQF certification documentation by the RTO or b. provide assessment resulting in the issuance of AQF certification documentation by the RTO.
Services	means training, assessment, related educational and support services and/or any activities related to the recruitment of prospective learners. It does not include services such as student counselling, mediation or ICT support.
Skill set	means a single unit of competency or a combination of units of competency from a training package which link to a licensing or regulatory requirement, or a defined industry need.
Standards for VET Accredited Courses	are the standards made under subsection 188(1) of the <i>National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011</i> or the equivalent requirements adopted by a non-referring State.
Statement of attainment	means a statement issued to a person confirming that the person has satisfied the requirements of the unit/s of competency or accredited short course specified in the statement.
Statistically valid	means for the purposes of these Standards, a random sample of appropriate size is selected to enable confidence that the result is sufficiently accurate to be accepted as representative of the total population of assessments being validated.
Student Identifier	has the meaning given in the <i>Student Identifiers Act 2014</i> : <i>Student identifier means an identifier assigned to an individual by the Registrar under section 10 or 12.</i>
Third party	means any party that provides services on behalf of the RTO but does not include a contract of employment between an RTO and its employee.
Trainers	are persons who provide training in accordance with Clause 1.13, 1.14 and 1.16.
Training	is the process used by an RTO, or a third party delivering services on its behalf, to facilitate learning and the acquisition of competencies in relation to the training product on the RTO's scope of registration.
Training and assessment strategies and practice	are the approach of, and method adopted by, an RTO with respect to training and assessment designed to enable learners to meet the requirements of the training package or accredited course.

Training Package	means the components of a training package endorsed by the Industry and Skills Council or its delegate in accordance with the Standards for Training Packages. The endorsed components of a Training Package are: units of competency assessment requirements (associated with each unit of competency) qualifications and credit arrangements. The endorsed components form part of the requirements that an RTO must meet under these Standards. A training package also consists of a non-endorsed, quality assured companion volume/s which contains industry advice to RTOs on different aspects of implementation.
Training Product	means AQF qualification, skill set, unit of competency, accredited short course and module.
Unit of competency	means the specification of the standards of performance required in the workplace as defined in a training package.
Validation	is the quality review of the assessment process. Validation involves checking that the assessment tool/s produce/s valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic evidence to enable reasonable judgements to be made as to whether the requirements of the training package or VET accredited courses are met. It includes reviewing a statistically valid sample of the assessments and making recommendations for future improvements to the assessment tool, process and/or outcomes and acting upon such recommendations.
VET	means vocational education and training.
VET accredited course	means a course accredited by the VET regulator in accordance with the Standards for VET Accredited Courses.
VET Quality Framework	comprises: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the Standards for Registered Training Organisations b. the Australian Qualifications Framework c. the Fit and Proper Person Requirements d. the Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements e. the Data Provision Requirements
VET Regulator	means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the National VET Regulator, and b. a body of a non-referring State that is responsible for the kinds of matters dealt with under the VET legislation for that State

APPENDIX 2—SCHEDULES TO THE STANDARDS FOR RTOs 2015

SCHEDULE 1

ITEM	RELEVANT STANDARD	AQF QUALIFICATION OR UNIT OF COMPETENCY
1	1.14 1.15	<i>TAE40110 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment</i> or its successor.
2	1.14 1.15	A diploma or higher level qualification in adult education.
3	1.15	<i>TAESS00001 Assessor Skill Set</i> or its successor.
4	1.18	a. <i>TAESS00007 Enterprise Trainer—Presenting Skill Set</i> or its successor or b. <i>TAESS00008 Enterprise Trainer—Mentoring Skill Set</i> or its successor c. <i>TAESS00003—Enterprise Trainer and Assessor Skill Set</i> or its successor.
5	1.23	a. <i>TAE50111 Diploma of Vocational Education and Training</i> or its successor or b. <i>TAEDES50211 Diploma of Training Design and Development</i> or its successor or c. A higher level qualification in adult education.

