Apprenticeships and traineeships: Good practice guide for registered training organisations
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Introduction

Apprenticeships/traineeships play an important role in the Australian vocational education and training (VET) system and form part of a national strategy to address skill shortages. The recent focus on the effectiveness of apprenticeships/traineeships has driven reform in the system.

The reforms—combined with changes to regulatory frameworks—are the stimulus for this publication which is not a policy document but a guide. Registered training organisations (RTOs) should always refer to legislation, and national and state policy to ensure that they meet their obligations.

This guide provides information about the requirements of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) as well as current state and national policies, and draws on the latest research in effectiveness in employment-based training1.

It is organised to follow the steps that an RTO would take – from the initial notification that it has been registered as an apprenticeship/traineeship provider, through to providing a certificate once apprentices/trainees have completed their training and assessment.

The diagram below illustrates that pathway and the layout of this guide.

**Effective models of employment-based training**¹

Recording, improving learning, assessment and support services and compliance occur throughout the term of the training contract and not after certification as suggested in the chart above.

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¹ NCVER 2008, *Effective models of employment-based training.*
Marketing

Marketing an RTO’s services is an important business activity. Marketing gives an RTO the opportunity to showcase its training, assessment and support services to prospective apprentices/trainees.

When prospective apprentices/trainees are choosing a training provider, the RTO’s marketing material is often the only information they will have. Marketing materials can deliver the following benefits to an RTO. They can:

- remind current and prospective apprentices/trainees about the benefits of the training, assessment and support services it offers;
- establish and maintain the RTO’s distinct identity;
- enhance the RTO’s reputation;
- encourage existing apprentices/trainees to continue using the RTO;
- attract new apprentices/trainees and replace those apprentices/trainees who have completed their apprenticeships/traineeships; and
- promote the business to apprentices/trainees and others.

To realise these benefits, the marketing needs to be targeted. It should present a consistent image and message, and be current, accurate and easy to use.

When marketing an RTO’s services, it is possible to access generic apprenticeship/traineeship marketing materials and obtain state specific information. These materials can help explain the benefits of apprenticeships/traineeships to potential apprentices/trainees.

However, the RTO must keep in mind its role in the Australian Apprenticeship system. Having appropriate references and contacts is important. The following websites are a starting point for accessing the most up to date information about apprenticeships/traineeships and contacting the agencies involved in the system.

www.dtwd.wa.gov.au
www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au

Indicators of good practice

- The media and message are suitable for the target group.
- The information provided is clear and concise.
- The information provides an accurate picture of the training, assessment and support services the RTO offers.
- The RTO monitors the effectiveness of its marketing strategies and makes improvements when necessary.

AQTF Condition 8 – Accuracy and integrity of marketing

The AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration provides RTOs with specific advice about the accuracy and integrity of marketing. It states that:

- The RTO must ensure its marketing and advertising of AQF qualifications to prospective clients is ethical, accurate and consistent with its scope of registration. The Nationally Recognised Training (NRT) logo must be employed only in accordance with its conditions of use.

The AQTF Users’ Guide to the Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration explains what ethical and accurate marketing means by listing what the RTO needs to do when marketing its training and assessment services.
Negotiating the training plan with the employer and the apprentice/trainee

Once the Apprenticeship Office notifies an RTO through the Training Records System (TRS) that it has been nominated as a provider for apprenticeships/traineeships, the RTO must then arrange for the negotiation of the training plan with the employer and the apprentice/trainee.

Negotiation of the training plan provides all parties with a clear picture of the learning and assessment which have to be achieved during the term of the training contract and how and when this will be achieved. It is the blueprint for the delivery of the apprenticeship/traineeship. To be able to effectively negotiate a training plan, the RTO, the employer and the apprentice/trainee need to discuss and decide on the following important issues.

1. The packaging of the qualification

Training package qualifications are designed to allow customisation to meet the needs of a range of apprentices/trainees. This is achieved by choosing a combination of units of competency that meet the needs of both the employer and the apprentice/trainee and also meet the packaging rules for the qualification. The RTO, the employer and the apprentice/trainee need to discuss and decide which units to include in the qualification. The following factors may influence the choice of units:

- the type of work undertaken by the employer;
- the availability of machinery/equipment and staff to support the learning and assessment;
- any conditions imposed by licensing authorities or regulatory requirements;
- any competency already held by the apprentice/trainee; and
- any seasonal or shift requirements that may restrict the opportunity for learning and assessment.

