



Building Training Excellence

*Quality Indicators
Code of Practice*



© Commonwealth of Australia July 2008

This work is copyright. It may be reproduced in whole or in part for study or training purposes, subject to the inclusion of an acknowledgement of the source and provided that it is not used for commercial use or sale. All rights are reserved. Reproduction for purposes other than those indicated above requires prior written permission from the Commonwealth. Requests and enquiries concerning reproduction and copyright should be addressed to the Branch Manager, Technology and Information Services Branch, Industry Skills Development Group, Department of Education, Science and Training, GPO Box 9880, Canberra City, ACT, 2601.

Contents

Introduction	2
Overview	2
Policy background	2
Ethical considerations	2
Conditions of use	3
General considerations	3
Requirement to provide Quality Indicator data to Registering Bodies	3

Introduction

Overview

The Australian Quality Training Framework 2007 (AQTF 2007) Quality Indicators form part of the AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs).

Under AQTF 2007, RTOs are required to collect and use data on these three Quality Indicators endorsed by the National Quality Council (NQC):

- Learner Engagement – This indicator focuses on the extent to which learners are engaging in activities likely to promote high-quality skill outcomes and includes learner perceptions of the quality of their competency development and the support they receive or have received from RTOs.
- Employer Satisfaction – This indicator focuses on employer evaluation of learner competency development and the relevance of learner competencies for 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 RTO.

The NQC has endorsed the use of Quality Indicator data for two purposes:

- continuous improvement by RTOs
- risk assessments of RTOs by Registering Bodies.

The NQC has developed this Code of Practice to provide guidelines for reporting and interpreting AQTF 2007 Quality Indicator data in fair and appropriate ways.

For further information about AQTF 2007 please visit www.training.com.au.

Policy background

The AQTF 2007 Quality Indicators have been developed to underpin a new evidence-based and outcomes-focused approach to quality assurance in Australian vocational education and training.

Standard learner and employer survey instruments and methodologies have been designed that RTOs will need to use to gather data related to the AQTF 2007 Learner Engagement and Employer Satisfaction Quality Indicators. The Competency Completion Online System has been developed to provide data for the Competency Completion Quality Indicator.

RTOs can use these data for quality assurance and continuous improvement. Data can also assist Registering Bodies assess risk associated with an RTO's operations and hence the scope of audit.

Ethical considerations

Surveys should be conducted within the ethical guidelines laid out in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (see: National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Research Council, Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee [NHMRC, ARC, AVCC] (2007). National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. Canberra: Australian Government.).

Conditions of use

General considerations

AQTF 2007 Quality Indicator data should be interpreted with caution and treated as indicative rather than definitive. Quality Indicator data should not be used in false, deceptive or misleading ways, either because of what is stated or suggested, or because of what is omitted. All interpretations should be shaped by the processes used to collect, analyse and report the data.

RTOs can make whatever declarations they feel are appropriate about their Quality Indicator data, provided disclosure accords with this Code of Practice. The use of Quality Indicator data in public statements should only be for the purpose of assisting the public to develop informed judgements. Public comment must be supported by appropriate interpretation of the data and necessary qualifications and caveats.

The use of, or referral to, an RTO's data beyond that which is in the public domain requires the prior consent of the RTO, and prior consultation with the RTO to ensure accuracy of interpretation and reporting. Users of AQTF 2007 Quality Indicator data must not use the information to knowingly undermine the reputation or standing of an RTO.

Comparisons between RTO results are best made when RTOs are similar in terms of their organisational and educational characteristics. Quality Indicator data are not suitable for making simplistic comparisons between RTOs, and care should still be exercised even if comparisons are to be made across apparently comparable RTOs.

The most effective comparisons can be made within RTOs by looking at changes over time within the same qualification or organisational unit. The greatest value of the AQTF 2007 Quality Indicator data is likely to be derived when the data are considered over a period of years.

Requirement to provide Quality Indicator data to Registering Bodies

Under their Conditions of Registration, RTOs agree to provide their Registering Body with accurate and timely data relevant to measures of their performance.

Regulatory activities are guided by a nationally consistent risk-management approach. They are based on RTOs' performance against the nationally agreed Quality Indicators and assessment of the risk level attributed to their operations.

To make risk assessments about RTOs, each Registering Body therefore requires the RTOs that are registered with them to provide Quality Indicator data. In addition to the standard return relating to Quality Indicators, Registering Bodies may ask for additional information such as confirmation of management and contact arrangements. This is consistent with current arrangements about information sharing between RTOs and their Registering Bodies.

All RTOs will provide an annual return to their registering body against the three Quality Indicators:

This return will be due on 30 June each year and will relate to the previous calendar year's activities.

The return will comprise reports against the three Quality Indicators which each RTO will generate using the Survey Management, Analysis and Reporting Tool (SMART) and the Competency Completion Online System.

The report on Competency Completion data will be disaggregated to jurisdiction level (i.e. state by state) and by unit/qualification.

In line with the AQTF 2007 requirement for Registering Bodies to continuously improve national consistency in registration functions, Registering Bodies will work together to inform the use of Quality Indicator data for risk assessment under the AQTF 2007 Risk Management Guidelines.

Registering Bodies will not release RTO Quality Indicator data to other parties, including government purchasers. This does not preclude training purchasers seeking Quality Indicator data directly from RTOs with whom the purchaser may plan to do business. The only exception to this is that Registering Bodies may share relevant Quality Indicator data with other Registering Bodies for the purposes of scheduling an audit in another jurisdiction.

