



Quality Assurance, Continuous Improvement and Compliance Policy and Procedure

Policy

Spectra is committed to continuous improvement, and applies a systematic approach to quality assurance, managing compliance, managing risk and striving for corporate excellence.

Spectra has clearly documented procedures for ensuring that quality objectives are met, managing and monitoring all training operations for consistency, compliance and continuous improvement and reviewing Trainee/Client satisfaction.

2. Related Standards

1.6. The RTO implements a range of strategies for industry engagement and systematically uses the outcome of that industry engagement to ensure the industry relevance of:

- a) its training and assessment strategies, practices and resources; and
- b) the current industry skills of its trainers and assessors.

2.1. The RTO ensures it complies with these Standards at all times, including where services are being delivered on its behalf. This applies to all operations of an RTO within its scope of registration.

2.2. The RTO:

- a) systematically monitors the RTO's training and assessment strategies and practices to ensure ongoing compliance with Standard 1; and
- b) systematically evaluates and uses the outcomes of the evaluations to continually improve the RTO's training and assessment strategies and practices. Evaluation information includes but is not limited to quality/performance indicator data collected under Clause 7.5, validation outcomes, client, trainer and assessor feedback and complaints and appeals.

6.5. The RTO:

- a) securely maintains records of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes; and
- b) identifies potential causes of complaints and appeals and takes appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.

7.5. The RTO provides accurate and current information as required by the Data Provision Requirements as updated from time to time.

8.1. The RTO cooperates with the VET Regulator

8.4. The RTO provides an annual declaration on compliance with these Standards to the VET Regulator and in particular whether it:

- a) currently meets the requirements of the Standards across all its scope of registration and has met the requirements of the Standards for all AQF certification documentation it has issued in the previous 12 months; and
- b) has training and assessment strategies and practices in place that ensure that all current and prospective learners will be trained and assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Standards.

Data Provision Requirements 2011

3. Purpose

This procedure describes the process by which Spectra can ensure that its quality objectives are met consistently and at all times, can identify and manage risks concerned with compliance with the Standards for Continuing Registration (SNR), VET Quality Framework and State Government Performance Agreements and act on opportunities to improve its systems and operations.

4. Responsibility

The CEO is responsible for ensuring that Spectra operates with a culture of continuous improvement, compliance and excellence.

The CEO and General Manager – Educational Support are responsible for the control and issue of this procedure.

5. Definitions

Quality Assurance – refers to a system that focuses on planned and systematic activities implemented so that quality requirements for a product or service will be fulfilled. It is the systematic measurement, comparison with a standard, monitoring of processes and an associated feedback loop that aims to continually identify and implement improvements.

Continuous improvement - means a planned and ongoing process that enables an RTO to systematically review and improve its policies, procedures, products and services in order to generate better outcomes for clients and to meet changing needs. It allows an RTO to constantly review its performance against the VET Quality Framework and to plan ongoing improvements to its performance. Continuous improvement involves collecting, analysing and acting on relevant information collected from clients and other interested parties, including the RTO's staff.

- The core principle of continuous improvement is the review of processes. (Feedback)
- The purpose of continuous improvement is the identification, reduction, and elimination of suboptimal processes. (Efficiency)
- The emphasis of continuous improvement is on incremental, continuous steps rather than giant leaps. (Evolution)

Continuous Improvement and Compliance Committee (CIC) – acts as a conduit for feedback from internal and external stakeholders. The committee meets regularly to review information such as

Quality Indicator Data, audit results and complaints and develops and agrees on corrective action(s) to ensure that spectra is taking appropriate actions to improve its operations through the review of current policy and procedures. Minutes of the CIC committee are taken to the management meetings, items discussed recorded and taken to the board (if necessary).

The CIC is composed of ten members who represent all the functional areas of Spectra namely, Training, Sales, Business Support and Management.

CIC Register - records significant changes recommended by the CIC committee that improve Spectra's operations. These changes are most likely to occur in response to monitoring activity, management review or self-assessment.

Compliance – fulfilment of obligations as required of an ASQA registered training organisation.

Feedback - is information provided by a trainee, employer, Trainer and Assessor , Spectra employee or other stakeholder in response to specifically designed satisfaction survey questions or validation and moderation of assessments. Spectra Employees are encouraged to provide suggestions for improvement using Q/F/005_S Suggestions for Improvement form

Unsolicited feedback - may come from a variety of sources and because of its unstructured nature may raise issues beyond the control of Spectra.

Quality Indicator Data - Spectra is required to report annually on three Quality Indicators: Learner engagement, Employer satisfaction and Competency Completion. All data relates to the previous calendar year. Failure to submit quality indicator data, or the submission of incomplete data, may affect the RTO's risk rating and impact on registration.

Risk Management Framework - is the identification, assessment and prioritization of risks followed by coordinated and efficient allocation of resources to minimize, monitor and control the probability and/or impact of unfortunate events or to realise opportunities.