This list is not definitive and the RTO’s discussions with the employer and the apprentice/trainee will uncover any other opportunities or restrictions that may need to be considered in deciding the qualification packaging. RTOs can also refer to the *AQTF Users’ Guide to the Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration* for more information about engaging the employer. RTOs also need to be aware of any delivery requirements specified in legislation or regulations. Any concerns that an RTO may have in this regard should be discussed with the Apprenticeship Office.
As a training and assessment specialist, the RTO will be able to guide these discussions and help the employer and apprentice/trainee to understand the requirements of the training package. It is important to remember that employers and apprentices/trainees will not necessarily be familiar with the terminology used in the VET sector so it is a good idea to use plain English and avoid jargon.

2. The delivery and assessment schedule and methodologies

Once a decision has been made about the units of competency to be included in the training plan, the delivery and assessment schedule and methodologies can be determined. The following factors will influence these decisions:

- any prerequisites stipulated by the training package;
- the training contract’s nominal completion date;
- the most logical order for delivery and assessment of the units of competency (or clusters of units);
- the availability of opportunities for learning and assessment in the workplace;
- the integration of on the job and off the job training;
- the qualifications and experience of the staff delivering or supporting learning and conducting assessment;
- the accessibility and availability of any resources needed, including equipment, machinery and supervisory staff;
- the requirement for simulation (if any);
- the arrangements for access to other workplaces (if required);
- the most appropriate methodology for delivery and assessment, both on and off the job, subject to legislation or regulations which may include national recognition or recognition of prior learning (RPL);
- any special arrangements for training and/or assessment that need to be made for apprentices/trainees with special needs;
- the expected duration, ie the start and completion dates for the units and/or clusters of units;
- which party is responsible for the delivery and assessment of each unit of competency or cluster of units; and
- the responsibilities of all parties relating to monitoring the progress of apprentices/trainees.

AQTF Standard 1.3

The AQTF requires that:
- staff, facilities, equipment, and training and assessment materials used by the RTO are consistent with the requirements of the training package or accredited course and the RTO’s own training and assessment strategies.

In an apprenticeship/traineeship, this includes what is needed in both on the job and off the job training and assessment.

AQTF Standard 1.4

The AQTF requires that anyone who provides training and assessment is appropriately qualified. This relates to trainers and assessors demonstrating:

- necessary training and assessment competencies;
- relevant vocational competencies;
- current industry skills; and
- continuing development of VET knowledge and skills.

RTOs also need to refer to the assessment guidelines from the appropriate training package for guidance about the qualifications and experience required for trainers, assessors and workplace supervisors.
Decisions relating to these factors should be recorded in the training plan. This information is very similar to what is typically found in a training and assessment strategy. The training plan provides a learning and assessment strategy for an apprentice/trainee that is agreed to and used by the RTO, the employer and the apprentice/trainee. Each party to the negotiated training plan should have a signed copy of the plan so that they can refer to it throughout the duration of the training contract.

Employers and apprentices/trainees also need information about the support and administrative services offered by the RTO. This information is normally provided before an apprentice/trainee enrols and may influence the negotiation of the training plan. For example, if the apprentice/trainee needs numeracy support and the RTO does not have the capacity to provide that support, alternative arrangements would need to be made and included in the training plan. Administrative information such as fees, refunds, accessing RTO resources, and complaints and appeals should also be provided at this time.

3. Recording progress against the training plan

The training plan is not a static document. As a blueprint for the delivery of the qualification, it should be updated when the progress and effectiveness of the plan are reviewed. The RTO will negotiate a timeframe for review with the employer and the apprentice/trainee when developing the plan. It is important to remember that the timeframe for review will be determined by the needs of the employer and the apprentice/trainee. RTOs are required to regularly review the apprentice’s/trainee’s progress to record competencies achieved during the course of the training contract. Competence as it applies to on the job and off the job training must be confirmed and recorded by both the employer and the training provider.

The training plan outlines the training and assessment throughout the apprenticeship/traineeship. The training plan is:

- initiated by the training provider;
- negotiated between the employer, the apprentice/trainee and the training provider; and
- signed by the employer, the apprentice/trainee and the training provider within six weeks from the date the training contract is signed or at the end of the probation period of the contract, whichever is longer.

