



*Essential Standards  
for Registration*

## State and Territory Registering Bodies

<i>Australian Capital Territory</i>	ACT Accreditation and Registration Council Department of Education and Training Ph: (02) 6205 7091 <a href="http://www.arc.act.gov.au">www.arc.act.gov.au</a>
<i>New South Wales</i>	NSW Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board NSW Department of Education and Training Ph: (02) 9244 5335 <a href="http://www.vetab.nsw.gov.au">www.vetab.nsw.gov.au</a>
<i>Northern Territory</i>	Employment and Training Division Department of Employment, Education and Training Ph: (08) 8901 1340 <a href="http://www.deet.nt.gov.au">www.deet.nt.gov.au</a>
<i>Queensland</i>	Department of Education, Training and the Arts Ph: 1300 369 935 <a href="http://www.trainandemploy.qld.gov.au">www.trainandemploy.qld.gov.au</a>
<i>South Australia</i>	Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology Ph: (08) 8226 3065 <a href="http://www.training.sa.gov.au">www.training.sa.gov.au</a>
<i>Tasmania</i>	Tasmanian Qualifications Authority Ph: (03) 6233 7708 <a href="http://www.tqa.tas.gov.au">www.tqa.tas.gov.au</a>
<i>Victoria</i>	Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority Ph: (03) 9637 2806 <a href="http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au">www.vrqa.vic.gov.au</a>
<i>Western Australia</i>	Training Accreditation Council Ph: (08) 9441 1910 <a href="http://www.tac.wa.gov.au">www.tac.wa.gov.au</a>

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# 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:

**The 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 <<http://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.

# About the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration*

The AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration* apply to all Registered Training Organisations from 1 July 2007.

This document contains the AQTF 2007 requirements for RTOs, including:

- three standards relating to training and assessment, client services and management systems
- a set of quality indicators, or data to be collected, to help the RTO continuously improve its training and assessment, and to help the registering body to monitor the quality of the RTO's operations
- a set of conditions (Conditions of Registration) to be met while operating as a training provider.

*Standard 1 The Registered Training Organisation provides quality training and assessment across all of its operations.*

**Elements**

- 1.1 The RTO collects, analyses and acts on relevant data for continuous improvement of training and assessment.
- 1.2 Strategies for training and assessment meet the requirements of the relevant Training Package or accredited course and are developed in consultation with industry stakeholders.
- 1.3 Staff, facilities, equipment, and training and assessment materials used by the RTO are consistent with the requirements of the Training Package or accredited course and the RTO's own training and assessment strategies.
- 1.4 Training and assessment are conducted by trainers and assessors who:
  - (a) have the necessary training and assessment competencies as determined by the National Quality Council or its successors
  - (b) have the relevant vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered or assessed
  - (c) continue developing their vocational and training and assessment competencies to support continuous improvements in delivery of the RTO's services.
- 1.5 Assessment, including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):
  - (a) meets the requirements of the relevant Training Package or accredited course
  - (b) is conducted in accordance with the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence
  - (c) meets workplace and, where relevant, regulatory requirements.

*Standard 2 The Registered Training Organisation adheres to principles of access and equity and maximises outcomes for its clients.*

**Elements**

- 2.1 The RTO continuously improves client services by collecting, analysing and acting on relevant data.
- 2.2 Before clients enrol or enter into a contract, the RTO informs them about the training, assessment and support services to be provided, and about their rights and obligations.
- 2.3 Employers and other parties who contribute to each learner's training and assessment are engaged in the development, delivery and monitoring of training and assessment.
- 2.4 Learners receive training, assessment and support services that meet their individual needs.
- 2.5 Learners have timely access to current and accurate records of their participation and progress.
- 2.6 Complaints and appeals are addressed efficiently and effectively.

*Standard 3 Management systems are responsive to the needs of clients, staff and stakeholders, and the environment in which the Registered Training Organisation operates.*

**Elements**

- 3.1 The RTO uses a systematic and continuous improvement approach to the management of operations.
- 3.2 The RTO monitors training and/or assessment services provided on its behalf to ensure that they comply with all aspects of the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration*.
- 3.3 The RTO manages records to ensure their accuracy and integrity.

# Quality Indicators

Three quality indicators have been identified for continuous improvement of RTO performance and for the establishment of risk profiles by state and territory registering bodies.

## The three quality indicators are:

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

# Conditions of Registration

When applying for initial registration or renewal of registration, each training organisation signs a declaration that binds it to operate in accordance with the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration*. These standards include the Conditions of Registration, which are detailed below.

## 1 Governance

The RTO's chief executive must ensure that the RTO complies with the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration* and any national guidelines approved by the National Quality Council. This applies to all of the operations within the RTO's scope of registration, as listed on the National Training Information Service.

## 2 Interactions with the registering body

The RTO's chief executive must ensure that the RTO cooperates with its registering body:

- in the conduct of audits and monitoring of its operations
- by providing accurate and timely data relevant to measures of its performance
- by providing information about significant changes to its operations
- in the retention, archiving, retrieval and transfer of records consistent with its registering body's requirements.

## 3 Compliance with legislation

The RTO must comply with relevant Commonwealth, State or Territory legislation and regulatory requirements that are relevant to its operations and its scope of registration. It must ensure that its staff and clients are fully informed of requirements that affect their duties or participation in vocational education and training.

## 4 Insurance

The RTO must hold insurance for public liability throughout its registration period.

## 5 Financial management

The RTO must protect fees paid in advance and have a fair and reasonable refund policy.

The RTO must have its accounts certified by a qualified accountant to Australian Accounting Standards at least annually, and must provide the certificate of accounts to its registering body on request. If the registering body reasonably deems it necessary, the chief executive must provide a full audit report on the RTO's financial accounts from a qualified and independent accountant.

## *6 Certification and issuing of qualifications and statements of attainment*

The RTO must issue to persons whom it has assessed as competent in accordance with the requirements of the Training Package or accredited course, a qualification or statement of attainment (as appropriate) that:

- meets the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) requirements
- identifies the RTO by its national provider number from the National Training Information Service
- includes the Nationally Recognised Training (NRT) logo in accordance with the current conditions of use.

The RTO must retain learners' records of attainment of units of competence and qualifications for a period of 30 years.

## *7 Recognition of qualifications issued by other RTOs*

The RTO must recognise the AQF qualifications and statements of attainment issued by any other RTO.

## *8 Accuracy and integrity of marketing*

The RTO must ensure that its marketing and advertising of AQF qualifications to prospective clients is ethical, accurate and consistent with its scope of registration. The NRT logo must be employed only in accordance with its conditions of use.

## *9 Transition to Training Packages/expiry of accredited courses*

The RTO must manage the transition from superseded Training Packages within 12 months of their publication on the National Training Information Service. The RTO must also manage the transition from superseded accredited courses so that it delivers only currently endorsed Training Packages or currently accredited courses.

# AQTF 2007 National Publications

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## 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 <<http://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 are also available from <<http://www.training.com.au/AQTF2007>>.