SCHEDULE 2

Independent validation requirements for RTOs delivering training and assessment qualifications or assessor skill sets from the Training and Education Training Package (or its successor)

For the purposes of Clause 1.25, the requirements for independent validation will apply as follows:

- a. For an RTO applying to extend its scope of registration to include the delivery and assessment of an AQF qualification or assessor skill set from the *Training and Education Training Package* (or its successor), validation is of:
 - i. the RTO's assessment tools, processes and outcomes in relation to other AQF qualifications and/or units of competency on its scope of registration, as directed by the VET Regulator, and
 - ii. the assessment system to be adopted in the delivery of the training and assessment qualification or assessor skill set.
- b. For an RTO applying for the renewal of its registration where its scope of registration includes the delivery and assessment of an AQF qualification or assessor skill set from the *Training and Education Training Package* (or its successor), validation is of:
 - i. the assessment system for delivery of the training and assessment qualification or assessor skill set, and
 - ii. the RTO's assessment tools, processes and outcomes in relation to the training and assessment qualification or assessor skill set.

For the purposes of Clause 1.25, independent validation of AQF qualifications or the assessor skill set from the *Training and Education Training Package* (or its successor) must be conducted by one or more persons who collectively have:

- a. current knowledge and skills in vocational teaching and learning, and
- b. the training and assessment qualification or assessor skill set at least to the level being validated.

SCHEDULE 3

Fit and Proper Person Requirements

Criteria for suitability

In assessing whether a person meets the Fit and Proper Person Requirements, the VET Regulator will have regard to the following considerations:

- a. whether the person has been convicted of an offence against a law of the Commonwealth or a State or Territory of Australia, or of another country, and if so, the seriousness of the offence and the time elapsed since the conviction was recorded
- b. whether the person has ever been an executive officer or high managerial agent of an RTO at a time that the RTO had its registration on the National Register cancelled or suspended by its VET Regulator for having breached a condition imposed on its Registration
- c. whether the person has ever been an executive officer or high managerial agent of an RTO at a time that the RTO was determined to have breached a condition of its registration under the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* or the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011*
- d. whether the person has ever become bankrupt, applied to take the benefit of a law for the benefit of bankrupt or insolvent debtors, compounded with his or her creditors or assigned his or her remuneration for the benefit of creditors, and if so, the time elapsed since this event occurred
- e. whether the person has ever been disqualified from managing corporations under Part 2D.6 of the Corporations Act 2001, and if so, whether the disqualification remains in place
- f. whether the person was involved in the business of delivering courses or other services on behalf of a person that was the subject of regulatory action described in points b) or c) above, and if so, the relevance of the person's involvement
- g. whether the person has ever provided a VET Regulator with false or misleading information or made a false or misleading statement to a VET Regulator, and if so, whether it is reasonable to assume that the person knew that the statement made or information provided to the VET Regulator was false or misleading
- h. whether the person has ever been determined not to be a fit and proper person as prescribed under any law of the Commonwealth or of a State or Territory of Australia, and if so, whether that determination remains in place
- i. whether the public is likely to have confidence in the person's suitability to be involved in an organisation that provides, assesses or issues nationally recognised qualifications
- j. whether the person has ever been an executive officer or high managerial agent of an RTO at a time that the RTO was determined to have breached a government training contract, and
- k. any other relevant matter.



SCHEDULE 4

Conditions of Use of NRT Logo

The Nationally Recognised Training (NRT) Logo is a distinguishable mark of quality for promoting and certifying national vocational education and training leading to AQF certification documentation. The NRT Logo is a registered trade mark.

The following describes a range of situations and conditions for using the NRT Logo.

Advertisements and promotional information in any medium (print, television, radio, banners, internet, etc)

1. RTOs registered by any VET Regulator may use the NRT Logo to promote nationally recognised training provided that training is within the RTO's scope of registration.
2. Impressions must not be created that may lead an observer to conclude the NRT Logo applies to all training provided by the RTO, if this is not the case. The NRT Logo cannot be used by an RTO where the training is accredited, but is outside the scope of registration of the RTO. Where training is being promoted and does not meet the requirements stipulated in the VET Quality Framework or is outside the RTO's Scope of Registration, it must be made clear the NRT Logo is not associated with that training.
3. Use of the NRT Logo is only permitted where there is a direct relationship to a AQF qualification and/or unit of competency as specified within training packages or VET accredited courses.

Student information (brochures, course handbooks, prospectuses, etc)

4. When an RTO is promoting the training it offers and wishes to use the NRT Logo, its promotional material such as brochures, handbooks and prospectuses must clearly distinguish between nationally recognised training within the scope of registration and that which is not nationally recognised.

