



MINUTES – ASQA Meeting with Adult Learning Australia

11	October	2016	Meeting No. 16-3
		Teleconference	BRIS 10 – 11.30 am AEDT 11 am – 12.30 pm

	Agenda Item
1	<p>a) <u>Welcome and Introductions</u></p> <p>Chief Commissioner Robinson welcomed the following ALA representatives to the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catherine Devlin – Chief Executive officer, Adult Learning Australia • Michelle Simpson - Tamworth Community Centre <p><u>Apology</u>: Frank Krasovec, Training & Administration Manager, Jesuit Social Services</p> <p><u>Secretariat</u>: Julie Northridge - Executive Officer to the Chief Commissioner.</p> <p>b) Minutes of meeting – 7 June 2016 - accepted</p>
2	<p>ASQA update</p> <p>(a) ASQA Regulatory Report</p> <p>Commissioner Robinson provided general comments on the data in the report, including the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since July 2011 there has been a net reduction of around 600 RTOs in the total number of RTOs registered, reflecting more outgoing than new registrations. • ASQA has taken decisions to not register around 10% of registration applicants. • ASQA is exercising more rigour in its regulation of existing RTOs and market entry is harder for initial applicants. • ASQA regulates around 95% of RTOs in Australia. • VRQA regulates RTOs that deliver only in Victoria and WA – some of which are ALA members. • ASQA has conducted more than 6000 audits, as well as multiple investigations. • ASQA is targeting poor providers in a more efficient way and this is showing up in the number of refusals. • Over past 12 months ASQA’s rate of application refusals has risen to around 16%. There have been increased numbers of initial applications due to VFH. • During the last 12 months, ASQA has focussed on the nefarious behaviours of VFH RTOs - as well as investigating issues raised in complaints about RTOs. • ASQA receives around 2000 complaints about RTOs each year – more than half of which are from students. <p>(b) Sharing Information with the jurisdictions</p> <p>Commissioner Robinson provided an update on ASQA’s processes for sharing information with the jurisdictions and other agencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formalised process has been established with each of the States. Regular meetings of one ASQA Commissioner with the Senior Official of each jurisdiction. Operational meetings between ASQA Regulatory Operations Managers and officers of the jurisdictions are held throughout the year. • ASQA has information sharing arrangements with State and Federal Police, the ACCC and other Commonwealth and State regulators. • ASQA has arrangements with government VET funding bodies that facilitate information sharing.

These arrangements provide ASQA and state funding bodies the opportunity to take action at an early stage if there are concerns about particular providers.

(c) Implementation of new audit model

Pam Christie provided the following update on the implementation of the new audit model.

A change of audit focus

The new model focuses on the student experience and the quality of student outcomes whereas the previous model was largely focussed on RTO systems. It is consistent with ASQA's risk based approach to regulation.

While continuing to audit against the RTO standards, the audit process is aligned to the cycle of the student experience and has a focus on:

- RTO practices and behaviours;
- the quality of training and assessment;
- the student experience;
- student outcomes; and
- RTO marketing and recruitment.

Development of the new model

The development of the model included an analysis of the current model, including feedback from auditors.

The model was also informed by an analysis of overseas practices that identified the importance of consumer input into the audit process. The new model includes a student survey, administered prior to audit, that will inform the approach to be taken at audit.

Student Surveys

ASQA is aiming to achieve simplicity in the design and administration of a student survey instrument that will maximise student completions.

The survey instrument has been tested on different groups of students and their feedback led to some modification of the terminology/language in the survey.

Student surveys will be conducted prior to site audits and will rely on the full co-operation of the RTOs.

A number of approaches to administering the survey are being tested.

ASQA will notify the RTO prior to audit, requesting a sample of around 1000 students or less (depending on size of RTO). In this model ASQA would administer the survey.

ASQA will also trial a survey model that is administered by the RTO, in which students will complete the survey electronically, with the results being invisible to the RTO.

Staged implementation

A sample of 20 audits that comprise a range of audit types are being conducted across four states and scheduled to be completed before the end of 2016. This process will allow the new audit tools will be evaluated, refined and improved, prior to the full implementation of the model in 2017.

The initial response from auditors and the RTOs audited to date has been very positive.

When the model is rolled out more fully it will be applied to both VET and CRICOS audits.

ASQA Fact Sheet

A Fact Sheet on the new audit model is available on www.asqa.gov.au

Action: Pam Christie is to check to see if the survey administration removes the names of students who have completed their surveys, in order to avoid those students being sent multiple follow up emails.

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ADULT LEARNING AUSTRALIA - items for discussion

The following questions were submitted as agenda items:

Question 1: ASQA has indicated that its relationship with DET in Victoria is being strengthened. What are the changed protocols and new ways of sharing information etc. (Catherine Devlin)

	<p><u>Answer:</u> Following discussions between ASQA, the Minister and Victorian senior officials, communication and information sharing protocols were developed and later signed by Minister Herbert and Minister Ryan (Commonwealth). These arrangements have resulted in regular dialogue between ASQA and Victorian officials. The process has been rolled out across the other jurisdictions.</p> <p><u>Question 2:</u> <i>What is the timeframe for assessment of additions to scope of the two TAE Diplomas and upgrades to scope from TAE40110 to TAE40116? (Michelle Simpson)</i></p> <p><u>Answer:</u> ASQA has been concerned that providers offering good quality TAE courses have been facing unfair competition from poor quality providers, as well as about providers that only offer TAE to their own staff.</p> <p>The TAE Training Package has a greater emphasis on assessment. A more rigorous process now applies to TAE qualifications than would normally apply to a replacement Training Package qualification. Applications to add TAE qualifications to scope now require a greater depth of evidence.</p> <p>Since these evidence requirements were introduced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70 providers have withdrawn TAE40110 from scope • 11 providers have withdrawn TAE50111 from scope • 19 providers have withdrawn TAE50211 from scope <p>To date 28 applications to ASQA to add TAE qualifications to scope have been confirmed as complete and therefore been referred for evidence review.</p> <p><u>Review of short course durations</u> The Chief Commissioner outlined ASQA's concerns about the proliferation of short course durations that result in students not gaining the skills and knowledge specified in the qualifications and needed by industry. This also results in pressure on RTOs that seek to provide quality training and assessment.</p> <p>As a result of these concerns ASQA's is conducting a national review of short course durations.</p>
4	<p>Other Business</p> <p>Michelle Simpson thanked the Chief Commissioner for meeting with the ALA providers in recent years and indicated that he had provided the colleges with an "amazing opportunity that is much appreciated".</p> <p>Catherine Devlin congratulated Commissioner Robinson for five years of his leadership and expressed the appreciation of the community education sector 'for having been listened to' during that period.</p> <p>In response, Commissioner Robinson thanked the sector for their participation in the meetings and indicated that dialogue with the participants had assisted ASQA to communicate with the sector more effectively and to understand their issues.</p>
	Meeting closed at 11.05 am (Brisbane time)

Note: 2017 meeting dates yet to be determined.