

Training Accreditation Council Policy – Accreditation of Vocational Education and Training (VET) Courses

TRIM No:	2018/16598
Policy owner:	Manager Regulation, Training Regulation
Approved by:	Director, Training Regulation
Date approved:	31/03/2015
Due for revision:	31/03/2019
Amendments:	
Related policies/documents:	<p>Application forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation/Reaccreditation • Amendment to Accredited Course • Extension to Course Accreditation • Notification of Transfer of Course Ownership <p>Flowcharts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation Application Process • Accreditation Review Process • Amendment to Accredited Course • Extension of Accreditation <p>Procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendment to Accredited Course • Course Accreditation/Reaccreditation • Extension of Accreditation

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1. Purpose

This policy is to outline the requirements for course accreditation by the Training Accreditation Council (TAC or the Council). The policy reflects the Council's commitment to the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015*, the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and the *Vocational Education and Training Act (VET) Act 1996*.

Accreditation is the formal recognition of a course by a VET Regulator in accordance with the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015*, the AQTF 2007 Standards for Accredited Courses and Parts 4 and 7A of the *VET Act 1996*.

When a course is accredited it becomes nationally recognised and is listed on the National Register (training.gov.au) by the Council. Only a registered training organisation (RTO) can deliver an accredited course. The RTO will issue a nationally recognised qualification or statement of attainment following the full or partial completion of the course.

2. Scope

The Council, under the *VET Act 1996*, is responsible for making decisions regarding the accreditation of VET courses.

The TAC Secretariat within the Department of Education implements and manages course accreditation policies and processes on behalf of the Council. The policies and processes are part of the overall quality assurance arrangements in place to ensure that courses are accredited in accordance with the national standards.

This policy applies to all course accreditation arrangements, including:

- initial accreditation of courses;
- reaccreditation of courses;
- amendments to courses;
- extension to course accreditation; and
- cancellation of course accreditation.

Under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the national VET Regulator, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) and the Council, jurisdictional responsibility for accreditation has been agreed as follows:

- course owners who are RTOs registered with the Council are required to apply to the Council for accreditation;
- course owners who are RTOs registered with ASQA are required to apply to ASQA for accreditation; and
- course owners who are not RTOs can apply to either body for accreditation.

The MOU includes an agreement for ASQA and the Council to exchange information about course accreditation.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Accreditation	The formal recognition of a course by a VET Regulator in accordance with the national standards for accredited courses. Accreditation means a course is nationally recognised and that an RTO can issue a nationally recognised qualification or statement of attainment following full or partial completion of the course.
Accredited course	A structured sequence of vocational education and training that has been accredited by a VET Regulator and leads to an AQF qualification or statement of attainment.
AQTF 2007 Standards for Accredited Courses	The national course design standards that must be met for accreditation by TAC.
Course owner	The person or legal entity who owns the copyright to the accredited course. The obligations of a course owner are specified in the AQTF 2007 Standards for Accredited Courses.
Extension of accreditation	Extension to the period of accreditation of a course, usually by application by the course owner. When an extension of accreditation is granted, the course owner is informed of the period of extension and the amended course expiry date.
RTO	A training provider registered by a VET Regulator in accordance with the <i>Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015</i> within a defined scope of registration.
<i>Standards for VET Regulators 2015</i>	The national standards for VET Regulators that ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a risk-based approach to regulation of RTOs and accredited courses; • consistency of implementation and interpretation of standards; and • accountability and transparency in undertaking regulatory functions.
Vet Regulator	The body with the responsibility for registration of training providers and accreditation of courses under VET legislation. In WA the Training Accreditation Council is this body.

4. Policy

Applications

The Council will only accredit a course that complies with the national standards for accredited VET courses as prescribed in the following:

- AQTF 2007 Standards for Accredited Courses; and
- The AQF.

Applications to accredit or manage an accredited course must be made using the prescribed forms. Course documentation must follow the approved templates. Only the course owner can submit an application for course accreditation.

Assessment of applications

All applications will be assessed in accordance with the requirements of the AQTF 2007 Standards for Accredited Courses.

Applications will be handled in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness. This means that the Council will act fairly, impartially and without bias in making accreditation decisions. Decisions, reasons and evidence on which decisions are based will be explained and are subject to review. Applicants will be given a fair hearing and an opportunity to present their case.

Consideration of applications

The Council will decide whether to approve or reject an application, or allow a further opportunity for submission of additional evidence by the course owner.

If the Council rejects an application, the Council will advise the applicant in writing of the reasons for the rejection.

If the Council approves an application, the Council will advise the applicant in writing and amend the National Register.

A course owner can appeal against a decision by the Council about an accredited course. An appeal can only be brought on the grounds that in making the decision appealed against, the Council erred in its application of, or failed to apply, criteria or procedures as outlined in the Council's established policies and procedures.

The appeal must be submitted in writing to the State Training Board within 21 days of the day on which the appellant was first notified of the decision.

Duration of accreditation

Accredited courses are granted accreditation for a specified period and have an expiry date. The Council generally accredits courses for five years, unless special circumstances warrant a lesser duration.

Extensions to course accreditation can be granted by the Council under certain circumstances. If a course owner applies for course reaccreditation at least three months before the expiry date of the existing course, the accreditation of the course continues automatically until the application is decided.

Delivery of accredited courses

Accredited courses can only be delivered by an RTO. The RTO must obtain copyright permission and course documentation from the course owner and must apply to TAC to have the course added to its scope of registration. Evidence of the copyright permission granted by the course owner must be included with the application for addition to scope.

Monitoring of accreditation services

The Council will monitor the provision of accreditation services by seeking feedback from course owners and developers, accreditation reviewers, RTOs delivering accredited courses and other VET Regulators.

The Council will report on its performance of accreditation functions in accordance with nationally agreed indicators and reporting protocols. Under the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015*, the Council is required to advise training package developing bodies on gaps in training packages identified as a result of its course accreditation activities.

Policy responsibility

The Council is responsible for making accreditation decisions under the *VET Act 1996*.

Policy approval/review

This policy will be submitted to the Director, Training Regulation for endorsement. Approval and future review dates will be entered on the document when the policy is finalised.

Policy record keeping and publication

The approved policy will be made available on the TAC website and in the TAC Secretariat's Quality System on TRIM.

5. Supporting information

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

AQTF 2007 Standards for Accredited Courses

AQTF Users' Guide to the Standards for Accredited Courses

TAC Procedures for:

- Course Accreditation/Reaccreditation
- Amendment to Course Accreditation
- Extension of Course Accreditation

Vocational Education and Training Act 1996