Corporate stationery, business cards, buildings, training resources and marketing products

5. The NRT Logo must not be used on products such as corporate stationery, business cards, building signage, mouse pads, pens, satchels, packaging around products nor learning resources supporting training.

Certificates, Statements of Attainment and other testamurs

6. The NRT Logo must be depicted on all AQF certification documentation issued by the RTO. These can only be issued by an RTO when the qualification and/or unit of competency are within the RTO's scope of registration. The NRT Logo must not be depicted on other testamurs or transcripts of results.

SCHEDULE 5

Application of the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy within the VET Sector

RTOs must meet the requirements of the AQF for issuing AQF qualifications and statements of attainment, in addition to the following requirements.

Issuing AQF Qualifications

1. RTOs must include the following information on the testamur, in addition to the requirements of the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy:
 - the name, National RTO code and logo of the issuing organisation
 - the code and title of the awarded AQF qualification, and
 - the NRT Logo in accordance with the current conditions of use contained in Schedule 4.

2. The following elements are to be included on the testamur as applicable:
 - the State / Territory Training Authority logo (only where use of the logo is directed by State / Territory Training Authorities, e.g. within User Choice contracts)
 - the industry descriptor, e.g. Engineering
 - the occupational or functional stream, in brackets, e.g. (Fabrication)
 - where relevant, the words, 'achieved through Australian Apprenticeship arrangements', and
 - where relevant, the words, 'these units/modules have been delivered and assessed in <insert language>' followed by a listing of the relevant units/modules.
3. RTOs must not include the learner's Student Identifier on the testamur consistent with the Student Identifiers Act 2014.
4. RTOs will:
 - retain registers of AQF qualifications they are authorised to issue and of all AQF qualifications issued
 - retain records of AQF certification documentation issued for a period of 30 years, and
 - provide reports of Records of qualifications issued to its VET Regulator on a regular basis as determined by the VET Regulator.

Issuing Statements of Attainment

5. RTOs must include the following information on a statement of attainment:
 - the name, National RTO Code and logo of the issuing organisation
 - a list of units of competency (or modules where no units of competency exist) showing their full title and the national code for each unit of competency
 - the authorised signatory
 - the NRT Logo
 - the issuing organisation's seal, corporate identifier or unique watermark
 - the words 'A statement of attainment is issued by a Registered Training Organisation when an individual has completed one or more accredited units'
6. The following elements are to be included on the statement of attainment as applicable:
 - the State/Territory Training Authority logo (only where use of the logo is directed by State/ Territory Training Authorities)
 - the words 'These competencies form part of [code and title of qualification(s)/course(s)]'
 - the words, 'These competencies were attained in completion of [code] course in [full title]', and
 - where relevant, the words, 'these units / modules have been delivered and assessed in <insert language>' followed by a listing of the relevant units/modules.
7. RTOs must not include the learner's Student Identifier on the statement of attainment consistent with the *Student Identifier Act 2014*.
8. RTOs will:
 - maintain registers of all statements of attainments issued
 - retain records of statements of attainment issued for a period of 30 years, and
 - provide reports of its records of statements of attainment issued to its VET Regulator on a regular basis, as determined by the VET Regulator.

SCHEDULE 6

Requirements for protecting fees prepaid by individual learners, or prospective learners, for services.

These requirements do not override obligations and requirements of the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (Cth).

TYPE OF RTO	REQUIREMENT
Government entity or an Australian university	<p>The RTO implements a policy addressing learner fee protection arrangements. This policy details how, if the RTO is unable to provide services for which the learner has prepaid, the learner will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be placed into an equivalent course such that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the new location is suitable to the learner, and – the learner receives the full services for which they have prepaid at no additional cost to the learner or • be paid a refund of any prepaid fees for services yet to be delivered above the threshold prepaid fee amount.
All other RTOs	<p>The RTO addresses learner fee protection by implementing one or more of the following arrangements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The RTO holds an unconditional financial guarantee from a bank operating in Australia where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the guarantee is for an amount no less than the total amount of prepaid fees held by the RTO in excess of the threshold prepaid fee amount for each learner for services to be provided by the RTO to those learners, and • all establishment and ongoing maintenance costs for the bank guarantee are met by the RTO. 2. The RTO holds current membership of a Tuition Assurance Scheme approved by its VET Regulator which, if the RTO is unable to provide services for which the learner has prepaid, must ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the learner will be placed into an equivalent course such that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the new location is geographically close to where the learner had been enrolled, and – the learner receives the full services for which they have prepaid at no additional cost to the learner or • if an equivalent course cannot be found, the learner is paid a refund of any prepaid fees for services yet to be delivered above the threshold prepaid fee amount. 3. Any other fee protection measure approved by the VET Regulator.

