

Training Recognition Branch, DETE

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Assuring Standards In Vocational Education And Training

From 1 January 1998, revised national arrangements for vocational education and training came into effect in South Australia. The changes (defined under the National Training Framework or NTF) aim at further enhancing national mutual recognition and quality assurance in the delivery of vocational education and training. The changes have a number of key elements:

1. The **Australian Recognition Framework (ARF)** which promotes national recognition and quality assurance of the delivery and outcomes of vocational education and training.

" the key focus of the ARF is to provide a more streamlined and responsive system of national recognition underpinned by strengthened quality assurance"

ANTA ARF Arrangements~January 1998

2. **National Training Packages** which replace stand-alone competency standards and include industry-defined:
 - national competency standards
 - national industry assessment guidelines
 - national qualifications frameworks.
3. Delivery of **New Apprenticeships** which will replace *traineeships* and *apprenticeships*, and comprise:
 - a negotiated training program leading to a nationally recognised qualification
 - a registered training agreement (contract of training) between an employer and trainee
 - employer and employee choice of the Registered Training Organisations.

The Australian Recognition Framework (ARF)

The *Australian Recognition Framework* (ARF) applies to all providers of vocational education and training. It defines the arrangements for the delivery of vocational education and training and the issuing of qualifications against the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). The ARF has three components:

- National Principles for Mutual Recognition and registration of training organisations
- National Core and Product/Service Standards for registration of training organisations
- National Operating Protocols for external review, fees, and marketing.

The South Australian policies and the requirements for recognition as an RTO are based on these three components.

Registered Training Organisations (Rtos)

Benefits of Becoming a Registered Training Organisation

There are many benefits for Registered Training Organisations. These include:

- **National Recognition** to provide training and/or assessment and issue national qualifications Once a training organisation is registered in South Australia, it can be approved to operate in another state/territory.

There may be specific requirements in other states/territories which will need to be addressed, such as OH&S legislation and licensing arrangements.

- **Marketing and Promotion Opportunities**

RTOs may:

- deliver their services nationally
- issue nationally recognised qualifications
- use the national training logo in advertising and on certification.

The details of RTOs are accessible to a wide range of potential clients through the internet. This comes about through listing each RTO on the National Training Information Service (NTIS) which contains records of all RTOs, courses, competency standards and training packages and their qualifications (see <http://www.anta.gov.au/ntis>).

- **Access to Public Funding**

Only RTOs can apply to access public training funds for delivery of their services in South Australia.

The Role of RTOs

The role of RTOs is to provide high quality products and services in accordance with national agreements. RTOs are the only bodies recognised to provide training, conduct assessment and issue national qualifications. RTOs may, at a later stage, meet additional quality standards to be recognised as a Quality Endorsed Training Organisation (QETO).

Products and Services of RTOs

The emphasis has shifted from delivery of accredited courses, to the flexible delivery of training which meets industry needs. RTOs seek recognition for:

- **training delivery** (incorporates training, assessment and issuance of national qualifications)

or

- **skills recognition** (incorporates assessment and issuance of national qualifications)

The products and services must be delivered within a defined "Scope of Registration".

Scope of Registration for RTOs

Training organisations will be assessed for registration according to a defined "*Scope of Registration*". The Scope includes:

- **product/service delivery** (ie. training delivery or assessment)
- **area of operation** (training package and/or industry area)
- **level of qualification(s)** issued
- **domestic or international students.**

Responsibilities of RTOs

RTOs, registered with the Accreditation and Registration Council (ARC) will be required to:

- abide by national principles, standards, and protocols
- implement continuous improvement, through self monitoring and evaluation
- participate in external audits and reviews
- meet the requirements of endorsed industry training packages(s) and/or accredited courses
- abide by a defined Code of Practice
- collect and store (*for a minimum of seven years*), student information, and make that information available as required.

Quality Endorsed Training Organisation (QETO)

An RTO may apply to become a QETO. Recognition as a QETO confers a number of benefits on the organisation. These include the delegation of certain regulatory powers such as:

- the ability to expand a Scope of Registration
- the ability to self-accredit courses where Training Packages do not exist.

The requirements to be met by an organisation seeking QETO status are described in *A Guide to Quality Endorsement*, a publication of the Training Recognition Branch in the S.A. Department of Education, Training and Employment.

What is the difference between recognition and registration?

"Recognition" is an umbrella term which incorporates registration, accreditation and quality endorsement. Recognition is the formal approval of training organisations and their products and services in accordance with the requirements of the ARF.

"Registration" is the process of formal approval of training organisations, products and services operating within the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector. It tells potential learners, the community and industry that the organisation has the ability to competently deliver and assess the qualification(s) for which it is registered to issue qualifications.

Do organisations have to be registered to offer training?

No. An organisation can offer education and training without being registered unless that training:

- leads to a degree
- is offered to international students
- is funded by the State or Commonwealth.

If registration isn't compulsory, why register?

There are many advantages to registration~for the organisation and its clients.

For The Organisation:

- if you are registered, learners and industry know that the organisation has met quality assurance standards and that increases credibility
- the organisation is eligible to offer recognised training which expands its potential client group
- the organisation will be listed on the State Register, and on the National Training Information Service (NTIS) for RTOs, and on the Commonwealth Register (CRICOS) if it is providing services to international students
- the organisation will be eligible to tender for government funds in South Australia to deliver training
- the organisation will be able to issue nationally recognised qualifications.