The training plan must show:

- the training delivery and assessment strategy for both on and off the job training;
- all the training and assessment required to complete the qualification; it is important that this training and assessment is documented on the training plan, as this is considered to be time worked and therefore the apprentice/trainee must be paid for this time;
- when, where and how the training and assessment will take place; and
- who will be providing the training and assessment.
Indicators of good practice

- The employer and the apprentice/trainee are actively engaged in developing the training plan.
- The focus of the negotiation process is to meet the needs of the apprentice/trainee.
- The training plan is a living document that is used by all parties for the duration of the training contract.
- The RTO monitors the effectiveness of the training plan and makes improvements when necessary.
- The training plan outlines the training delivery and assessment strategy for the on and off the job training provided to the apprentice/trainee.
Enrolment and induction

Apprentices/trainees can be enrolled with an RTO once the training plan has been negotiated. At the time of enrolment, the RTO should provide the employer and apprentices/trainees with the information they need to make an informed decision that the RTO is the best provider for them. The AQTF requires that RTOs provide this information before enrolment.

Once enrolled, apprentices/trainees should attend an induction. This gives them the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the RTO and the processes they will need to follow over the term of the training contract. Inductions are often supported by written information, usually a student handbook that apprentices/trainees can refer to at any time. The induction also prepares apprentices/trainees for the learning experience they are about to have.

Supporting apprentices/trainees

Engaging in work based learning is likely to be a new experience for apprentices/trainees and they will need to learn how to take advantage of such an environment. An induction should prepare apprentices/trainees to:

- learn from experience;
- learn from observation;
- have fundamental work based skills;
- reason and solve problems;
- be aware of legal and statutory responsibilities;
- understand personal wellbeing and safety;
- understand the need for safe workplace practices;
- have cultural awareness and sensitivity;
- understand the industry and have basic workplace literacy;
- understand what is required to successfully complete the apprenticeship/traineeship.

AQTF Standard 2.3

This standard requires the RTO to provide information to prospective clients so that they can make an informed decision about whether or not to enter into a contract with the RTO.
Supporting employers

Employers should not be forgotten in the induction process as they also become clients of the RTO and partners in delivering training and assessment. As a minimum, the RTO should understand the attitude of the organisation to having apprentices/trainees and tailor their support accordingly.

Induction for employers could include:
- the roles and responsibilities of those involved in supporting or training apprentices/trainees;
- how to facilitate learning in a workplace;
- providing opportunities for apprentices/trainees to be withdrawn from work for other learning experiences;
- completing documentation;
- duty of care responsibilities;
- supporting apprentices/trainees; and
- understanding what is required to successfully complete apprenticeships/traineeships.

Indicators of good practice

- The induction prepares employers and apprentices/trainees to maximise the learning experience.
- The information is regularly reviewed and the RTO consults with apprentices/trainees about the usefulness of the information.
- The RTO provides clear and accurate information.
- The information and media are suitable for the apprentice/trainee group.
Providing and supporting learning opportunities

Apprenticeships/traineeships should provide rich experiential learning opportunities which integrate on the job and off the job training. Training can take place in the workplace or in a classroom or both, and should take into account any prescribed regulatory delivery requirements. RTOs are responsible for making sure that apprentices/trainees are provided with opportunities to develop the required knowledge, skills and competence.

RTOs need to consider and manage the following:
- preparing employers and apprentices/trainees for training (as discussed in the previous section);
- providing pedagogically sound learning experiences;
- supporting employers and apprentices/trainees for the duration of the training contract;
- focusing on delivering quality outcomes; and
- reviewing and responding to feedback as part of a continuous improvement approach.

This section of the guide will focus on supporting apprentices/trainees by providing pedagogically sound learning experiences.

The 2008 National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) report Effective models of employment-based training suggests that three features be present in pedagogically sound employment-based training models.

It suggests first of all that vocational experiences comprise an integrated on the job and off the job training and employment arrangement involving a range of stakeholders, and that access to vocational experiences be sequenced to develop competence. This requires the structuring of training experiences and opportunities.

