**Australian College**
Empowering Everyone

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# Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedures

## Scope

This policy and procedures are designed to put in place a continuous improvement approach to the management of operations within Australian College as required by the Standards for RTOs 2015.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to management and staff to:

- understand and implement an ongoing cycle of continuous improvement;
- systematically evaluate academic and student services provided throughout the students' journey from enrolment to completion for all stakeholders where applicable ie. students, staff, trainers/assessors, contractors, employers, government agencies, etc.;
- focus on quality assurance to ensure the requirements of regulatory standards are met or exceeded.

Opportunities for continuous improvement can be identified from various sources:

- Feedback from stakeholders
- Quality indicator data
- Reviews and audits (internal and external)
- Student, Staff, Trainer & Employer Surveys
- Validation Reports / recommendations
- Other sources including complaints and appeals, meetings and safety inspections

## Definitions

***Continuous Improvement*** – is 'typically based on an ongoing reflective feedback cycle involving monitoring, review and consequent evidence based improvements'. (TEQSA 2017). Continuous improvement is usually applied to the performance of a business including quality assurance.

***Continuous Improvement Register*** - A '*Continuous Improvement Register'* is a record of implemented material changes to demonstrate a long-term cycle of improvements in compliance, improvements to the students' journey and reduction of risk.

***Internal reviews*** – Internal reviews of policies, procedures and/or student records are used to monitor and measure compliance and quality assurance. Reviews may be performed regularly using templates and are often conducted in an annual cycle. There are many ways that internal reviews may be conducted, including:

- a brief internal check;
- a series of internal checks across all regulatory standards;

- an extensive internal audit.

*Quality Assurance\** in Education means systematic quality management and evaluation measures adopted by schools or education providers and external validation agencies to monitor, supervise and evaluate educational inputs process and the outputs for the purposes of:
- maintaining approved educational standards
- ensuring appropriate education development of learner
- providing public accountability/transparency
- ensuring the credibility and integrity of the education system; and
- ensuring constant review, improvement and renewal policies and practices

*(Definition taken from https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/education-quality-assurance )*

*Risk* – The effect of uncertainty on objectives. Training providers must manage many business risks including the risk of not meeting compliance requirements.

*Risk Assessment* – Actively seeking out, determining and recording the likelihood and severity of current and potential risks with solutions implemented to either resolve or mitigate each risk.

*Self-Assurance* - Providers can effectively self-assure their practices with systems and procedures that critically examine their performance and student outcomes on an ongoing basis. This helps to ensure ongoing compliance and the identification of ways in which providers can continue to improve. Self-assurance is a key concept in the Vocational Education regulatory framework.

# Policy

Australian College is committed and uses a systematic and continuous improvement approach to the management of its operations. When an actual or potential problem is acknowledged, its root cause is first identified, and action is taken to eliminate it. Australian College will progressively seek out and eliminate problems in this way which results in continual improvement.

Opportunities for continuous improvement can be identified from various sources:
- Feedback from stakeholders
- Quality indicator data
- Reviews and audits (internal and external)
- Student, Staff, Trainer & Employer Surveys
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- Other sources including complaints and appeals, meetings and safety inspections

## Procedure for collecting, analysing and acting on feedback data from stakeholders

- Students are encouraged to provide feedback about the quality of the Australian College's programs, facilities and resources throughout the duration of the course. On completion of the course, all students are issued with the Learner Questionnaire for final feedback.
- Trainers and assessors are encouraged to provide feedback during scheduled meetings.
- Student Support, admin and marketing staff are encouraged to provide feedback during regular staff meetings.

- The Quality and Compliance Manager collects and analyses feedback data to identify any improvements or rectifications required. A '*Continuous Improvement Request Form'* is completed by staff members with identified improvements or rectifications and actions to be taken to improve or rectify issues at hand and get approval from the CEO.
- The Quality and Compliance Manager presents feedback analysis and improvement records in staff meetings / Continuous Improvement meetings for review and close-out by the CEO.
- The Quality and Compliance Manager registers improvements in the '*Continuous Improvement Register'* once the *Continuous Improvement Request forms* have been approved and processed.

## Procedure for collecting, analysing and acting on data for AVETMISS & Quality Indicator reports

**Implement the Quality Indicator System**

### a) Process overview

I. Australian College maintains the capability to provide AVETMISS compliant data reports to the NCVER on an annual basis. This requirement is specified in the Data Provision Requirements 2020 and the Total VET Activity Reporting guide on the ASQA website, which explains the requirement for all RTOs to report their nationally recognised training data in accordance with the National VET Provider Collection Data Requirements Policy. Australian College meets this requirement by maintaining its activity data within its student management system.

II. ASQA requirements for the quality indicator system are detailed at the following web site, currently available at:

https://www.asqa.gov.au/vet-registration/meet-data-provision-requirements/quality-indicator-reporting

### b) Process for Students

I. Collect feedback using Australian College developed surveys from enrolled students who have completed at least six months of study with Australian College.

II. The students sampled must be from all current courses on Australian College's scope of registration.

III. On completion of courses, students will be asked to complete the 'Learner Questionnaire', which will provide further feedback that can be used for review.