APPENDIX 3—NOTES ON THIS VERSION

VERSION 1.0 (PRE-PRINT, AVAILABLE ON ASQA WEBSITE 5 NOVEMBER - 10 DECEMBER)		VERSION 1.1 (FIRST PRINT EDITION, PUBLISHED 10 DECEMBER 2014) AND AVAILABLE WWW.ASQA.GOV.AU/STANDARDS FROM 10 DECEMBER 2014	
Page number/s	Content	Page number/s	Change made
43	<p>From 1 January 2016, people delivering any qualification or skill set from the Training and Education Training Package must hold a TAE qualification or skill set at least to the level they are delivering. From that date, a person who does not hold a relevant qualification or skill set is not permitted to deliver or assess any component of these qualifications or skill sets.</p> <p>Prior to 1 January 2016, transition arrangements are in place allowing people delivering any qualification or assessor skill set from the Training and Education Training Package to demonstrate they hold equivalent competencies to a TAE qualification or skill set at least to the level they are delivering. During that period, your RTO must retain evidence of such equivalence, which may include, for example, an analysis of how other study undertaken compares with the relevant qualification or skill set.</p>	39	<p>[changes requested by Department of Industry to clarify intent of standards]</p> <p>From 1 January 2016, people delivering any qualification or assessor skill set from the Training and Education Training Package must hold a TAE qualification at least to the level they are delivering. From that date, a person who does not hold a relevant qualification is not permitted to deliver or assess any component of these qualifications or skill sets.</p> <p>Prior to 1 January 2016, transition arrangements are in place allowing people delivering any qualification or assessor skill set from the Training and Education Training Package to demonstrate they hold equivalent competencies to a TAE qualification at least to the level they are delivering. During that period, your RTO must retain evidence of such equivalence, which may include, for example, an analysis of how other study undertaken compares with the relevant qualification.</p>

1. SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES

VERSION 1.0 (PRE-PRINT, AVAILABLE ON ASQA WEBSITE 5 NOVEMBER - 10 DECEMBER)		VERSION 1.1 (FIRST PRINT EDITION, PUBLISHED 10 DECEMBER 2014) AND AVAILABLE WWW.ASQA.GOV.AU/STANDARDS FROM 10 DECEMBER 2014	
Page number/s	Content	Page number/s	Change made
55	<p>Columns in table under heading 'Providing training and/or assessment – Certificate IV in Training and Assessment or any Assessor Skill Set':</p> <p>(left column)</p> <p>One or more of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate IV in Training and Assessment • Equivalent competencies. <p>(middle column)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. <p>(right column)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. <p>And one or more of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diploma of Vocational Education and Training • Diploma of Training Design and Development • Adult education qualification higher than diploma <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be working under supervision of a person that holds one of the qualifications listed directly above (persons cannot determine assessment outcomes in this case). 	41	<p>[changes requested by Department of Industry to clarify intent of standards]</p> <p>Columns in table under heading 'Providing training and/or assessment – Certificate IV in Training and Assessment or any Assessor Skill Set':</p> <p>(left column)</p> <p>One or more of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate IV in Training and Assessment • Diploma of Vocational Education and Training • Diploma of Training Design and Development • Diploma or higher qualification in adult education • Equivalent competencies. <p>(middle column)</p> <p>One or more of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate IV in Training and Assessment • Diploma of Vocational Education and Training • Diploma of Training Design and Development • Diploma or higher qualification in adult education. <p>(right column)</p> <p>One or more of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diploma of Vocational Education and Training • Diploma of Training Design and Development • Adult education qualification higher than diploma <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and be working under supervision of a person that holds one of the qualifications listed directly above (persons cannot determine assessment outcomes in this case).

