

TOID: 3097



Victorian Registration &
Qualifications Authority

Mr Bryan Blake
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Dear Mr Blake

Re: AQTF 2007 audit outcomes and renewal of registration

I write to advise you of the outcomes of the audit of the compliance of Wodonga Institute of TAFE with the *Australian Quality Training Framework 2007: Essential Standards for Registration* conducted on 30 and 31 March 2010.

In accordance with section 4.3.16, of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, the VRQA granted registration to Wodonga Institute of TAFE on condition that the Institute maintains compliance with the *AQTF 2007 Essential Standards*. Based on the findings from the audit, I intend to renew your registration for a five year period, and I will confirm the new registration period in writing.

I acknowledge receipt of your letter broadly outlining initiatives that have been introduced by the Institute to improve practices while noting that the audit reports outline some issues of non-compliance. Wodonga Institute of TAFE is required to provide the VRQA with an Action Plan by **18 June 2010** outlining any action that the Institute has already taken, or intends to take, to address the findings of the audit reports. Please include the dates by which all outstanding issues will be addressed. In due course, the VRQA will require evidence (such as minutes of meetings) of verification by the Institute's internal auditors of the actions taken in regard to non-compliance. Copies of the final audit reports are in *Attachment 1*.

Thank you (and your staff) for the approach taken to the re-registration process and for the professionalism displayed throughout the audit process.

If you have any queries in relation to these matters, please contact me on (03) 9651 3207 or at timmins.robyn.l@edumail.vic.gov.au

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robyn Timmins', is positioned above the typed name.

Robyn Timmins
Deputy Director, VRQA

3rd May 2010

Attachment 1

Summary and Systemic issues report

Wodonga Institute of TAFE

Introduction

Wodonga Institute of TAFE is located in the twin cities of Albury Wodonga, on the border of Victoria and New South Wales. This area is one of the fastest-growing economies in regional Australia and has a population of 160,000. There are more than 12,800 people from the region and beyond engaged in study at Wodonga through on-campus, off-campus, and workplace learning.

Founded in 1986, Wodonga Institute has become integral to the growth and sustainability of the regional cities it serves, delivering over 2.5 million student contact hours in training every year. This influence is made possible through a range of partnerships and links that include industry organisations; other registered training organisations, universities, local chambers of commerce, and community organisations. The Institute services the City of Wodonga, the shires of Alpine, Indigo, and Towong, and the local government areas of Albury, Greater Hume, and Corowa in New South Wales. However, Wodonga Institute's reach extends much further. It delivers training in every mainland state and territory of Australia.

Audit Methodology

AQTF audit

The audit process included three phases:

- Desk audit
- Site visit
- Feedback from the VRQA.

Desk audit

The scope of the desk audit for the re-registration included a review of:

- The Institute Annual Report 2008
- The Strategic Plan
- Details of the Institute's Quality System, including documents that outlined key procedures
- A brief description of the progress that the Institute had made toward implementing the AQTF Quality Indicators and a 2010 January Report
- A list of current delivery partnership arrangements
- An overview of the performance planning and review process (KATE) to be implemented in 2010.

The re registration submission was reviewed, and informed the audit sample for the second stage of the audit. The scope of the audit was informed by the information provided in Stage 1 and analysis of the level of risk by the VRQA.

Audit visit

The second stage of the audit consisted of a visit to the Institute by two VRQA appointed auditors (Chloe Dyson and Bernadette Delaney). The audit visit was conducted over 2 days (30 and 31 March 2010), with ½ day devoted to each qualification.

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The four qualifications audited were:

- TAA40104 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment
- MEM30305 Certificate III in Engineering – Fabrication Trade
- HLT43407 Certificate IV in Nursing (Enrolled/Division 2 Nursing)
- TLI30207 Certificate III in Transport and Logistics (Road Transport)

These four qualifications covered the following areas of provision:

- Auspiced agreements
- Apprenticeship delivery

Third stage

The third stage consisted of a confidential audit report to the Institute CEO, which included an overview of the initial submission and any systemic issues identified at audit. This report was accompanied by four individual audit reports pertaining to the four qualifications.

Audit Findings

AQTF Review and Systemic issues

Governance and strategic planning

The Wodonga Institute of TAFE Board is responsible for the management and strategic development of the Institute. The primary role of the Board is to provide authoritative, broad-based strategic advice to the Chief Executive Officer of Wodonga TAFE, which will place the Institute in the most advantageous position regarding trends in local, national, and international training. Wodonga TAFE Board Directors are drawn from business, industry, and the communities served by the Institute. The Board has three Committees: Employment Remuneration Committee, Finance and Infrastructure Committee, Audit and Risk Management Committee and Resources. The Wodonga TAFE Board continues to operate under a 'balanced scorecard' reporting system based on the objectives set in the Institute's Strategic Plan 2006–12.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible to the Board for the operational management of the Institute and has delegated authority from the Board to manage the Institute. The divisional heads in finance, enterprise training and development, technical and vocational training and learning, innovation and organisational development assist the CEO.