While the training plan provides broad direction about training opportunities, it is clear that further planning of the learning is required. As the RTO is the certifying body for the qualification and the training and assessment specialist, it is incumbent upon the RTO to ensure that the combination of on the job and off the job experiences are sequenced to foster knowledge and skills development and appropriate practice for the apprentices/trainees.
AQTF Standard 1.4b and 1.4c
AQTF Standard 1.4b and 1.4c state that:
training and assessment are delivered by trainers and assessors who:
   a) have the relevant vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered or assessed and
   b) can demonstrate current industry skills directly relevant to the training/assessment being undertaken.
RTOs need to ensure that the person providing the learning experience, whether in a workplace or classroom, can demonstrate the competencies from the current version of the training package.

AQTF Standard 1.3
This standard requires the RTO to ensure that it has the resources required, including training materials, to meet the needs of the training package and the agreed strategy.
RTOs should review the AQTF Users’ Guide to the Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration for more information about resources.

Secondly, the report suggests that vocational experiences be long enough to provide the range necessary to ensure that learning covers the full scope of the vocational activities to be practised. Reference to the appropriate range statement and evidence guide in the training package’s units of competency, combined with industry consultation will define the scope of vocational activities.

Thirdly, the report also suggests that apprentices/trainees be provided with opportunities to engage with experts who possess the knowledge to be acquired – experts who can guide apprentices/trainees, monitor their progress and provide direct assistance. These may be drawn from the workplace or from the RTO but most often a combination of both is required. RTOs must ensure that the experts selected are vocationally competent.

Supporting employers and apprentices/trainees
RTOs should provide employers and apprentices/trainees with resources to support learning in the workplace – in particular, learning resources that address underpinning knowledge for the units of competency.

Careful consideration needs to be given when choosing appropriate learning resources as it is important that learning objectives are achieved as a result.

Learning resources can be anything that contains appropriate content and helps apprentices/trainees to acquire knowledge and/or skills. This may include textbooks, journals, online resources, videos and podcasts, apprentice’s/trainee’s guides, television and radio programs, lecture notes and slideshow presentations. The possibilities are endless.

RTOs need to remember that resources need to be fleshed out through well designed, interactive learning activities provided by the trainer/facilitator so that apprentices/trainees can construct meaning.

There is a wide range of learning resources available and the challenge for most trainers is to select those resources most likely to enhance training. RTOs need to be very clear about what they are trying to achieve and choose resources that are fit for purpose.

For example, if you wanted to develop a particular practical skill, would reading about how to perform the task be the best way of supporting learning? Probably not.
Watching someone perform the task would be far more effective.

It is tempting to provide apprentices/trainees with a wide range of resources and large amounts of written material but too much information can become overwhelming for workplace supervisors and apprentices/trainees. When selecting learning materials, it is best to provide only key resources.

RTOs should also consider the fact that promoting apprentices’/trainees’ learning in the workplace may also help to develop the training skills of workplace supervisors, who in turn may be more likely to provide apprentices/trainees with effective training resources and activities.

Recording training

With lots of people involved in providing training experiences for apprentices/trainees, there is a need for all parties to communicate frequently and effectively about the apprentice’s/trainee’s progress. Regular meetings involving all parties should discuss:

- the progress being made by the apprentice/trainee;
- any further support required by the employer and the apprentice/trainee;
- identification of any risk of not achieving competency;
- any adjustment of the negotiated training plan;
- further opportunities for training and assessment; and
- sign-off of any completed task/competency of the training plan.

A training journal or training record book may be useful in documenting communication and in tracking progress. Documenting the apprentice’s/trainee’s progress at regular intervals throughout the execution of the training plan will help all parties to have confidence in the learning and assessment process. The training journal also permits the documentation of any employer’s and apprentice’s/trainee’s comments on specific tasks/competencies within the training plan between monitoring visits.

Where a training journal or training record book is not used, the training plan needs to be robust enough to record the progression/competencies as indicated, especially where an apprentice/trainee is at risk of not achieving competence.

**AQTF requirements**

The AQTF has a number of requirements for RTOs and employers.

Check the latest AQTF standards for specific information at

AQTF Standard 2.4

AQTF Standard 2.4 states that:

- employers and other parties who contribute to each learner’s training and assessment are engaged in the development, delivery and monitoring of training and assessment.

Within the context of apprenticeship/traineeship delivery, this involves developing a comprehensive training plan in consultation with the employer then monitoring the apprentice’s/trainee’s progress and achievements throughout the training contract.

