



*National Guideline
for Risk Management*



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Section 1 – Introduction to AQTF 2007

The national training system is a key driver of Australia's economic and social growth. For more than a decade, Australian and state and territory governments have worked with industry to develop a national training system that now provides the basis for high-quality, industry developed and nationally recognised training to about one in nine working-age Australians. Through a national network of over 4,200 public and private registered training providers, over 1.5 million Australians from all ages, backgrounds and locations participate in vocational education and training each year.

The Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) is the national set of standards which assures nationally consistent, high-quality training and assessment services for the clients of Australia's vocational education and training system. AQTF 2007 is the current version of the framework, effective from 1 July 2007.

The National Quality Council (NQC) collaboratively developed AQTF 2007 and will continue to monitor it. The NQC includes all state and territory Governments, the Australian Government, peak industry bodies, peak training organisations and a representative on equity issues. The Ministerial Council of Vocational and Technical Education, which includes all Ministers for Training in Australia, has approved these quality arrangements.

The three components of AQTF 2007

The three components of AQTF 2007 are:

Essential Standards for Registration – Training organisations must meet these standards in order to deliver and assess nationally recognised training and issue nationally recognised qualifications. They include three standards, a requirement for registered training organisations to gather information on their performance against three quality indicators, and nine conditions of registration.

Standards for State and Territory Registering Bodies – State and territory registering bodies are responsible for registering training organisations and for quality assuring the training and assessment services they provide, in accordance with the AQTF 2007 and relevant legislation within each jurisdiction. The standards and supporting guidelines provide a national operating framework.

Excellence Criteria – These are criteria that registered training organisations may use voluntarily to continue improving the quality of their training and assessment and to gain recognition of their performance.

The key features of AQTF 2007

Outcomes-focused

AQTF 2007 focuses on the quality of services and outcomes being achieved for clients rather than the inputs used to get there. This means that registered training organisations have more flexibility in demonstrating how their individual approaches provide quality training outcomes for their clients.

Nationally consistent

Individuals expect that they can use the skills from nationally endorsed qualifications across Australia and employers expect that the staff they hire have the same skills no matter where they were trained. State and Territory registering bodies have worked together to develop and publish national guidelines to ensure consistent interpretation and implementation of AQTF 2007.

Streamlined

The standards for registered training organisations have been simplified and streamlined to focus on outcomes. AQTF 2007 places the focus of quality assurance squarely on training and assessment, client services and management systems.

Transparent

National guidelines and handbooks to be used by registering bodies in all states and territories are readily accessible through the following link on the national training website: www.training.com.au/aqtf2007.

The commitment by registering bodies to work together on continuous improvement in implementation of AQTF 2007 is one of the measures to build confidence of industry, clients, regulators and registered training organisations in the quality assurance arrangements of the training system.

The beneficiaries of AQTF 2007

Learners have equitable access to quality training and assessment services tailored to their needs and the learning outcomes they seek.

Industry, unions, enterprises and regulators have confidence that registered training organisations are delivering training and assessment services that achieve the skill requirements of nationally recognised qualifications developed by industry.

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) can focus on providing quality training and assessment in the way that best suits their business. No matter what the size or scope of the organisation, they can also seek recognition of excellence.

Registering bodies (the bodies which register training organisations in each state and territory) work as part of a national system of registration and audit that is outcomes-focused and risk-managed to streamline quality assurance processes.

Section 2 – About this guideline

The AQTF 2007 *National Guideline for Risk Management Guideline* describes the nationally consistent risk-management approach used by all state and territory registering bodies in their decisions about monitoring the achievements of training organisations against the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration*.

Consistent with international efforts to drive better regulation in the belief that ‘... removing unnecessary regulation releases energy, promotes innovation and improves productivity’, this guideline supports an approach that will mean when training organisations are delivering high-quality training and assessment services they will receive less monitoring by registering bodies. On the other hand, training organisations assessed as currently presenting a ‘high risk’ to the achievement of quality outcomes for their clients, and to the vocational education and training (VET) system in general, will receive regular monitoring and attention through audit, with the aim of improving their performance outcomes and achieving a lower risk rating. As a result, registering bodies’ resources will be used more effectively to assist in improving the quality of training organisations and thus the VET system.

