

RTO Update 1 January 2008

AQTF 2007 - coming together as a complete system

On 1 July 2007, Australia's highly regarded national system of vocational education and training welcomed the introduction of the streamlined, outcomes-focussed AQTF 2007. AQTF 2007 has now been in place for six months. The new standards have been well received by those using them in this initial phase – feedback from training organisations, states and territories, auditors and industry has been positive.

The new arrangements will be strengthened by the components yet to be introduced - the quality indicators and the excellence criteria - both of which are due for implementation in 2008.

Quality Indicators

From 2008, registered training organisations (RTOs) will be required to collect and use data on the three quality indicators endorsed by the National Quality Council:

- **Learner engagement.** This indicator will focus on the extent to which learners are engaging in activities likely to promote high-quality skill outcomes and will include learner perceptions of the quality of their competency development and the support they receive or have received from RTOs.
- **Employer satisfaction.** This indicator will focus on employer evaluation of learner competency development and the relevance of learner competency to work and further training, as well as employer evaluation of the overall quality of the training and assessment.
- **Competency completion.** This indicator will show the number of enrolments and qualifications completed and units of competency awarded in the previous calendar year by each RTO.

Early in 2007, the National Quality Council requested work be undertaken to develop further the quality indicators to be used in AQTF 2007. This work is now finalised - extensive consultation and piloting has been completed.

RTOs will be required to use the Learner Questionnaire, the Employer Questionnaire and the Competency Completion Indicator annually.

- The **Learner Questionnaire** will be used by RTOs to gather information across the scope of their registration within each term of registration in line with the sampling guidance provided in the RTO Guide.
- The **Employer Questionnaire** will be used in a manner which reflects the nature of an RTO's business.
- The **Competency Completion Indicator** will be supported by a tool to collect the information.

A package of resources will be made available to all RTOs by 31 May 2008 to support the collection and use of the data. The package will comprise survey instruments, an RTO guide and data collection and collection and reporting software.

Information sessions will be held across Australia in April and May 2008 to introduce the use of the quality indicator resources and to support their implementation from 1 July 2008. It is expected that all RTOs will have mechanisms in place to collect the quality indicators in the 2008 calendar year.

AQTF 2007 Excellence Criteria

The voluntary Excellence Criteria component of AQTF 2007 also comes into use in 2008. This component of AQTF 2007 is designed to recognise high quality training and assessment delivery, and to encourage the continuing development of high performance.

The draft Excellence Criteria were endorsed by the National Quality Council at its meeting in December 2007, and these are now on the www.training.com.au/aqtf2007 website

During the first half of 2008 a live trial of the Excellence Criteria will be conducted. Participants in the live trial will take part in the full evaluation process and receive formal recognition of their level of performance. A small and representative number of organisations will be used to test the design of the administration and evaluation. A draft guide has been published to support organisations' participating in the trial. It is anticipated that the Excellence Criteria will be available for use by all RTOs in the second half of 2008.

AQTF 2007 Accreditation

Two documents to support a nationally consistent approach for all accrediting bodies in their approval of accredited courses are now available at www.training.com.au/aqtf2007.

The AQTF 2007 *Standards for Accredited Courses* apply to the course design for vocational education and training (VET) accredited courses.

The AQTF 2007 *Standards for State and Territory Course Accrediting Bodies* apply to course accrediting bodies that manage course accreditation under state and territory legislation. These standards focus on national consistency, client service and responsive management systems and specify quality indicators and operating protocols for course accreditation.

AQTF 2007 Formative Evaluation

In the spirit of continuous improvement that is a feature of all parts of AQTF 2007, a formative evaluation of the implementation of the new quality arrangements will be undertaken during the first half of 2008.

KPMG has been appointed to undertake this work on behalf of the National Quality Council. The consultants will conduct research between January and July 2008 which will involve contact with RTOs, registering and course accrediting bodies and a range of organisations with an interest in vocational education and training. As this is a formative evaluation there will be progressive reporting to the National Quality Council and the outcomes will inform policy making and decisions made during 2008.

Keep in contact

Information about the AQTF 2007 Quality Indicators and its implementation, the Excellence Criteria and the outcome of the live trial, and progress on the formative evaluation will continue to be provided on www.training.com.au/aqtf2007 and will be distributed through a wide range of VET and industry networks. Any questions please email the [AQTF information Hotline](#).