Training journals should be presented in a simple format and provide apprentices/trainees and employers/supervisors with easy to understand instructions for its completion. A completed training journal will provide valuable information for prospective employers as to the specific skill sets of the apprentice/trainee.

Indicators of good practice

- The learning activities and resources are tailored to the needs and learning styles of the apprentice/trainee.
- The training is structured and builds logically (from simple to complex) to develop knowledge and skills.
- Employers and apprentices/trainees are supported throughout the learning process.
- Learning is valued and recognised by employers and apprentices/trainees.
- All parties communicate effectively and regularly about the apprentice’s/trainee’s progress. A training journal/record book may be useful in documenting communication and in tracking progress.
- The training and assessment methods are reviewed and improved upon based on feedback from a range of stakeholders including employers, apprentices/trainees, the RTO and industry.
Providing and supporting assessment

Assessment is fundamental within a competency based system. In the apprenticeship/traineeship system, RTOs assess apprentices/trainees to determine whether they are competent in the units of competency which make up the AQF qualification.

Assessment in an employment-based (apprenticeship/traineeship) pathway is just as rigorous as that undertaken in an institutional pathway. The primary differences are where the evidence is collected and who collects the evidence.

Evidence collected from a workplace can have a richness that is difficult to replicate in an institutional pathway. Many RTOs, however, are hesitant to use workplace evidence. Because staff are not the evidence collectors, the RTO often has concerns about the validity, reliability and authenticity of the evidence collected.

Another common concern is that assessment tools, such as checklists commonly used in institutional pathways, place an unnecessary paperwork burden on workplaces. These concerns can be addressed by ensuring that employers are:

- actively involved in the development and monitoring of the training plan, and provided with support, including training if necessary, to fulfil their role and responsibilities in the apprenticeship/traineeship;
- given assessment tasks that reflect actual work tasks and are written in the language of the workplace; and
- provided with mechanisms to ensure that appropriate training, assessment and communication records are kept.

All these concepts have been discussed in previous sections of this publication. In addition, a vast number of resources are available to RTOs to help them develop and conduct assessment.

AQTF Standard 1.5
The AQTF requires that RTOs ensure that their assessment practices meet the requirements documented in Standard 1.5a, 1.5b, 1.5c and 1.5d.
RTOs should refer to the AQTF Users’ Guide to the Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration.
Quality assessment

Quality assessment occurs when:

- RTOs provide employers and apprentices/trainees with information and assistance at each step of the training and assessment process;
- assessment methods and processes follow the negotiated training plan;
- assessment tasks provide for contextualisation to reflect the individual's workplace;
- assessment tasks provide for holistic assessment by grouping elements from various competencies to form meaningful work tasks;
- assessment tasks integrate the four dimensions of competency and RTOs ensure the rules of evidence are met;
- assessors consider levels of literacy and numeracy so that assessment tasks do not exceed the expectations of the workplace;
- assessment is undertaken only when apprentices/trainees are ready to be assessed;
- RTOs increase the validity and reliability of assessment decisions by having employers verify evidence gathered before judgements are made by the assessor;
- the assessment process allows for feedback to be provided by the employer regarding the workplace performance of apprentices/trainees;
- assessment processes, tasks and judgements are validated;
- assessment judgements are made by appropriately skilled and experienced assessors who consistently update their vocational and assessment skills; and
- the workplace values and actively supports and encourages skill development.

Indicators of good practice

- Assessment activities and resources are tailored to apprentices'/trainees' needs.
- Employers and apprentices/trainees are supported throughout the assessment process.
- All parties communicate effectively and regularly about the apprentice’s/trainee’s progress using a training journal, training record book or other instrument/record.
- Assessment is reviewed and improved upon based on feedback from a range of stakeholders including employers, apprentices/trainees, the RTO and industry.
Certification

RTOs issue AQF qualifications to apprentices/trainees once all qualification requirements have been achieved. This means that the apprentice/trainee has been deemed competent by both the employer and the RTO in all the units of competency listed in the training plan. An important aspect of completion is the validation by the employer that all competencies have been successfully demonstrated in the workplace.

The Apprenticeship Office requires that RTOs notify them of completion of on the job and off the job training via TRS and in accordance with the requirements of the Vocational Education and Training Act 1996. RTOs should refer to the July 2011 edition of the Australian Qualifications Framework to ensure that they use the correct format and terminology on the qualifications or statements of attainment they issue.

