



Continuous Improvement Policy

PURPOSE:

1. To ensure that Australian College of Training reviews and improves its training processes, products and services for quality assurance and to meet compliance with the VET Quality Framework by collecting feedback from its stakeholders (including employers, program participants, employees of ACT), analysing the data and acting upon any opportunities for improvement.

SCOPE:

2. This policy details the continuous improvement cycle across all of its operations, systems, processes and services and is adhered to by all Australian College of Training personnel.

PROCEDURE:

3. Whenever a client undertakes a training or assessment program or accesses a service provided by Australian College of Training they will be provided a feedback form and encouraged to complete it. If the form contains a complaint and the client has provided their name on the form the Australian College of Training Registrar or similar shall attempt to undertake a resolution process and identify the root cause as per Complaints and Appeals Policy. Any recommendations for improvement that arise in the resolution process will be documented in the Continuous Improvement Plan.
4. Feedback is collected at a number of key milestone points, but not limited to:
 - a) After the enrolment process, upon commencement of a training program;
 - b) Approximately 1/3 of the way through the training program;
 - c) At the completion of the training program;
 - d) Destination surveys at 3mths, 6mths, and 12mths as far as is practical;
 - e) ASQA Quality Indicators data from Learner Engagement and Employer Satisfaction survey tools
 - f) Includes program participants, purchasers of products /s services, employers and other workplace personnel and other key stakeholders.

TRAINING AND DELIVERY – INDUSTRY CONSULTATION AND SERVICE AGREEMENTS

5. During our market research Australian College of Training consults with enterprise and industry on learning and assessment strategies. These include:
 - a) Relevant Industry Training Bodies / Industry Skills Council, Industry groups
 - b) Large employers / enterprises within the relevant industry sector where possible
 - c) Local employers / enterprises within the relevant industry sector

Through these discussions with the above Australian College of Training management plan and strategises the types of training and assessment approaches best suited to the industry sector,



including specific needs (i.e. location / timing of site visits for training and assessment activities, shift or seasonal considerations, licensing or regulatory requirements). Findings are recorded on the Industry Consultation Form or Learning and Assessment Strategy Consultation form and then summarised and incorporated into the Learning and Assessment Strategy.

6. Further consultation occurs at the local level with employers to ensure that the Learning and Assessment Strategy reflects their individual business needs. Each Learning and Assessment Strategy forms part of the overall service agreement for enterprise (whereas for individual learners the service agreement is reflected in their enrolment form and training plans). The strategy and training plan is validated by the company representative and the learner before training commences.
7. Continuous improvement recommendations will be considered on the basis of Australian College of Training fulfilling their agreements and obligations to the enterprise and learners as well as for improving the quality training and assessment services and products.

FEEDBACK MECHANISMS DURING TRAINING

8. Feedback will be gathered across various stakeholders and stages throughout the program. Improvements identified for action through this phase are documented in the Continuous Improvement Plan.
9. At the conclusion of every training program or independent training unit (unit of competency /module), the trainer will consider the effectiveness of resources. If there is a deficiency, or an improvement to be made, the trainer will complete a Training Resource Feedback Form and forward to the Registrar for review and implementation as required.
10. At the conclusion of every training program or independent training unit (unit of competency / module), the trainer will complete a Reflective Journal and Feedback Form, reflecting on the overall delivery with an emphasis on what worked, what didn't work so well, what can be improved upon and what better practice examples can be shared with colleagues. The trainer should keep a copy of the reflection for their own professional development and for sharing with other trainers at team meetings or similar. The original is submitted to the Training Manager for review and implementation as required.
11. At the conclusion of every training program or independent training unit clients (participants, employers and other relevant persons involved in the training and/or assessment process) will complete a Client Feedback Form or Employer /Enterprise Feedback Form. The trainer will then return the form to the Registrar who will enter the data into the relevant database application. An analysis of the data will be conducted by the continuous improvement team to review and implement as required.



12. Opportunities for improvement or enhancement that are identified through this process will be discussed at moderation / validation, team meetings or professional development workshops or similar and continuous improvement actions implemented except in the case of a conflict with another policy.
13. Outcomes will be recorded in the meeting minutes then entered into the Continuous Improvement Plan. Any area that is identified as a potential non-compliance should be raised on a Corrective Action Request Form and be entered into the Corrective Actions Register.
14. In all cases where improvements or enhancements are decided, the information will be circulated to the appropriate personnel in writing for implementation. The person delegated to implement the change should have the task completed and signed off by the Registrar within the agreed time frame.
15. The Registrar will review the Continuous Improvement Plan and Corrective Action Register quarterly to ensure opportunities for improvement or rectifications of non-compliances are acted upon.
16. Improvements or enhancements that impact upon existing policies or procedures will be published as per this policy.