This guideline outlines the processes used by registering bodies in determining arrangements for the assessment of all registration applications, including applications for initial registration, renewal of registration and extensions to scope of registration. It recognises that each training organisation has a unique and dynamic business environment and mode of operation. Accordingly when assessing the risk of an RTO at a given point in time, registering bodies take into account all the relevant information about a training organisation’s current performance. Its operating context may also have an impact for risk management; for example, some qualifications that lead to licensed outcomes may be treated as high risk and result in higher levels of intervention from the registering body irrespective of the RTO’s performance outcomes.

The state or territory registering body that registered the training organisation is responsible under its legislation for verifying that the RTO continues to operate in compliance with the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration*. Each registering body operates in accordance with the AQTF 2007 *Standards for State and Territory Registering Bodies* and the state or territory legislation under which it is established. The legislation requires that each RTO be treated in accordance with principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. As part of reporting audit outcomes, the registering body will inform each RTO about how it can challenge audit outcomes and appeal a decision made by the registering body.

This guideline is one of several that have been agreed between all state and territory registering bodies and approved by the National Quality Council to support the operation of the national VET system. Registering bodies work together to ensure that these guidelines are interpreted and implemented consistently. These guidelines include:

- AQTF 2007 *National Guideline for Managing Non-Compliance*
- AQTF 2007 *National Guideline for Industry Regulator Engagement*
- AQTF 2007 *National Guideline for Responding to Complaints about Vocational Education and Training Quality*.
- AQTF 2007 *National Guideline for Conducting Audits of the Interstate Operations of an RTO*.

Forms used to ensure national consistency include:

- Application for Initial Registration or Renewal of Registration
- Request by RTO to Cancel Registration
- Application to Amend Scope of Registration.

Each guideline and form is publicly available from www.training.com.au/aqtf2007.

Section 3 – Principles

The following principles underpin the risk-management processes applied by state and territory registering bodies.

Principle 1 – Transparency

Risk-management processes are documented and published. Each RTO will know its risk rating.

Principle 2 – Confidentiality

An RTO's risk rating will remain confidential to the registering body and the RTO (although the registering body is authorised under legislation to provide information about the RTO to another state or territory's registering body). Data supplied by RTOs may be published in aggregate form but will not be used to identify an individual RTO without its permission.

Principle 3 – Integrity

Data used for risk assessment is based on information provided by the RTO or training organisation and data gathered by the registering body in performing its regulatory role. The data used is valid, sufficient, current and verifiable.

Principle 4 – Consistency

Registering bodies work together to facilitate consistent interpretation and implementation of this guideline within and across jurisdictions.

Principle 5 – Proportionality

Regulatory responses are in proportion to the risk assessment of the RTO or training organisation's operations.

Principle 6 – Accountability

The registering body will tell each RTO how it can challenge its risk rating or audit outcomes and appeal a decision made by the registering body.

Section 4 – Protocols

State and territory registering bodies observe the following protocols in the management of risks to the quality of training and assessment services and outcomes.

Risk-assessment process

The registering body assesses each RTO and all registration applications, including extensions to scope of registration, using the nationally agreed risk-assessment process. The risk assessment assists the registering body to determine how it will assess an application from an RTO. It also informs the extent to which it will monitor an RTO to ensure its operations meet the requirements of the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration*. A risk assessment is made when an application is received and is reviewed in the light of current evidence of performance. However, the risk information does not limit a registering body in acting on other information it may have about an RTO for the scheduling and conduct of audits.

Conditions of Registration

Conditions of Registration are not audited unless a relevant risk is identified.

Business rules

To determine the scheduling and scope of audits, the registering body applies the business rules listed in Section 7.

Identification of trends and continuous improvement of risk management

In line with the continuous improvement approach which is built into the AQTF 2007 *Standards for State and Territory Registering Bodies*, an annual analysis of risk data and information on the quality of the training and assessment outcomes from RTOs is used to refine and improve risk-assessment and risk-management processes, and to identify risk issues associated with particular RTO types. The National Quality Council receives annual reports on the operation of the AQTF 2007 *National Guideline for Risk Management* and the effective use of risk indicators, and recommends any necessary amendments to the guidelines.