Certificates issued under apprenticeship/traineeship arrangements should include the wording ‘achieved through apprenticeship, traineeship, cadetship or internship arrangements’ as appropriate.

Indicators of good practice

- RTOs monitor the apprentice’s/trainee’s progress against the training plan and issue a qualification or statement of attainment when required.
- The qualification or statement of attainment meets Condition 6 of the AQTF requirements.
- Issue of the qualification is timely and the Apprenticeship Office is notified within 21 days.
- The RTO’s records for the apprentice/trainee accurately show the award of a qualification and/or a statement of attainment.
Improving learning, assessment and support services

Continuous improvement is a commonly used term in the VET sector as well as other sectors of industry, but it is sometimes difficult for RTOs to understand and realise the benefit of such an approach.

The AQTF in its Users’ Guide to the Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration states that:

the value for RTOs of adopting a continuous improvement cycle is its potential to create a stronger, more sustainable business that meets the needs of clients and stakeholders. Such a cycle also enables RTOs to adapt quickly to changing external environments such as economic factors and skills needs.

To realise these benefits, RTOs need to have systems in place that drive them to seek feedback from their stakeholders about the services they provide. RTOs should be systematic about collecting, analysing and then (where needed), acting on any feedback they receive.

When considering how to improve the assessment provided for apprenticeships/traineeships, RTOs commonly use a process known as validation. Validation requires RTOs to review, compare and evaluate all aspects of the assessment system, including the judgements made by their assessors. This process is equally valid for assessments conducted in an apprenticeship/traineeship and importantly, should be used to ensure consistency between judgements made through institutional pathways and employment-based pathways.

Reviews of learning or training delivery are most commonly achieved by doing apprentice/trainee surveys. RTOs should remember that this is only one of many methods that can be used to gather information about the learning process. RTOs need to ensure that they collect information about the learning process from all stakeholders, including the employers of apprentices/trainees, and that, once analysed, the data can be used to make business decisions.

AQTF Standards 1.1, 2.2 and 3.2

These three elements of the AQTF standards require that, based on continuous improvement processes, RTOs improve the products, services and the way they operate.

A guide to the continuous improvement of assessment

The Department released this publication to help RTOs to improve their assessment practice. RTOs can review the information provided in the guide and where appropriate adopt the suggested practices in their organisations.

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Indicators of good practice

- The RTO’s systems promote the continual and systematic review of its products, services and the way it operates.
- All stakeholders in the apprenticeship/traineeship pathway have the opportunity to provide feedback.
- The focus of improvement actions is meeting the apprentices’/trainees’ needs.
- Continuous improvement activities lead to measurable improvements to the business.
RTO records

In any RTO, records are kept for a variety of purposes. Some records are required by legislation or to meet regulatory requirements; others are required by the RTO as part of its operating procedures. When delivering apprenticeships/traineeships, RTOs should note that, for every apprentice/trainee, the following records are required by the WA Department of Training and Workforce Development:

- a compliant training plan; and
- the qualification or statement of attainment.

While not mandatory, a training journal or training record book may be useful in documenting communication and in tracking progress. Where the RTO does not use a training journal or record book, the training provider should be able to record and track the apprentices’/trainees’ progress and achievements.

There is also a range of other legislation that exists in industry which specifies the records to be maintained for training and assessment. Each RTO needs to be aware of the legislation relevant to its industry and any specified record keeping requirements that result. For example, RTOs providing training and assessment services for qualifications that include units of competency designated ‘high risk work activities’ have additional record keeping requirements.

RTOs will keep a variety of other records relating to training and assessment. These records may include the following:

- enrolment forms;
- fee payment records;
- workplace visit notes;
- records of conversations between the RTO, the employer and the apprentice/trainee;
- assessment plans;
- assessment tools; and
- completed training and assessment materials.

These records may be used for continuous improvement, knowledge management, making assessment judgements, assessment moderation, internal audit and review. Each RTO will need to determine which records to keep so that its processes are effective and compliant with regulatory/legislative requirements. The RTO needs to ensure that its record keeping system ensures the accuracy and integrity of the records.
All parties involved in an apprenticeship/traineeship need to understand clearly which records they are required to keep and why they are keeping them. The RTO should ensure that this is established when negotiating the training plan and inducting the employer and the apprentice/trainee. The accuracy, integrity and effectiveness of the record keeping arrangements should be monitored throughout the apprenticeship/traineeship and any improvements required to the arrangements should be made in a timely manner.

