Australian Quality Training Framework

What is the Australian Quality Training Framework?

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. It came into effect on 1 July 2007.

When was the Australian Quality Training Framework introduced?

The Australian Quality Training Framework evolved from the original Australian Recognition Framework. In 2001 it was renamed to reflect the increased emphasis on quality in the national vocational education and training systems.

AQTF 2007

The National Quality Council collaboratively developed AQTF 2007 and continues to monitor it. The Ministerial Council of Vocational and Technical Education approved these quality arrangements.

The three components of AQTF 2007 are:

- **AQTF 2007 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.

- **AQTF 2007 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.

- **AQTF 2007 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.

What are the AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration?

The AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration apply to all existing registered training organisations and all organisations seeking to become registered training organisations. The AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration are divided into three parts:

- Conditions of registration
- Standards
- Quality indicators

What are the conditions of registration?

The conditions of registration are the compulsory requirements of operating a training organisation and are based on previous Australian Quality Training Framework standards.

There are nine conditions which must be met covering areas such as governance, insurance, compliance with legislation, financial management, marketing, the issuing of qualifications and national recognition.

Under AQTF 2007 the registered training organisation chief executive officer is required to sign a contract agreeing to adhere to the conditions of registration.

What are the standards?

There are three standards:

**Standard 1** – the registered training organisation provides quality training and assessment across all of its operations.

**Standard 2** – the registered training organisation adheres to principles of access and equity and maximises outcomes for its clients.

**Standard 3** – management systems are responsive to the needs of clients, staff and stakeholders, and to the environment in which the registered training organisation operates.

Each standard contains a number of elements that further describe the expectations of that standard, with the focus being on outcomes. Rather than prescribing in detail how a registered training organisation should operate, the elements specify the outcomes expected from registered training
organisations. This gives registered training organisations greater flexibility to demonstrate how their approach complies with the standards, best meets the needs of their clients and suits the scope and scales of their operations.

What are the quality indicators?

The AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration include quality indicators designed to provide information about registered training organisation performance. Three quality indicators have been identified to be used by registered training organisations for continuous improvement and by state and territory registering bodies to establish and monitor risk. The three indicators are:

- **Learner Engagement** – this indicator focuses 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 registered training organisations.

- **Employer satisfaction** – this indicator focuses 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 shows the number of enrolments and qualifications completed and units of competency awarded in the previous calendar year by each registered training organisation.

What are the Excellence Criteria?

The AQTF 2007 Excellence Criteria build on the AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration and will provide a new opportunity for high-performing registered training organisation to seek recognition, on a voluntary basis, for the quality of their operation and outcomes. The Excellence Criteria are based on internationally recognised business quality criteria customised to meet the needs of the Australian vocational education and training sector.

This process will be administered separately to the AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration and will focus on the registered training organisation's commitment to continuous improvement within its operations.

What are the AQTF 2007 Standards for State and Territory Registering Bodies?
The standards describe the way that registering bodies carry out registration of training providers and audits. The revised standards shift the emphasis from inputs and processes to a regulatory and audit approach based on quality skills outcomes.

The National Audit and registration Agency has been established to provide audit and registration services for registered training organisations that operate in more than one Australian state or territory. These organisations are known as multi-jurisdictional registered training organisations.

The new arrangements strengthen national consistency. They also provide opportunities for industry regulatory bodies that use certification from the vocational education and training sector for occupational and industry licensing to engage in the registration and audit process.

**How does a training organisation become registered?**

To become registered, a training organisation must apply to the registering body in the state or territory where the organisation has its head office, and pay the relevant fees. Registration is for up to five years (unless suspended or cancelled).

**What is the scope of registration?**

A registered training organisation’s scope of registration specifies the Australian Qualifications Framework qualifications and/or units of competency for which the training organisation is registered to deliver, assess and issue qualifications. These details are recorded on the National Training Information Service.

**How does auditing work under AQTF 2007?**

AQTF 2007 replaces the audit emphasis on inputs and processes with a stronger focus on quality skills outcomes.

Under AQTF 2007 auditing will be carried out in accordance with a risk management model that considers many facets of a registered training organisation’s operation. Registering bodies will make decisions about the targeting, frequency, scope and depth of audits using a nationally agreed approach to risk management that focuses on a range of agreed risk indicators, including:

- Performance against quality indicators
- Delivery of qualifications in areas subject to licences
Multi-site delivery including across jurisdictions
Off-shore delivery
Complaints

Registered training organisations with high quality outcomes can expect less regulatory intervention from registering bodies.

More Information

Key Resources

- Australian Qualifications Framework
- AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration
- National Training Information Service
- AQTF 2007 Standards for State and Territory Registering Bodies
- www.training.com.au

Key Contacts

- Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations
- National Audit and Registration Agency
- State and territory registration bodies
- State and territory training authorities

Related articles

Australian Qualifications Framework, Training packages, the national vocational education and training

This information is current at the date of publication (13 November 2008) and has been provided by the Training Packages @ Work team (Australian Government project).

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