Maintaining currency of data

The registering body collects data from RTOs annually to ensure that information held about each RTO is current. The registering body also updates data when an RTO applies for registration and at the time of audits. An RTO may at any time provide to the registering body additional information relevant to its risk assessment.

Integration of audits

The registering body minimises the impact of audit activity on RTOs by integrating AQTF 2007 audits, wherever possible, with audits required by other authorities.

Section 5 – Risk-assessment process

The risk-assessment process involves assessing each RTO against performance risk indicators and supplementary risk indicators that relate to risks associated with specified operating contexts. The risk assessment process may be triggered by an application for registration or to assist a registering body determine a schedule for monitoring audits.

The risk assessment of an RTO by the registering body is a two-stage process.

Performance risk indicators determine the risk rating for an RTO. Each RTO is categorised as high, medium or low risk, based on current data for each of the performance risk indicators. This risk rating is used by the registering body as the starting point for determining whether additional quality assurance actions by the registering body are required. The risk rating is reviewed on the basis of new information about an RTO's performance and each time an application is received.

Supplementary risk indicators are considered for every RTO regardless of their risk rating. They are considered after the risk rating of an RTO has been determined by the performance risk indicators. The supplementary risk indicators are used in conjunction with the performance risk indicators to determine the need for additional quality assurance activity by the registering body.

Performance risk indicators

Performance risk indicators focus on the performance of each RTO in delivering quality skills outcomes. The consequences for each RTO from its risk category are described in Section 7.1.

The performance risk indicators are:

- history of audit compliance
- data from quality indicators
- history of complaints.

Supplementary risk indicators

Supplementary risk indicators apply to the operating context of each RTO, to specified qualifications and units of competency, and also to particular regulatory contexts. The supplementary risk indicators are divided into two groups. The first group primarily influences the scheduling of audits and the second group primarily influences the scope of audits. This second group is integrated into the audit process and these risk indicators are examined during audit.

The responses by registering bodies to each of these supplementary risk indicators are specified in Section 7.2.

The supplementary risk indicators that primarily influence the scheduling of audit include:

- the scope of the registration application
- delivery of training that leads to a licensed or regulated outcome
- the period since the RTO was last audited
- compliance with and value of government training contracts.

The supplementary risk indicators that primarily influence the scope of audit include:

- the RTO delivering training to overseas students studying in Australia
- the RTO having multiple sites
- the delivery of training offshore
- partnership or subcontracting arrangements
- the RTO accepting fees in advance from students
- the RTO delivering training to students under the age of 18
- the mode of delivery.

Section 6 – Determining an RTO’s risk rating

An RTO’s risk rating is determined by evaluating information and assigning an overall risk rating of high, medium or low in relation to the three performance risk indicators:

- history of audit compliance
- data from quality indicators
- history of complaints.

The criteria for determining a risk rating are described below. In the case of a new application for registration, a risk rating will not be assigned until performance data is available. Supplementary indicators do not contribute to an RTO’s risk rating.

High-risk rating

- **History of audit compliance**

The RTO has a recent history of critical non-compliance with the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration*

or

- **Data from quality indicators**

Data from the quality indicators reflects poor performance when considered in combination with, and in the context of, the RTO’s business

or

- **History of complaints**

The RTO has a history of complaints made to the registering body about its performance. Investigation of these complaints demonstrates that the RTO is not delivering quality training and assessment outcomes or effectively managing its operations and client services. The complaints have been assessed as demonstrating critical non-compliance with the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration*.

Medium-risk rating

- **History of audit compliance**

The RTO has been in significant non-compliance with the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration* but this has been rectified and there is evidence that compliance has subsequently been sustained

or

- **Data from quality indicators**

Data from the quality indicators reflects marginal performance when considered in combination with, and in the context of, the RTO’s business

or

- **History of complaints**

Complaints may have been made about the RTO to the registering body, and the registering body’s investigation of these complaints has identified significant non-compliance with the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration*.