The Department of Training and Workforce Development may seek information from the training provider regarding the progress and training of an apprentice/trainee. AQTF Standard 2.6 also specifies that 'learners have timely access to current and accurate records of their participation and progress'.

**Indicators of good practice**
- The RTO’s records are managed systematically.
- The RTO keeps all required records and clearly understands the purpose for any additional records it chooses to keep.
- Records are able to be accessed in a timely manner.
- The record management system is consistently monitored to ensure it is effective and improvements are made when required.
Compliance

Compliance with the AQTF Users’ Guide to the Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration and other contractual or legislative requirements is often foremost in the minds of RTOs. While it is important that RTOs meet these obligations, it is crucial that the quality of the training, assessment and support services is not compromised by the RTO focusing too much on compliance. When RTOs focus on providing quality training, assessment and support services for their apprentices/trainees, it is likely that they are complying with the AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration, which focus on providing quality outcomes for apprentices/trainees. RTOs need to make sure they focus on quality outcomes and improve the services they provide.

AQTF Conditions 1 and 3

These conditions require RTOs to ensure that they comply with the AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration and any relevant Commonwealth or state/territory legislation.

For more information, refer to the AQTF Users’ Guide to the Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration.
Glossary and useful links

Apprenticeship Office
The Department of Training and Workforce Development's Apprenticeship Office (formerly ApprentiCentre) administers training contracts and regulates the apprenticeship system in Western Australia as prescribed in Part 7 of the Vocational Education and Training Act 1996 (the VET Act) and associated Regulations.

The Apprenticeship Office also has a compliance role that includes audits on training plans, assessments on employers' suitability to train their apprentice(s), and ensuring that regulatory requirements are maintained across the apprenticeship/traineeship system. The Apprenticeship Office also provides a dispute resolution service for employers and apprentices/trainees where disagreement may arise under the training contract.

For more information, call the Apprenticeship Office on 13 19 54 or email apprenticeshipoffice@dtwd.wa.gov.au, or visit the website at dtwd.wa.gov.au/apprenticeshipoffice.

Apprenticeship/traineeship
A structured employment based training program, that leads to apprentices/trainees gaining a nationally recognised qualification. Apprenticeships (including traineeships, cadetships and internships) may be full time, part time or school based.

Australian Apprenticeships Centres (AACs)
From 1 July 2015 the Commonwealth Government's Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) will deliver services with a stronger focus on apprentice recruitment and job-matching. The AASN service will also offer advice and mentoring for employers and apprentices throughout the course of the apprenticeship.

For general enquiries regarding the AASNs, call 13 38 73 or visit australianapprenticeships.gov.au.

Australian Qualification Framework (AQF)
The policy framework that defines all qualifications recognised nationally in post-compulsory education and training in Australia, the AQF comprises titles and guidelines that define each qualification, as well as the principles and protocols covering cross-sectoral qualification links, and the issuing of qualifications and statements of attainment. For more information, go to www.aqf.edu.au.

Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF)
The national set of standards which assures nationally consistent, high quality training and assessment services for the apprentices/trainees of Australia’s VET system, AQTF is the current version of the framework, effective from 1 July 2010 and consists of the Essential Conditions and Standards for Initial Registration and the Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration. For more information, visit www.nssc.natese.gov.au.
Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
www.asqa.gov.au

The national regulator for Australia’s vocational education and training sector, this government authority regulates courses and training providers to ensure that nationally approved quality standards are met.

Western Australian RTOs which deliver courses interstate or overseas are required to register with ASQA.

Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS)
AVETMISS is a national standard for the collection and analysis of VET information throughout Australia. It collects data on all persons employed under a training contract, including apprentices/trainees.

Client Qualification Register (CQR)
CQR is the online tool used to establish a permanent system for records of student achievement data from WA RTOs. In the event that an RTO ceases to trade, students will have access to records of their achievement of qualifications and statements of attainment. The CQR can be accessed through RTONet at https://stars.dtwd.wa.gov.au.