The Institute's Strategic Plan (2009–2012) has been approved by the Institute Board and establishes the educational and institutional objectives for the institute. It sets out the vision and mission of the Institute. The three strategic areas in this plan are the learner, industry and the community.

Engagement with industry is a key focus area for the Board and staff. There are current partnerships with industry and the planned development of joint facilities use in the creative and community industries. The Institute actively engages with higher education through Charles Sturt University (CSU) and La Trobe University. There is a new foundation program with CSU with dual delivery guaranteed entry to CSU through the completion of a Certificate IV in Further Education and a University Certificate.

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Extension to scope

Materials examined relating to the RTO's extension to scope processes were:

- DF013 Qualification/course/program training delivery and assessment capability plan
- DP023 Training package and curriculum document control procedure
- DF011 Application to vary scope of registration or static curriculum (additions, variations, and mutual recognition)
- An application to add Certificate III in Concreting to the RTO's scope of registration.

The RTO has recently made its extension to scope processes more rigorous by requiring all applications to be accompanied by a completed DF013 Program training delivery and assessment capability plan. However, there is no process to check that all required training and assessment resources are in place before applying to the VRQA for an alteration in scope; instead there is an expectation that all training and assessment resources have been placed on the RTO's N Drive.

Suggestion

It is suggested that the Institute revise its extension to scope processes so that it is confirmed that all resources are in place before approval for a program is sought from the VRQA.

Management systems and continuous improvement

(AQTF Standards 1.1, 2.1, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 3.1, 3.3)

Wodonga Institute of TAFE maintains a quality management system (QMS) that complies with the requirements of 'ISO9001:2008 Quality management system requirements', which is currently certified by SAI Global. There are ISO and financial audits annually as well as a schedule of targeted AQTF 2007 internal audits. The QMS has been documented using three levels of documentation:

- Policies
- Procedures
- Work instructions/forms

The Quality Management System is accessed by staff through STAFFNET.

Relevant documentation includes:

- LP005 Management organisation responsibilities and authorities procedure
- LFO12 Form Teaching Quality Committee – Monthly Report
- RP004 Quality Audit procedure
- LP003 Improvement opportunities and complaints (IOC) procedure and form
- CP007 Management of Student Feedback procedure
- DP024 Qualification/Course/Program and Individual/Learner Planning Procedure
- CF061 Student Unit Evaluation survey
- CF062 Student Course Evaluation survey
- CF063 OH&S Course Evaluation

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- DF004 Validation of resources form.

Feedback can be offered informally by clients at any time or actively solicited through formal feedback or evaluation processes. There are four main activities that review the performance of the organisation against the business objectives and the requirements of the QMS: Executive Management Team meetings; Leadership Network representatives from all departments meetings; Teaching and Learning Committee meetings and the Teaching Quality Committee meetings.

The Teaching Quality Committees in each department are responsible for:

- The preparation of new program documentation and the portfolio review process (refer DP024 Qualification/Course/Program and Individual/Learner Planning Procedure)
- Ensuring that feedback from students and industry is collected and acted upon (refer CP007 Management of Student Feedback Procedure)
- Ensuring that course materials and required QMS documents are maintained (refer DP028 Teaching Material Control Procedure)
- Ensuring that assessment instruments and assessment tools are validated and moderated (refer DP001 Validation Procedure)
- Ensuring that teaching delivery is audited and staff are assisted to continuously improve quality (refer RP004 Quality Audit Procedure)
- Ensuring that results are verified, recorded and reported (refer DP026 Resulting (Achievements) Procedure)
- Ensuring that the Vocational Competency Matrix is kept up to date (refer DP014 Vocational Competence Register Procedure)
- Ensuring that contracts, partnerships and auspice arrangements are monitored (refer DP022 Partnership/Auspicing Procedure).

These committees will then complete an LF012 Teaching Quality Committee – Monthly Report to Department Manager, and submit it to the Department Manager prior to the next scheduled Teaching and Learning Committee meeting.

Other internal processes used as part of the Quality System include:

- Internal Quality Audits based on a schedule. These audits issue reports requesting corrective action.
- Feedback via 'Improvement opportunity and complaints' procedure and teaching departments determine their strategies to gather this feedback, using Institute-approved instruments, before delivery/assessment begins. The feedback results are analysed centrally and a summary report is provided to the teaching department for review and action (if required) by the Teaching Quality Committees.
- Wodonga Institute of TAFE has completed one round of employer and learner surveys and has used the SMART software to process the results.