Low-risk rating

- **History of audit compliance**

The RTO has a proven record of operating in general compliance with the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration*. Audits consistently reveal that the RTO has good practices in most areas of its operations and

- **Data from quality indicators**

Data from the quality indicators reflects a high standard of performance, when considered in combination with, and in the context of, the RTO's business and

- **History of complaints**

No complaints have been made about the RTO or, if complaints have been made, they do not indicate significant or critical non-compliance with the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration*.

Section 7 – Applying the business rules for scheduling and scoping audit activity

Three categories of business rule determine scheduling and scope of RTO audits. There are also some additional circumstances that may determine the need for the audit.

7.1 Business rules for actions following consideration of the performance risk indicators

The following business rules apply for the scheduling and scope of audits based on the performance risk indicators for each of the three RTO risk categories.

Scheduling and scope will also be determined in accordance with the business rules for the supplementary risk indicators, the additional business rules for scoping audit activity, and the other circumstances in which audits may be conducted (see sections 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4 for information about these).

In relation to initial applications for registration:

- Risk assessment is primarily based on supplementary risk indicators, given the absence of performance data. No formal assignment of risk rating is made until performance data becomes available
- An audit may be either a desk audit or a site audit, with a focus on preparedness to commence delivery
- A site audit (post-initial audit) to validate the effective deployment of quality systems and achievement of outcomes is conducted within one year of operation.

Circumstances	RTO with high-risk rating	RTO with medium-risk rating	RTO with low-risk rating
Renewal of registration or extension to scope of registration	<p>Site audit:</p> <p>Business rules for supplementary risk indicators and additional business rules for scoping audit activity are also considered in determining scheduling and scope</p> <p>All AQTF 2007 <i>Essential Standards for Registration</i> are audited apart from Conditions of Registration, which are audited by the registering body on the basis of identified risks</p> <p>Reasons for audit of Conditions of Registration are documented.</p>	<p>The registering body may conduct a desk audit only, unless a site audit is required in accordance with the business rules for the supplementary risk indicators</p> <p>Audit focuses on areas of risk identified in the risk-assessment process</p> <p>Conditions of Registration are audited only as determined by the registering body on the basis of identified risks</p> <p>Reasons for audit of Conditions of Registration are documented.</p>	<p>The registering body may approve an application without any supporting evidence being provided by the RTO</p> <p>or</p> <p>The RTO may need to provide specified evidence for a desk audit</p> <p>A site audit may be required in accordance with the business rules for the supplementary risk indicators</p> <p>Scope of audit and extent of evidence required for assessment takes into account the low-risk rating of the RTO</p> <p>Conditions of Registration are audited only as determined by the registering body on the basis of identified risks</p> <p>Reasons for audit of Conditions of Registration are documented.</p>

<i>Circumstances</i>	<i>RTO with high-risk rating</i>	<i>RTO with medium-risk rating</i>	<i>RTO with low-risk rating</i>
Monitoring RTO performance	<p>The registering body may increase regulatory activity, apply specific conditions to the RTO's registration and/or require the RTO to provide reports to the registering body about its operations</p> <p>The registering body may schedule monitoring audits as required in the business rules for the supplementary risk indicators or take other measures (for example, interviewing a sample of learners, graduates, employers or industry regulators) to assess action taken by the RTO to address the causes of its high-risk rating</p> <p>In line with the continuous improvement focus of AQTF 2007, actions taken by the RTO and registering body focus on enabling the RTO to move along a pathway from its high-risk rating to a medium-risk rating.</p>	<p>The RTO must provide an annual report to the registering body on its performance and operations to update the performance and supplementary risk indicators</p> <p>The registering body may schedule monitoring audits as required in the business rules for the supplementary risk indicators</p> <p>In line with the continuous improvement focus of AQTF 2007, actions taken by the RTO and registering body focus on enabling the RTO to move along a pathway from its medium-risk rating to a low-risk rating.</p>	<p>The RTO must provide an annual report to the registering body on its performance and operations to update the performance and supplementary risk indicators</p> <p>The registering body may schedule monitoring audits, such as strategic industry audits, in accordance with the business rules for the supplementary risk indicators, but may lessen regulatory activity and streamline the audit process in line with the RTO's low-risk rating.</p>

7.2 Business rules for supplementary risk indicators

The following business rules apply to the scheduling and scope of audits arising from applications for initial registration, post-initial audit, extension to scope of registration and renewal of registration, and in relation to each of the supplementary risk indicators.