For Clients of Registered Training Organisations:

- their training will lead to a nationally recognised qualification
- the knowledge and skills they gain will be recognised by and be of practical benefit to a particular industry/vocation~and that increases their chances of either gaining employment or extending/furthering their career path

- they will be able to apply for Austudy/Abstudy.

What's the difference between a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) offering training and assessment services and an RTO offering assessment only services?

Training Organisations may seek to be registered to either deliver training, assess and issue nationally recognised qualifications, or only to assess and issue nationally recognised qualifications. An organisation can offer assessment only services for part of its Scope and training and assessment services for the remainder. An RTO (assessment only) is most likely to provide services to employees seeking recognition of skills gained on the job.

Once registered are there any restrictions on the types of courses an organisation can offer?

Organisations new to this area sometimes assume that once they're registered as a Training Organisation they'll be able to offer a range of different courses, adding or deleting offerings when market needs change or they want to do something different.

Currently the registration system doesn't work this way.

When an organisation applies for registration, it needs to clearly state the industry areas in which it wishes to operate and the levels of qualifications it wishes to offer. The particular qualifications within your Scope that you would like listed on the NTIS. The application for registration is then assessed against your proposed Scope.

How long does registration last?

The length of the registration period is different for the two different types of RTO.

For RTOs offering training and assessment services, the period of registration is *up to a maximum of five years*. For RTOs offering assessment only services, the period of registration is *up to a maximum of two years* in South Australia.

Any changes to the Scope of Registration during these time periods will not extend an RTOs overall period of Registration.

Can an organisation offer training interstate without having to go through the registration process again?

Yes. An organisation does not have to go through any additional registration processes to offer training interstate. Under the Principles of Mutual Recognition, an organisation is able to operate in any other state or territory, within the Scope of its registration. The qualifications that the organisations issue will also be recognised by any other RTO in any other state or territory. An organisation must inform the ARC of its intentions to operate in another state or territory. The ARC will then advise the relevant recognition authorities with which you may have contact in your new location. There may also be some specific legislative, licensing, reporting and accountability requirements which are applicable interstate.

Once registered, is there any review of the performance as a Training Organisation?

Yes, Registered Training organisations will be required to take part in external reviews, or "compliance audits" at least once during their period of registration. The audits are designed to assess compliance with the registration criteria. Audits may also take place on renewal of registration, on expansion to Scope of Registration, and on receipt of a documented complaint by the ARC. Audits will involve a site inspection by representatives from the ARC.

What if the RTO's circumstances change?

If there are any significant changes~eg. in location, staffing, financial status etc.~you must advise the ARC in writing.

What is a Training Package?

A Training Package is a package of national vocational qualifications based on industry competency standards. Training Packages allow training to be more closely tailored to the needs of different enterprises.

Training Packages consist of two parts. The endorsed component defines the outcomes to be achieved by training leading to formal qualifications, and is made up of competency standards, qualification levels and assessment guidelines. The non-endorsed component consists of support materials for training, and is made up of learning strategies, professional development materials and assessment materials.

What is Quality Endorsement?

Quality Endorsement (or QE) is the public status conferred by the ARC on an organisation that is already registered and which satisfies the Quality Endorsement criteria as a training organisation.

What is a QETO?

A Quality Endorsed Training Organisation (QETO) has met all of the seven quality criteria, (insert the criteria) has implemented continuous improvements in key areas and has been successfully validated and been granted a quality seal by the ARC.

If a Registered Training Organisation offers quality service~does this mean it can achieve QETO status?

Unfortunately, gaining QETO Status isn't as simple as that. All RTOs should offer a quality service.

To apply for and be granted QETO Status by the ARC, an organisation will undergo an extensive audit by a team of experts. The team looks for detailed evidence that your organisation complies with Quality criteria, and that you continually improve your key processes and services to clients, as described in the South Australian, *A Guide to Quality Endorsement*.

Who issues Qualifications/Statement of Attainments?

An RTO, is responsible for issuing Statements of Attainment or the relevant Qualifications, in line with national protocols.

The certification should include the RTO,s business name, and on the transcript the name of the person receiving the Qualification, the nature of the Qualification, the units of competence achieved, and if relevant, modules completed and the date the Qualification is issued. If the Qualification or recognised training program is nationally recognised then you can use the logo for nationally recognised training. The logo is available on disk and can be obtained from the Training Recognition Branch once an organisation has registered as an RTO.

The Qualifications/Statements of Attainment issued by any RTO will be recognised by all other RTOs throughout Australia.

What role does industry play in registration of Training Organisations?

Industry specialists will be trained as auditors in South Australia to assist in initial and compliance audits.

Information Sources

A valuable source of additional information about the national policies supporting the registration process is the internet.

- ANTA (Australian National Training Authority)—
<http://www.anta.gov.au>
- DETE (Department of Education, Training and Employment) —
<http://www.tafe.sa.edu>
- TRAIN (The Australian Training Information Network) —
<http://www.dvet.tas.gov.au/train>
- EDNA (Education Network Australia)—**<http://www.edna.edu.au>**
- NTIS (National Training Information Service) —
<http://www.anta.gov.au/ntis>
- DEETYA (Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs)—**<http://www.deetya.gov.au>**
- DEETYA re: ESOS—**<http://www.deetya.gov.au>** [?? I can't find this on the site ??]
- DEETYA re: South Australian Traineeship Field Guide —
<http://www.deetya.gov.au/divisions/vet/vetpubs/htm>
- Australian Training Products—**<http://www.atpl.net.au>**