Practice Guide
Self-assurance and Continuous Improvement

Overview

This guide explores the concept of self-assurance and continuous improvement. It highlights systems, processes and practices used to gather data to evaluate the quality of the student experience, including students with disability.

What is self-assurance?

Self-assurance is when training providers have their own systems and practices to systematically monitor, evaluate and continually improve their training outcomes and performance against the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 (Cth)*.

Self-assurance should assist RTOs to improve their practices, achieve excellence in training outcomes and ensure the integrity of training products. Self-assurance identifies the ways in which an organisation is meeting the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (DDA)* and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth) (DSE)*.

Monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement of training and assessment strategies and practices are key responsibilities of all RTOs. In addition to ensuring the RTO can demonstrate how they meet the range of legislative and regulatory requirements; self-assurance should also identify how an RTO is responsive to industry and stakeholder expectations and needs. The data and evaluation outcomes can be used to decide whether changes to the training and assessment strategies or practices are needed.

Practice considerations and checkpoints

- Consider adding questions to feedback and evaluations about accessibility, usability and inclusiveness.
- Conduct confidential surveys of students with disability about their learning experiences.

- Develop ways to evaluate and report on the accessibility of online learning platforms, tools and materials.

- Conduct industry engagement and collaboration to seek feedback about RTO access and equity strategies.

- Facilitate student consultations to seek feedback and highlight good practice.

- Create a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan or Disability Action Plan. Ensure it has clear and achievable goals and key performance indicators. Support this with a reporting framework with set timelines. This can assist to demonstrate continuous improvement goals, actions and impacts.

- Track outcomes of complaints and appeals related to disability and inclusion issues, and document changes made in response to these.

- Benchmark practices related to disability and inclusion against practices of peer organisations.

Links to the relevant legislation and standards to meet RTO obligations

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (DDA)

The DDA makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the grounds of disability. Section 22 of the DDA contains specific requirements for educational authorities and providers.

Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth) (DSE)

The DSE is a legislative instrument made under section 31 of the DDA. These standards outline the legal obligations of education providers and articulate how responsibilities under the DDA should be implemented within education settings.

Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 (Cth)

Standard 1: The RTO's training and assessment strategies and practices are responsive to industry and learner needs and meet the requirements of training packages and VET accredited courses.

Standard 2: The operations of the RTO are quality assured. The RTO is ultimately responsible for ensuring quality training and assessment within their organisation and scope of registration, regardless of any third-party arrangements where training and/or assessment is delivered on their behalf.

Standard 5: Each learner is properly informed and protected. The RTO must ensure learners are adequately informed about the services they are to receive, their rights and obligations, and the RTO's responsibilities under the RTO Standards.

Standard 6: Complaints and appeals are recorded, acknowledged and dealt with fairly, efficiently and effectively. RTOs must implement a transparent complaints and appeals

policy that enables learners and clients to be informed of and to understand their rights and the RTO's responsibilities under the Standards.

Standard 8: The RTO cooperates with the VET Regulator and is legally compliant at all times. RTOs need to comply with the requirements of the RTO Standards as well as other relevant Commonwealth, state and territory legislation. This is critical if the RTOs are to deliver training products that have integrity and fulfil their obligations to their clients.

Please note: RTOs registered by the *Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority* or the *Training Accreditation Council Western Australia* may refer to the following websites for requirements specific to you.

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority

Training Accreditation Council Western Australia

Benefits

- Student – feels confident that the organisation is interested in improving accessibility and inclusiveness.
- Trainer and assessor – provides opportunity to continue to develop their capability to be responsive to students with disability.
- RTO – demonstrates the RTO commitment to improving access and inclusion.

Training and resources

- *Clauses 1.1 to 1.4 and 2.2 – Implementing, monitoring and evaluating training and assessment strategies and practices Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)*
- *Self-assurance (ASQA)*
- *Improving Participation and Success in VET for Disadvantaged Learners (National Centre for Vocational Education Research)*

Disclaimer

The 'supporting students with disability resources' provide guidance on legislation and policy for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) regarding vocational education and training for students with disability, but they should not be considered legal advice or impose additional legal obligations. RTOs should seek tailored legal advice to understand their specific obligations. More information on this disclaimer can be found at *adcet.edu.au/vet/disclaimer* or by contacting the *Department of Employment and Workplace Relations*.