In the case of organisations applying for initial registration, the supplementary risk indicators are a key tool in assessing risk because there is no data available about performance risk indicators. The registering body determines, in accordance with the supplementary risk indicators, whether or not a site audit is required, and which, if any, Conditions of Registration are to be audited. A site audit (post-initial audit) to validate the effective deployment of quality systems and achievement of outcomes is conducted within one year of operation.

Supplementary risk indicators – scheduling of audit

While these indicators primarily influence scheduling of audit they may also influence scope.

Supplementary risk indicators	Scheduling of audit
Scope of registration application	RTO rated high-risk The registering body conducts a site audit if the RTO applies to deliver training outside its current scope.
	RTO rated medium-risk The registering body may conduct a site audit if the RTO applies to deliver qualifications in a new industry area.
	RTO rated low-risk The registering body may approve the application with or without a desk audit. A site audit may need to be conducted in accordance with business rules for other supplementary risk indicators relating to the application.
Training and/or assessment that leads to a licensed or regulatory outcome	Where an agreement has been established with an industry regulator, an application for registration must be audited in accordance with the agreement. Monitoring audits are conducted in accordance with the agreement.
Period since the RTO was last audited	RTO rated high-risk The RTO is audited if no audit has occurred for a period of more than one year.
	RTO rated medium-risk The RTO is audited if no audit has occurred for a period of three years.
	RTO rated low-risk The RTO may be audited if no audit has occurred for a period of three years.
Government training contracts	An RTO found highly non-compliant with a government training contract is scheduled for an audit as soon as it is practicable. The scope and value of government training contracts will be taken into account in determining the schedule of audits.

Supplementary risk indicators – scope of audit

While these indicators primarily influence scope of audit, they may also influence scheduling.

Supplementary risk indicators	Scope of audit
Delivery to overseas students studying in Australia	AQF qualifications offered to overseas students will be included in the audit sample.
RTOs with multiple training sites	<p>RTO rated high-risk</p> <p>At each audit the registering body audits a sample of training sites in addition to the RTO's head office.</p> <p>RTO rated low or medium-risk</p> <p>The registering body audits a sample of training sites at least once during the registration period.</p>
RTOs operating off-shore	The registering body ensures that evidence of compliance from these operations is assessed at least once during the registration period.
Partnerships/subcontracting arrangements	<p>RTO rated high-risk</p> <p>At each audit, the registering body audits a sample of partnership/subcontracting arrangements in addition to the head office audit.</p> <p>RTO rated medium or low-risk</p> <p>The registering body audits a sample of partnership/subcontracting arrangements at least once during the registration period.</p>
Fees taken in advance from students	Compliance with Condition of Registration 5 may be checked at audit, particularly if the RTO accepts the majority of fees from individual students in advance of training delivery.
Delivery of services to students under the age of 18	Compliance with relevant legislative requirements for the protection of children is checked at each audit.
Mode of delivery	An audit takes into account the modes of delivery used and focuses on the risks of a learner not achieving competency to industry standards and the management of those risks.

7.3 Additional business rules for audit scope

<i>Other circumstances</i>	<i>Scope of audit</i>
Number of qualifications examined from each Training Package	<p>Two qualifications from each Training Package must be sampled. Factors taken into consideration when selecting qualifications to be audited are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • units of competency identified as high risk by industry • apprenticeship/traineeship qualifications. <p>Where possible, the qualifications selected should represent both high and low AQF-level qualifications in each Training Package.</p>
Number of assessment instruments sampled for each qualification examined at audit	<p>Assessment instruments must be sampled for at least two units of competency for each qualification, being either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high-risk units identified by industry or • two industry-specific units of competency from nominated qualifications.
Training and assessment strategies	<p>Training and assessment strategies for all qualifications in the registration application may be considered either at a desk audit or at a site audit.</p>