FEEDBACK MECHANISMS DURING ASSESSMENT

17. Feedback will be gathered across various stakeholders at the end of the assessment process. Improvements identified for action through this phase are documented in the Continuous Improvement Plan.

During the Assessment phase feedback is gathered:

- a) Through client feedback section at the end of written assessment tools, or where a practical-based assessment is conducted an area is provided for clients to provide feedback.
- b) Where work-based assessment has occurred, enterprise/employers or other relevant workplace personnel will be provided an Assessment Feedback Form to provide feedback on the assessment process. This includes any assessment that uses the resources of the enterprise (physical space, work-place documentation, work-based projects etc.).
- c) On completion of all program and unit assessments the assessor will then analyse the feedback, summarise and submit the relevant information to the Registrar who will enter the data into the relevant database application and on the Continuous Improvement Plan. Feedback for assessments is used at moderation and validation sessions, shared at team meetings or similar.



- d) At the end of the assessment of the program or independent training unit the assessor will complete a Reflective Journal and Feedback Form, reflecting on the overall process of assessment with an emphasis on what worked, what didn't work so well, what can be improved upon and what better practice examples can be shared with colleagues. The assessor should keep a copy of the reflection for their own professional development and for sharing with other assessors at team meetings, moderations/validation sessions or similar. The original is submitted to the Training Manager for review and implementation as required.

OTHER FEEDBACK MECHANISMS

18. Australian College of Training will gather feedback from but not limited to the following areas:
- a) ASQA Quality Indicator tools
 - b) Learner satisfaction
 - c) Enterprise satisfaction
 - d) Industry validation
 - e) Validation and moderation activities
 - f) Improvements and recommendations
 - g) Products and delivery of service
 - h) Training and assessment process
 - i) Facilities, and resources
 - j) Internal and external audits
 - k) Planning and risk management
 - l) Staff performance appraisals
 - m) Monthly reports

TRANSITION FROM SUPERSEDED TRAINING PACKAGES AS CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

19. In the event that a Training Package is upgraded resulting in a change to national codes Australian College of Training will manage the transition within 12 months (commencing from the date of publication of the new or revised Training Package or component) utilising the continuous improvement model at Annex A, to update and maintain high quality, current training products. For further information refer to the Transition and Teach-Out Policy.
20. Recognition of superseded Training Packages will be identified though maintaining contact with relevant industry bodies and selecting the "Notify me of changes" subscription option on training.gov.au



21. Once a Training Package has been superseded Australian College of Training will liaise with relevant industry bodies as listed below, revise existing and where necessary develop new products according to the new Training Package requirements. Necessary changes will be documented on the Continuous Improvement Plan.
22. Australian College of Training will ensure that it enacts its Teach-Out Policy in a timely manner once a Training Package qualification or accredited course, or unit of competency or module has been superseded.

PRODUCT INFORMATION

23. Australian College of Training implements updated information provided by the following bodies:
 - a) National Skills Standards Council (NSSC)
 - b) Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
 - c) Department of Industry (Federal)
 - d) Department of Training and Workforce Development (WA)
 - e) Industry Skills Council and subsequent state-based Training Councils
 - f) Training.gov.au
 - g) Associated industry bodies relevant to scope of registration
 - h) Associated legislative, licensing and regulatory bodies relevant to scope of registration
24. Changes that have been identified are documented on the Continuous Improvement Plan and completion dates for action shall reflect the time requirements stipulated by the respective body.

AREAS SUBJECT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

25. Australian College of Training will continually use the following practices for ways to improve processes, products and services through the continuous improvement model at Annex A.
 - a) Analysis of trainer, assessor and client feedback of training and assessment services, support services, products and programs and pre-enrolment and enrolment processes
 - b) Review of national VET developments through website searches
 - c) Legislation log
 - d) Participation in forums which focus on VET issues
 - e) Consultation with industry
 - f) Review of marketing practices
 - g) Review of policies and procedures
 - h) Evaluation of registration scope within scope management process
 - i) Self-assessment through internal audit processes
 - j) Quality Indicators for Training



- k) Outcomes of complaints and appeals
- l) External auditing (i.e. national regulator or state or federal funding authorities)

RECORD KEEPING

- 26. An electronic Continuous Improvement File is maintained on NovaCore DMS (Continuous Improvement Folder) and includes agendas and minutes of meetings directly related to continuous improvement, finalised Continuous Improvement Plans and other supporting C.I. documentation.
- 27. Records of continuous improvement activity shall remain active in the electronic file for three years for the purposes of review by management, internal auditing and external audits (i.e. ASQA audits). After that, they will be archived as per Archive Policy.