Audit showed that all teams were aware of the quality processes such as collecting feedback through surveys and improvement opportunity forms, internal audits and the role of the teaching quality committees. All teams had reports on stakeholder feedback and validation schedules.

The RTO had identified that it did not have processes in place to strategically collect data about client services as the basis for continuous improvement. However, staff described some of the strategies planned for

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implementation in 2010 and subsequent years to address this gap. Staff in each of the four audits were not aware of any feedback collected from participants regarding client services.

Suggestion

The auditors made the following suggestion in relation to continuous improvement:

The auditors considered that there was a lack of advice provided to staff that provided a cohesive understanding of the impact of the range of continuous improvement activities utilised by the Institute. The Continuous Improvement approach consisted of a series of procedures and activities that would benefit from an encompassing continuous improvement framework. It is suggested that the Institute consider reviewing procedures and processes related to continuous improvement so that a more systematic approach is used.

Recommendation

The RTO is required to collect data on the range of student services and to use this data to continuously improve client services.

Staffing

(AQTF Standards 1.3, 1.4)

Procedures and forms relating to staffing included:

- PP068 Recruitment and selection procedure
- POL25 Performance planning and review work allocation and the KATE model
- PF029 Teaching load form
- PP039 Staff learning and development access procedure
- DPO14 Vocational Competence Register Procedure
- PF012 Vocational Competency Form
- DFO56 Delivery and Assessment supervision Record Form
- POL25 Performance planning and review work allocation and the KATE model

Audit found that:

Wodonga has documented recruitment procedures in place that are used for the recruitment of all teaching staff. Performance plans are developed in conjunction with managers or supervisors before they are approved. After the documents are agreed to and signed off, they become the individual's performance plan for the year. It is planned that performance against the agreed goals is reviewed at least twice during the year before it is finally evaluated.

Professional development of staff is informed by consultation between department managers, divisional general managers, individual staff members, and professional development networks in relation to the Institute's strategic plan, priority skills documents, the KATE model, the capability framework, staff individual learning and development plans (ILDPs), and external indicators.

For two of the qualifications audited staff did not hold the vocational competencies they were training and assessing and equivalence with those competencies had not been established. According to the DPO14 Vocational Competence Register Procedure records of vocational competency are to be registered on PF012 Vocational Competency Form. This form does not provide a useful format for providing a mapping document to establish equivalence.

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For three of the qualifications audited vocational currency of trainers had not been adequately established and/or monitored. Even though two teams (nursing and engineering) could describe how they maintained vocational competency through consultancy and part-time work, it was not recorded on personnel files.

For one program, contracted staff had been placed on auspicing agreements. However, these arrangements were not appropriate as the specific trainers were engaged, not their companies, and there was no evidence of monitoring the 'partnership agreement'.

Recommendations

The Institute is required to revise its processes so that the NQC requirements relating to the competency of trainers and assessors are satisfied. The Institute and delivery teams are required to implement the revised processes.

The RTO is required to place contractors on an employment agreement that accurately reflects the conditions of employment.

Teaching, learning and assessment (AQTF Standards 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 2.3)

Key documents within the quality system include:

- Assessment Policy
- Assessment procedure
- DP024 Qualification/course/program and individual learner planning procedure
- DF013 Qualification/course/program training and assessment capability plan form
- DF003 Validation Participation Form
- DF004 Validation of Learning Resources Form
- DF005 Validation of Assessment Process Form
- DF006 Validation of Assessment Tools Form
- DF007 Validation of Assessment Evidence (Moderation) Form.

All the teams had prepared a 'DF013 Qualification/course/program delivery and assessment capability plan' for the qualifications being audited. These plans detailed the resources required and the activities associated with delivery and assessment.

Audit found that:

- All of the teams had close links with the industries they serviced and adapted their training and delivery according to these relationships. However, the recording of industry consultation could be more systematic for continuous improvement and for delivery and assessment strategies. All teams completed a DF013 Qualification/course/program training and assessment capability plan form. This form did not record the impact or the result of the industry consultation on the program delivery and assessment.
- The auditors found that staff would benefit from greater guidance regarding the purposes of assessment validation and validation methodologies that they could employ. The Assessment policy does not address assessment validation and moderation. The Assessment procedure states that validation of assessment tools must occur prior to their use but it does not provide guidance on the

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range of validation methods that can be used by assessors. There were examples of validation meetings at audit but the records of these meetings provided little detail on the validation processes used.