7.4 Other circumstances in which audits may be conducted

<i>Other circumstances</i>	<i>Scope of audit</i>
Strategic industry audits	<p>National strategic industry audit</p> <p>The need for and scope of a national strategic industry audit is defined in consultation with all jurisdictions and representatives of the relevant industry.</p> <p>State strategic industry audit</p> <p>The need for and scope of a state strategic industry audit is defined by the jurisdiction requiring the audit, in consultation with representatives of the industry.</p>
Complaints against an RTO	<p>The registering body decides how the complaint is to be investigated and this may include an audit.</p>

Section 8 – Terminology

AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration	<p>The requirements an organisation must meet in order to become a registered training organisation (RTO) and maintain its registration. The AQTF 2007 <i>Essential Standards for Registration</i> comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) standards and underpinning elements(b) conditions of registration(c) quality indicators.
Audit	<p>A planned, systematic and documented process used to assess an RTO or training organisation's compliance with the AQTF 2007 <i>Essential Standards for Registration</i>. State and territory registering bodies conduct audits as a condition of registration. RTOs can conduct internal audits to assess their compliance with the standards and their own policies and procedures as part of their continuous improvement process.</p>
Compliance	<p>The requirements of the AQTF 2007 <i>Essential Standards for Registration</i> have been met, based on the evidence reviewed.</p>
Non-compliance	<p>The requirements of the AQTF 2007 <i>Essential Standards for Registration</i> have not been met, based on the evidence reviewed. There are three categories of non-compliance, each explained below.</p>
<i>Minor non-compliance</i>	<p>The requirements of the AQTF 2007 <i>Essential Standards for Registration</i> have not been met based on the evidence reviewed, but there is no or minor adverse impact on learners and or other consumers of goods and services produced in the training environment or the current (or future) workplace.</p>
<i>Significant non-compliance</i>	<p>The requirements of the AQTF 2007 <i>Essential Standards for Registration</i> have not been met based on the evidence reviewed, and there are indications of a significant adverse impact on learners and/or other consumers of goods and services produced in the training environment or the current (or future) workplace.</p>
<i>Critical non-compliance</i>	<p>The requirements of the AQTF 2007 <i>Essential Standards for Registration</i> have not been met based on the evidence received and a critical adverse impact on learners and/or consumers of goods and services produced in the training environment or the current (or future) workplace is occurring or has occurred.</p>
Continuous improvement	<p>A planned and ongoing process that enables an RTO to systematically review and improve its policies, procedures, products and services in order to generate better outcomes for clients and to meet changing needs. It allows an RTO to constantly review its performance against the AQTF 2007 <i>Essential Standards for Registration</i> and to plan ongoing improvements to its performance. Continuous improvement involves collecting, analysing and acting on relevant information collected from clients and other interested parties, including the RTO's staff.</p>
Desk audit	<p>An audit where an RTO or training organisation submits documents or information to the registering body to be assessed as evidence for compliance with the AQTF 2007 <i>Essential Standards for Registration</i>.</p>
Excellence criteria	<p>A set of criteria in the AQTF 2007 against which an RTO may self-evaluate for quality improvement, or be formally evaluated on a voluntary basis in order to seek recognition as either 'quality committed' or 'outstanding'.</p>
Multi-site delivery	<p>An arrangement in which an RTO manages delivery and assessment from a site or sites other than its head office.</p>

National Quality Council (NQC)

A committee of the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE). The NQC has a role in:

- providing the Ministerial Council with advice on the operation of the AQTF 2007 and any changes to it that are considered necessary
- providing the state and territories' registering and course-accrediting bodies with information and advice on implementation of the AQTF 2007
- providing the Council with information and advice on the operation of the AQTF 2007 in each state and territory, including advice on their registration, audit and related processes, and on the Commonwealth processes that support the AQTF 2007.

Outcomes

The consequences of actions implemented by an RTO to achieve high-quality training, assessment and client services.

Quality indicators

Quality indicators are a set of three indicators which are part of the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration*. When considered in the context of the RTO's business, data against the quality indicators provides a measure of the RTO's performance and the quality of outcomes it is achieving for clients.

