

Monitoring the quality of publicly funded training delivered by Training Providers with an ATSA

Introduction

To ensure the community has confidence in the training services provided through public investment, the Department of Innovation and Skills (DIS) requires registered training organisations (RTOs) with Accredited Training Service Agreements (ATSA) to:

- be registered with the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA);
- satisfactorily meet the assessment criteria for an ATSA with the Minister; and
- maintain high standards throughout the term of the ATSA.

ASQA is the national Vocational Education and Training (VET) regulator and is responsible for ensuring RTOs are compliant with the national *Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015*. DIS complements, not duplicates, the work of ASQA by ensuring that RTOs are compliant with the terms and conditions of the ATSA.

The most fundamental responsibility of a training provider with an ATSA is to understand the terms and conditions of the ATSA and the requirements of the national *Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015* (Standards).

The Quality and Compliance Monitoring Framework

DIS has developed a *Quality and Compliance Monitoring Framework* (Framework) to guide how DIS goes about monitoring RTOs for compliance with the ATSA.

The Framework applies a risk-based approach to monitoring RTOs, and has two key features:

Review of past performance against their contract: RTOs with a proven and positive track record will be recognised for that performance and can proceed with training South Australians, while more attention is given to RTOs that are not meeting their contractual obligations;

Proportionate response: non-compliant RTOs are given reasonable opportunity to address any non-compliance, and any subsequent action taken by DIS is proportionate to the nature and level of the non-compliance.

See the [Quality and Compliance Monitoring Framework](#) for more information.



Government
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Innovation and Skills

Who, why and when we monitor

DIS is committed to ensuring that public funds that are provided to RTOs to support subsidised training in South Australia are being used appropriately and represent value for money.

DIS routinely monitors the performance of all RTOs that deliver nationally accredited VET training to South Australian students, including any RTO that is delivering accredited VET training that is part of an ATSA.

The monitoring process checks whether the RTO is compliant with the terms and conditions of the ATSA, including compliance with requirements about: management of enrolment conditions (eligibility and existence); student assessment records; Upfront Assessment of Need; subcontracting; student learning support services; trainer experience and qualifications; and child protection.

DIS' monitoring of RTOs complements, and does *not* duplicate, ASQA's monitoring and audit activities for compliance with the national *Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015* (Standards). DIS may refer any suspected non-compliance with the Standards directly to ASQA for consideration.

DIS monitors RTOs throughout the term of their ATSA using a set of indicators and may at any time institute a review into an RTOs performance against the terms and conditions of the ATSA.

At all times, DIS seeks to ensure that RTOs deliver quality training to students to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Background monitoring

DIS' risk-based approach employs a range of qualitative and quantitative measures to routinely monitor RTOs including: subsidy payment data; training activity data; marketing materials including media and websites; complaints or concerns raised by consumers or stakeholders.

Monitoring will go unnoticed by the RTO although an RTO can be reviewed at any time during the term of their Contract which may require the RTO to produce further information.

Key indicators used by DIS include but are not limited to:

Key indicator	Quality & compliance issues
External Complaints	Concerns/Complaints from external sources relating to quality delivery, RTO Registration and Student Outcomes
Upfront Assessment of Need	RTOs are not implementing the upfront assessment of need in line with departmental requirements
Training Accounts with no activity for 90 days or more	A high prevalence of active Training Accounts for which there has been no activity for 90 days or more
Result Code 30/52	A high prevalence of failing result codes (i.e. "30 Competency not achieved/fail" and "52 RPL not granted")
Result code AP70	A high prevalence of result code "AP70 Academic Pass Only – Enrolment Continuing" Closing Training Accounts that include AP70s
Bridging Units	Inappropriate use of Bridging Units, which aims to ensure that students only undertake training that is essential for them to successfully complete the minimum requirements of their course. (The appropriateness of the selection of units as Bridging Units is governed by ATSA "Directions")
Closed Training Account (non-completion)	A high prevalence of closed Training Accounts
RPL	A high prevalence of result code "51 Recognition of Prior Learning granted", where a 'credit transfer' process may be more appropriate

How we conduct reviews

DIS confidentially 'profiles' RTOs against the indicators mentioned above, and the profile may lead to a review.

When a review is undertaken, DIS first writes to the RTO to explain:

- when the review will take place
- whether the review will include a desk-top analysis of documents, a site visit or a combination of both
- what documentation and evidence will be examined

If a desk-top review is undertaken, the RTO is usually asked to provide full student records for a sample of its students that DIS selects. The sample may include current and non-current students selected from across one or more courses. The RTO will be required to supply copies of the student records in hard copy form.

If a site visit is undertaken, the RTO is required to have all student records available for inspection as well as other documentation relevant to the ATSA. DIS will provide written notice to the RTO of the sample records required for the site visit and the DIS officers undertaking the review who may request the presentation of additional records without notice during the site visit.

DIS Reviewers have knowledge about the terms and condition of the ATSA and the requirements of record keeping in relation to student training and assessment records.

The review process may result in supplementary requests for information and, where non-compliances are identified, remedial action by the RTO. Any required remedial action will be communicated to the RTO in writing.

Training provider responsibilities and preparing for monitoring

In preparing for being monitored by DIS, RTOs must provide all requested evidence in accordance with the department's requirements that are explained in a letter from DIS to the RTO.

DIS can provide assistance in understanding the requirements. Please write to DIS.SkillsContracts@sa.gov.au.

The RTO must also appoint an officer who will be responsible for coordinating the provision of records and can respond to any questions or requests for further information during the review.

RTOs will be required to collate records and evidence and supply it to DIS Reviewers as part of the review process. The review progresses much more smoothly if student records are logically presented and include appropriate evidence of Upfront Assessment of Need, evidence of eligibility and existence, training and assessment records, and work placement records.

Because DIS monitors RTOs "in the background" based on data supplied by RTOs through the student enrolment and subsidy payment systems, it is important that RTOs keep their data up to date.

What to expect on the day of a site visit

The DIS Reviewers will introduce themselves and outline the review process, which should be followed by a brief tour of the site.

A site visit will usually take between 3 and 5 hours, depending on a range of factors including the size of the RTO, the availability and condition of student records and the complexity of the matters being investigated.

If the RTO's records are predominantly electronic, an officer from the RTO will need to be available to assist with the access of student records.

Reviewers may choose to provide RTO representatives with initial feedback at the site visit but will not discuss any potential action that may result from the review findings.

Outcomes from monitoring

Once a review is concluded, DIS will formally write to the RTO to explain the outcomes of the review.

The outcomes may range from a simple letter that states the findings of the review were satisfactory, through to a formal Default Notice that outlines non-conformances and remedial action required of the RTO, and the timeframe for that action.

Sometimes DIS will undertake a follow-up review to check that any remedial action has been implemented.

Costs associated with the review process

RTOs and DIS bear their own costs associated with the review process.

Further information

Skills and Employment 1800-673-097

[Quality and Compliance Monitoring Framework](#)

<https://s.skills.sa.gov.au/Training-providers>

<https://s.skills.sa.gov.au/Forms-and-publications/Training-providers-documents>

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