



Lifting Quality in Training

Communiqué following the second Strategic Industry Forum 20 November 2009

The quality of skills education received by students and delivered by educational institutions is one of the most important platforms for Australia's future prosperity and for overcoming disadvantage. Industry, educational institutions and government must take the lead in making the significant and far reaching changes necessary to ensure the required quality of Australia's training system.

The Strategic Industry Forum had its second meeting of industry leaders on 20 November 2009 to discuss the current and future quality of the national training system. Industry acknowledges and is a significant participant in the success of Australia's Vocational Education and Training (VET) System. At the same time there are shortcomings as we prepare for the future, and we must take action.

The time is right to act as State and national training ministers and Council of Australian Governments (COAG) have taken a significant step with their decision to develop a national regulator. The Industry Skills Councils have been given a broader role, and there is a groundswell of opinion that industry, educational institutions and governments can and must accelerate their work together to achieve the required level of excellence. The Forum agreed on three major directions:

- 1) Greater transparency of the services provided by and the performance of Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) as a lever to:
 - Drive industry confidence
 - Inform consumers
 - Lift the overall performance of individual training providers, recognise excellence and identify poor performers.
- 2) Industry should be more involved in RTO audit and student assessment processes. It should also play a role in the verification that leads to the issuing of qualifications.
- 3) Quality VET teaching is essential to a high performing system and to the professionalism of the broader workforce. National leadership is needed and the Forum is calling on COAG to add VET system quality to its list of aspirational education and skills targets. The Forum is calling on industry, educational institutions and government to support the development and implementation of a national workforce development strategy for the VET workforce. Elements of the strategy would include:
 - Higher quality data and information about the VET workforce
 - A suite of qualifications that reflect the diversity of the sector to ensure that qualifications of the VET workforce are fit for purpose, and regular audits to ensure that training providers offering these qualifications are competent to do so
 - Accreditation of teachers and assessors including a requirement for continuing professional development
 - Appropriate financial investment in teacher development

In addition, the Forum contributed to the discussions of the proposals for the Australian Workforce Development Strategy currently being facilitated by Skills Australia. Participants endorsed their support for the process and direction that Skills Australia is taking in this regard.

Issued by Skills Australia

on behalf of ISC Chairs, Peak Body Representatives, STA Chairs and Skills Australia

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