Three quality indicators have been identified as being useful for the purpose of continuous improvement within RTOs and to inform the risk profile of RTOs as established by registering bodies. The quality indicators are:

- **Employer satisfaction**
(including satisfaction with competency development and the quality of training and assessment) This indicator focuses on employers' evaluations of learners' competency development, its relevance to work and further training, and the overall quality of training and assessment
- **Learner satisfaction** (learner engagement and competency development)
This indicator focuses on the extent to which learners are engaging in the types of activity that are likely to promote high-quality skills, as well as on learners' perceptions of the quality of their competency development and the support they receive from RTO.
- **Competency completion rate**
This will be calculated for qualifications and units of competency or modules delivered, based on data provided by RTOs about:
 - the number of enrolments in the previous calendar year
and
 - the number of qualifications completed and/or units of competency or modules awarded in the previous calendar year.

Registration and Accreditation Technical Committee

An AQTF 2007 committee approved by the NQC to support the operation of a national regulatory system administered through the state and territories' registering and course-accrediting bodies. The committee focuses on the implementation of national standards, guidelines and resources. It is not a policy-determining body and it refers policy issues and proposed solutions to the NQC's Quality Standing Committee.

Risk indicators

Performance risk indicators

Indicators that apply to all RTOs and relate to performance outcomes from audit compliance, data from quality indicators and complaints history. The risk category for each RTO (high, medium or low) is derived from these indicators and determines the level of regulatory action required to help each RTO to establish compliance with the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration*.

Supplementary risk indicators

Indicators that relate to specific risks arising from aspects of each RTO's operations. These indicators further determine the scheduling and scope of regulatory arrangements.

Site audit

An audit conducted by a registering body at the premises of an RTO or training organisation and/or at locations where it delivers training and assessment.

AQTF 2007 National Publications

Registered Training Organisations will use these documents

AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration

The Essential Standards apply to all RTOs from 1 July 2007. This publication lists AQTF 2007 requirements for RTOs including:

- three standards relating to training and assessment, client services and management systems
- a set of RTO quality indicators
- Conditions of Registration.

AQTF 2007 Users' Guide to the Essential Standards for Registration

This guide assists RTOs, registering bodies and auditors to interpret and apply the standards.

State and Territory Registering Bodies will use these documents

AQTF 2007 Standards for State and Territory Registering Bodies

This document lists the standards that apply to the Registering Bodies in each state and territory. It includes:

- three standards
- quality indicators for assessing registering body performance
- a set of operational protocols to ensure national recognition of registration decisions.

AQTF 2007 National Guideline for Risk Management

This guideline describes the nationally consistent risk management approach to be used by all state and territory registering bodies in decisions about scheduling and scope of audits.

AQTF 2007 National Guideline for Audit Moderation

This guideline provides a framework for capacity building and for the development and continuous improvement of auditor performance. It describes the moderation processes used to ensure that auditors have a consistent approach to audit.

AQTF 2007 National Guideline for Managing Non-Compliance

This guideline describes the nationally consistent approach each registering body uses to respond to the outcomes of audit that highlight any non-compliance with the *AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration*.

AQTF 2007 National Guideline for Industry Regulator Engagement

This guideline describes how industry regulators can be engaged in the quality assurance arrangements. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of the registering bodies and regulators and includes a set of principles, protocols and options for industry engagement.

AQTF 2007 National Guideline for Responding to Complaints about Vocational Education and Training Quality

This guideline describes the nationally agreed complaint handling process available to resolve concerns about Vocational Education and Training Quality. It sets out principles, protocols and responses for investigating and resolving complaints and learning from the outcomes.

Auditors will use this document

AQTF 2007 Audit Handbook

This handbook is a key tool for auditors in applying the outcomes-focused audit model. The handbook describes the principles that underpin a nationally consistent, risk-managed approach to AQTF 2007 audits.

Auditors will also use the *AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration* and the *AQTF 2007 Users' Guide to the Essential Standards for Registration*.

AQTF 2007 is underpinned by the principle of transparency. All stakeholders in the VET system should have access to documents detailing the different components of AQTF 2007. All national documents are available for download from the national website: www.training.com.au/aqtf2007.

Excellence Criteria are effective from 1 January 2008. The Excellence Criteria focus on encouraging and recognising overall high performance in training providers. Application for assessment against the Excellence Criteria is voluntary. The full suite of Excellence Criteria documents is also available from www.training.com.au/aqtf2007.