National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)
Australia’s principal provider of VET research and statistics which informs policy and practice in Australia’s training system, including the following:

1. How to become AVETMISS compliant
   • [http://www.ncver.edu.au/content/compliancefaq.htm](http://www.ncver.edu.au/content/compliancefaq.htm)
   • AVETMISS v6.1 for VET providers: what’s new and why?
   • Booth, R et al 2002, Maximising confidence in assessment decision-making: Resource kit for assessors

For more information, visit [www.ncver.edu.au](http://www.ncver.edu.au).

National Skills Standards Council (NSSC)
provides information on regulatory standards. The website includes AQTF information and publications, including:

- AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration which contains the AQTF requirements for continuing registration for RTOs;
- AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Initial Registration which contains the AQTF requirements for initial registration for organisations seeking to become RTOs;
- AQTF Users’ Guide to the Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration which will help RTOs interpret and apply AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration to their operations; and
• *AQTF Users’ Guide to the Essential Conditions and Standards for Initial Registration*, which will help entities applying for registration as a registered training organisation (RTO) to interpret *AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Initial Registration*. For more information, go to [www.nssc.natese.gov.au](http://www.nssc.natese.gov.au).

**Off the job training**
Training that takes place away from a person’s job, usually off the premises and at the training provider’s premises but may be on the premises of the employer/enterprise such as in a special training area.

**On the job training**
Training acquired or learned while working at a job. Training is provided by the supervisor/employer.

**Registered training organisation (RTO)**
A training organisation registered by a state or territory registering body or ASQA in accordance with *AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Continuing Registration* within a defined scope of registration. All RTOs in Australia and the qualifications they are scoped to deliver are listed on [www.training.gov.au](http://www.training.gov.au).

**RTO Net**
An online system developed to allow RTOs to view and make changes to their details, upload reports, complete surveys and submit online applications, etc. It can be accessed with a login through [https://stars.dtwd.wa.gov.au](https://stars.dtwd.wa.gov.au).

**Statement of attainment**
A statement of attainment is issued by a registered training organisation when a student has completed one or more units of competency.

**Training Accreditation Council (TAC)**
TAC is the Western Australian registering and accrediting body and provides RTOs with advice on managing the records to be maintained. For more information go to [www.tac.wa.gov.au](http://www.tac.wa.gov.au).

**Training contract**
A legally binding agreement between an employer and an apprentice/trainee and his/her legal guardian, where required, to undertake an apprenticeship/traineeship. The contract contains information such as qualification, employer’s details, apprentice’s/trainee’s personal details, training provider, employment arrangements, and nominal term, and specifies the employer’s and the apprentice’s/trainee’s obligations and responsibilities.

**Training journal/Training record book**
A document that may be provided by the RTO to the apprentice/trainee for the purpose of monitoring the progress of the apprentice/trainee against the training plan.
Training plan
The training plan outlines the training delivery and assessment strategy to be undertaken throughout the apprenticeship/traineeship training contract. It is developed by the nominated training provider in accordance with the VET Act and Regulations and in negotiation with the parties to the training contract.

Training Records System (TRS)
DTWD’s database for recording all information regarding apprentices/trainees in Western Australia.

training.gov.au (TGA)
TGA is the database on vocational education and training (VET) in Australia. TGA is the official national register of information on training packages, qualifications, courses, units of competency and registered training organisations (RTOs) and has been developed for experienced training sector users. For more information, go to www.training.gov.au.

Western Australian Department of Training and Workforce Development
This site contains information and policies about training and workforce development as it applies to Western Australia and links to training courses available in Western Australia as well as to the Apprenticeship Office and the Careers Centre www.dtwd.wa.gov.au.
References


Useful publications

Department of Training and Workforce Development publications

A guide to continuous improvement of assessment in VET

Apprenticeships and traineeships: Good practice guide for registered training organisations

Clustering units of competency: A guide on how to cluster for delivery and assessment

Designing assessment tools for quality outcomes

Guidelines for assessing competence in VET

Professional development framework for vocational skills in VET

Reasonable adjustment: A practical guide to working with students with disability

Recognition of prior learning: An assessment resource for VET practitioners

Staying the course: A guide to working with students with mental illness

Troubleshooting guide: Assessment in VET

Electronic (PDF and word) copies are available at www.vetinfonet.dtwd.wa.gov.au.