INTERNAL AUDITS

- 28. An internal audit program and schedule of activities will be developed and implemented each calendar year by the Australian College of Training audit team. The ongoing internal auditing activities shall include reviewing each qualification / vocational area delivered that year within the scope of registration and the results may feed into the annual compliance audit.
- 29. An annual internal compliance audit will be carried out by the Australian College of Training audit team or delegate/s or as required by the internal review process established within NovaCore CMS and through the internal audit program schedule.
- 30. The outcome of the compliance audit will form part of the management business and quality reviews to determine whether various elements of the operational management system and subsequent practices are effective in achieving stated objectives.
- 31. The compliance audit will examine the adherence to the VET Quality Framework and documented quality control procedures through examining records and evidence provided by the NovaCore system, ATS digital system and hardcopy evidence. It may also include interviews with staff, clients and other stakeholders as part of the evidence gathering exercise.
- 32. Evidence will be gathered through a number of investigative and inquiry activities and shall include any or all of the following:
 - a) Examining documents and systems such as policies, procedures, forms and tools, handbooks, business plan, evidence of trainer / assessor qualifications and professional development etc.
 - b) A sample of student files
 - c) Examining records of training delivered and assessment conducted
 - d) Analysing resources for delivery and assessment including assessment tools
 - e) Observing processes such as training and assessment activities



- f) Interviewing management, trainers/assessors, other staff, learners, employers and other relevant stakeholders
 - g) Questioning the auditee to explore evidence and for additional evidence if required
33. The scope of the compliance audit will be determined in the audit plan. The audit plan is developed by the Lead Auditor in consultation with the audit team to provide the focus of the compliance audit, the respective audit tools and subsequent Final audit report.
34. The Final audit report shall be issued to the CEO and Senior Management for endorsement and CEO to sign off. Once signed off, the Audit Summary and any subsequent recommendations for improvements will be communicated to all Australian College of Training staff and documented in the Continuous Improvement Plan.
35. Corrective actions identified in the Final audit report shall be subject to endorsement by the CEO. Once endorsed, corrective actions and rectifications to achieve compliance shall be documented on the Corrective Action Register.
36. Non-compliances will be corrected within 3 months of the identification from the date of the audit. The Training Manager of Australian College of Training can delegate the responsibility of the rectifying of non-compliance as required. On completion of any issues being rectified, the Training Manager will conduct a follow up audit.
37. To ensure a balanced analysis the audit process shall include consultation with key stakeholders including but not limited to:
- a) Trainers and assessors of the qualification or accredited course in the vocational training area;
 - b) Clients, including learners, employers and other relevant workplace personnel accessing training and assessment services of the of the qualification or accredited course in the vocational training area;
 - c) Input from industry bodies, enterprises, legislative/regulatory bodies as appropriate.
38. The internal audit program may undertake some or all of the following audit activities, dependent on the objectives of the audit:
- a) Reviewing Policy Framework, including policies, procedures, forms, subsequent documents, systems and work practices to ensure they are current and meet VET Quality Framework requirements, and relevant legislative, regulatory and licensing requirements within the vocational sector;
 - b) Reviewing management systems and key documents including the business plan, senior management processes and communications at all levels;
 - c) Reviewing continuous improvement activities;
 - d) Reviewing alignment of training and assessment with strategic business objectives and business plans;



- e) Trainer and assessor competencies and vocational experiences and professional development activities;
 - f) Evidence of training activities conducted, training resources and equipment used in the delivery of training services;
 - g) Observing training and assessment activities;
 - h) Use of quality and appropriate resources that meet training package requirements, are engaging and at a suitable level for the learner, and respect intellectual property and abide by copyright laws;
 - i) Evidence of assessment activities conducted, assessment tools, resources and equipment used in assessing qualifications, including RPL and moderation of assessment;
 - j) Sample of student and staff files; and
 - k) Interviews with staff, clients and other relevant stakeholders.
39. Ongoing compliance and non-compliance that is identified throughout the year as part of the continuous improvement process will be documented and reported at the next scheduled quarterly audit team meeting.
40. If the audit team confirm corrective action or investigation is required, recommendations will be made for corrective and preventative actions as required. Corrective actions are documented on the Corrective Action Register. Results of any investigations are documented and forwarded to the Australian College of Training audit team for consideration and evaluation.

EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE

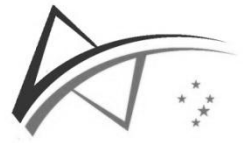
41. Australian College of Training may choose to procure the services of an independent consultant to assist in conducting internal self-audits when appropriate.

RISK MANAGEMENT

42. Any areas of continuous improvement or corrective actions that are identified through the continuous improvement or auditing processes shall be added to the Risk Assessment Tool and be treated under the Risk Management Policy.

CYCLE OF IMPROVEMENT

43. Australian College of Training implements the continuous improvement process indicated in Annex A.



ANNEX A