- For two of the partnership arrangements the monitoring of validation was not evidenced.
- For two of the programs audited (nursing and engineering) there were insufficient examples of student work, especially evidence of the completion of practical work. The retention of student work for moderation and continuous improvement purposes is not addressed in the Assessment procedure.
- For all of the programs audited, assessment did not meet the requirements of the relevant Training Package.
- There was an over-reliance on using just the performance criteria in the units of competency as benchmarks for assessment. Performance criteria represent only a portion of the scope of the unit of competency and they do not describe measurable indicators for assessment.
- RPL assessment tools specific to the qualification had not been developed in two qualifications audited.

Suggestions

It is strongly suggested that the Institute:

- Provide staff with greater guidance regarding how to document the outcomes of consultation with industry and the impact of this consultation on strategies for training and assessment.
- Provide staff with professional development related to the development of robust assessment tools.
- Provides greater guidance to staff regarding carrying out assessment validation so that assessment is systematically improved.

Student Support

(AQTF Standards 2.4, 2.6)

Audit found that the level of student support offered by the Institute was very high and included literacy and numeracy assistance and disability support services provided by student services.

Student complaints and appeals processes are well publicised to students and well understood by staff. Complaints were effectively managed.

Information provided to prospective students was comprehensive and included:

- Website information
- Course flyers
- Policies and procedures
- Student Handbook 2010
- Course inductions.

Documents reviewed included:

CP006 Student Grievance/Appeals Procedure

LP003 Improvement Opportunities and Complaints

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LF004 Improvement Opportunities and Complaints (IOC) Form.

Student information

(AQTF Standards 2.2, 2.5)

The key information strategies are:

- Website
- Course flyers
- Courses Guide
- Information sessions
- Course information booklets.

There was pre-engagement information through the website and information evenings.

Auspice arrangements

(AQTF Standard 3.2)

Relevant documents related to auspiced arrangements included:

- KF020 Request for Quote for VET in Schools Auspicing and/or delivery by Wodonga Institute of TAFE
- DP022 Partnership/auspicing procedure
- DP038 VET-in-schools program management procedure
- DF063 AQTF Regulatory Responsibilities for VET-in-schools Partnerships Form
- LF010 Business Case Form
- DF061 Pre-Agreement Review Form
- DF062 AQTF Framework regulatory responsibilities for partnerships

Audit found that:

Wodonga Institute of TAFE has a range of agreements in place with secondary schools, and a number of agreements in place with enterprises.

Three auspiced agreements reviewed (Retail Adventures, Red Cross and VETiS) completed DF062 or DF063 AQTF Framework regulatory responsibilities for partnerships at the commencement of the contract.

There are partnership arrangements with Victorian schools for the VET-in-schools program. The program arrangement for these programs is through the DP038 VET-in-schools program management procedure. This procedure sets out in a diagram the processes to be followed. The monitoring responsibilities in this diagram are not comprehensive.

The review of the auspiced agreement with another RTO (Red Cross) suggested that staff did not understand the roles and responsibilities as the managing partner especially in relation to the monitoring of quality and the AQTF 2007. There were assumptions made that processes would be followed as Red Cross was an RTO. There needed to be further monitoring of quality.

Significant issues were noted in both instances with the monitoring and reporting in relation to the AQTF 2007.

The auspiced arrangement with Retail Adventures Pty Ltd was briefly reviewed at audit. This partnership agreement was signed in September 2009 and delivery commenced in early 2010. These arrangements,

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although just newly implemented, were working well and may provide a useful benchmark for other agreements operating at the RTO.

Some strengths of this agreement were:

- The groundwork completed in establishing the agreement
- The monitoring process, which included regular communication between partners and regular audits of trainee files as well as the monitoring of issues identified and their rectification
- The commitment of RTO staff to ensuring that client relationships were maintained and strengthened.

Recommendation

The Institute is to review and revise processes related to auspice arrangements, to ensure that all such relationships are managed.

The Institute is then to ensure that all arrangements and their quality assurance and quality control processes are implemented.

Conclusion

The audit revealed significant strengths. Staff members at audit prepared well for the audit, engaged well with the audit process, were very open to auditor feedback and showed a great deal of commitment to the continuous improvement of their programs.

Engagement with Industry was a key focus of the Board and trainers and assessors provided examples of strong relationships with Industry sustained over a long period of time. The RTO is also forging some productive relationships with Higher Education providers.

StaffNet provides staff with easy access to policies and procedures and has been well constructed to meet staff requirements.

The recently created Teaching Quality Committees provide an excellent strategy for engaging staff in monitoring the quality of training and assessment.

There was a great deal of flexibility in all of the programs audited and each program had a strong customer focus.

Technology is used creatively to engage different student cohorts and students were being provided with a good level of feedback – teachers had established good relationships with their students.

Staff, including contractors, were provided with a range of professional development opportunities.

Auditors

Chloe Dyson

Bernadette Delaney

Attachments

AQTF Qualification Reports (4)