IV. Compile the student feedback and review the compiled data implementing any improvement actions required.

V. Record the outcomes in the continuous improvement register.

VI. Use the ASQA Reporting template to submit to ASQA.

### c) Process for Employers

I. Collect feedback using the 'Employers' Questionnaire' from a sample of employers who have interacted with Australian College.

II. The employers sampled must be from all current courses on Australian College's scope of registration.

III. Compile the employer feedback and use the <u>ASQA Reporting template</u> to submit the information to ASQA.

IV. Review the compiled data implementing any improvement actions required.

V. Record the outcomes in the continuous improvement register.

## d) Frequency

I. National VET Provider Collections must be submitted to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) before the end of February each calendar year. The activity report will relate to the previous calendar year meaning that a report being made on 28th Feb 20XX will relate to the activity period of the previous calendar year (ie 1st Jan to 31st Dec).

Activity reports including all NAT files are submitted to the *AVETMISS Validation Software*. This system will report any data entry errors which must be corrected and then resubmitted. Australian College is registered with the NCVER to use the *AVETMISS Validation Software*.

II. Australian College collates the results of the Learner and Employer surveys and produces a report using the <u>Quality Indicator annual summary report template</u>. A summary report is sent to ASQA between the period 01 January – 30 June each year and will relate to the learner engagement and employer satisfaction QI survey response rates and improvement actions identified for the previous calendar year (i.e. 01 Jan – 31 Dec). The report is emailed to the following email address: qidata@asqa.gov.au.

III. Annual Declaration on Compliance completed by the CEO and sent to ASQA every year before the 31st March. Completing the declaration helps Australian College in its practice of self-assurance, supporting the College's training delivery and improving outcomes for students.

## e) Tools

I. Australian College student and staff survey
II. Learner Engagement Survey
III. Employer Survey
IV. <u>ASQA Reporting Template</u>

## f) Tracking

I. Distribute the collected data and improvement actions required to all relevant staff of Australian College.
II. *Implement the improvement actions as directed by the Continuous Improvement Committee.*
III. Record the learner survey, employer survey and other quality indicators in the continuous improvement register.

## Review Compliance with VET Quality Framework Procedure

- Check the ASQA website (https://www.asqa.gov.au/) to ensure senior management is informed and up-to-date with current ASQA requirements and guidelines.

- Subscribe to relevant newsletters either from the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC), the Industry Reference Committees (IRC's) and/or Skills Service Organisations (SSO's).

- Review the Skills Website:
  https://www.education.gov.au/search?site_search=skills+and+training

- Subscribe to the Skills Reform mailing list

- Conduct a review of Australian College compliance with the VET Quality Framework.

- Frequency
    I. Check the ASQA website monthly prior to management meetings.
    II. Distribute copies of ASQA factsheets, guides, presentations, news and information to all staff in a timely fashion.
    III. Distribute the newsletters/subscription service information to staff each time it is received.
    IV. Conduct a compliance review (internal audit) at least once every 12 months and prior to the date when Australian College has to pay its annual registration fee and complete the registration declaration.

- Sign off
    I. The CEO will sign and date the audit report and Australian College recommended improvement actions report following completion of the audit.
    II. The CEO will sign the conditions of registration declaration and submit it to ASQA following completion of the audit.
    III. Completion of the review is reported to the Continuous Improvement Committee.

### Procedures for acting upon data from other sources

- Australian College understands that processes such as complaints, appeals, WHS audits, TAS reviews, meetings or validation and moderation sessions may trigger continuous improvement or corrective actions and expects staff to raise a *Continuous Improvement Request Form* when necessary.
- Staff must submit completed forms to the Quality and Compliance Manager who will review the request and initiate any continuous improvement or corrective actions required.
- The Quality and Compliance Manager records improvements in the *Continuous Improvement Register* once the *Continuous Improvement Request* forms are closed out by the CEO.

## Record Keeping

The *Continuous Improvement Register* will be maintained to include all completed *Continuous Improvement Request forms* and any associated evidence. The *Continuous Improvement Register* is electronically maintained by the Quality and Compliance Manager for each year of operation. Records of continuous improvement will be maintained for a period of one year from the creation date.

## Responsibilities

The **CEO** is responsible for approving amendment to this policy and close out of all Continuous Improvement Request forms.
The **Quality and Compliance and Manager** is responsible for the implementation of this policy.
All **staff members** are responsible for raising *Continuous Improvement Request forms* when necessary.

## Related Policies and Forms

- Continuous Improvement Register
- Continuous Improvement Request Form
- Quality Indicator - Learner Questionnaire
- Quality Indicator - Employer Questionnaire
- Quality Indicator Data Summary Report (ASQA form)
- All Australian College's policies, procedures and forms

## Relevant Legislation and Guidelines

- Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015
- Users' Guide – Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Data Provision Requirements) Instrument 2020

## Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed annually or amended following continuous improvement strategies implemented by the Australian College.

## Version Control and Responsible Officers

| Responsible Officer: | Quality and Compliance Manager | |
|---|---|---|
| Approved by: | Chief Executive Officer | |
| Next review scheduled: | March 2024 | |
| Approved and commenced: | March 2023 | |
| **Version** | **Authored/Reviewed by** | **Brief Description of Changes** |
| V2.0 | Quality and Compliance Manager | New policy. |
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