Validation – is a process for ensuring that the way a unit of competency/module or group of units/modules is/are assessed, and the evidence collected through these assessments, is consistent with the requirements of the unit or group of units, of competency and of industry. It includes validating the assessment process, the assessment tools and instruments, the evidence collected using those tools and instruments, and the interpretation of that evidence to make a judgment of competence in relation to the same unit(s) of competency.

Validation may be undertaken before, during and after the actual assessment activity occurs and may include both formative and summative assessment.

Moderation – is a process that involves Trainer and Assessors discussing and reaching agreement about assessment processes and outcomes in a particular industry or industry sector. It enables VEs to develop a shared understanding of the requirements of specific Curriculum/Training Packages, including the relevant competency standards and assessment guidelines, the nature of evidence, how evidence is collected and the basis on which assessment decisions are made.

DATA

Data includes:

- Feedback from stakeholders such as students and employers
- Quality indicator data
- Conclusions arising from assessment validation
- Results of internal/external audits
- Organisation self-assessment outcomes
- Records of complaints and appeals and their resolution
- End of program evaluation.

Processes for collecting data include:

- Assessment validation and/or moderation
- Benchmarking with high performing RTOs
- Collection of feedback through surveys, focus groups, SWOT analyses, telephone interviews and discussion

6. Guidelines

Spectra is committed to meeting all its contractual obligations within each State and Territory of Australia, with emphasis on compliance and continuous improvement.

COMPLIANCE – GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

1. The CEO of Spectra Training makes an annual declaration to ASQA that Spectra Training complies with Standards for Registered Training Organisations. This applies to all of the operations within Spectra Training’s scope of registration, as listed on the National Register of VET.
2. The CEO is responsible for notifying the Commission in each State/Territory in the event that any insolvency event occurs.
3. The CEO must immediately notify the Commission in each State/Territory, if Spectra’s registration is cancelled or suspended by the National Regulator or its subsidiaries.
4. The CEO will notify the Commission in Victoria within 24 hours of the death of a trainee/apprentice.
5. The CEO is responsible for informing the Commission in other State/Territories within 21 days of the death of a trainee.
6. The CEO must delegate authority to sales and account management staff on an annual basis, to ensure that only appropriately informed Spectra employees are signing participant declaration of eligibility forms. (Vic only)
7. The General Manager – Educational Support must ensure that the most recent registration audit report is published on the Spectra website.
8. The General Manager – Educational Support is responsible for ensuring that quality indicator data for the previous calendar year is published on the Spectra website, no later than the 31st July of each year.
9. The Business Analyst & Claims Officer, is responsible for reporting, as required in each state and territory, indicative fees for qualifications on offer and quality indicator data for the previous calendar year

7. Procedures

COMPLIANCE - INTERNAL AUDITS

1. The General Manager – Educational Support is responsible for organising and implementing an internal audit of Spectra at least annually, to ensure compliance with the VET Quality Framework and State Performance Agreements.
2. The General Manager – Educational Support or designated party also conduct random mini or spot audits.
3. An internal audit template is used and a project plan developed for the purpose of the audit.
4. The General Manager – Educational Support maintains an annual audit schedule and advises all personnel of the date and purpose of the audit to ensure that all necessary documentation is available.
5. The General Manager – Educational Support provides feedback detailing areas of compliance and any non-conformances and recommendations to the CEO. Each non-conformance is assessed for risk and consequences using the Spectra Risk Management Framework provided in the QA, Continuous Improvement and Compliance Guidelines.
6. Where policies and procedures are not being adhered to, the General Manager – Educational Support will take appropriate action to ensure those policies and procedures are followed in the future. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Debriefing of staff on areas of non-conformance and the risks associated
 - b. Leading working groups to implement improvements
 - c. Working with individuals to achieve compliance
7. Where Spectra policies and procedures require change as a result of the non-conformance, the General Manager – Educational Support is responsible for referring recommendations to CIC for review.
8. The General Manager – Educational Support or delegate is responsible for changes to policies and procedures and communicating changes to staff.
9. General Manager – Educational Support is responsible for maintenance and updates to the CIC Register.

UNSOLICITED FEEDBACK

1. Data from unsolicited feedback is collected from a variety of sources throughout Spectra. It is the responsibility of all Spectra staff to refer any feedback to the General Manager – Educational Support or the relevant manager.
2. The General Manager – Educational Support collates feedback and conducts quarterly analysis to be reviewed by the CIC Committee.
3. The CIC Committee will consider all information received from clients and stakeholders and review its policies and procedures in light of the information received. All information is assessed for risk and consequences using the Spectra Risk Management Framework.
4. The General Manager – Educational Support updates the CIC Register with the CIC Committee recommendations and instigates changes to processes with the relevant manager if required.
5. The General Manager – Educational Support refers CIC Committee recommendations to change policies and procedures to the relevant manager.

QUALITY INDICATOR DATA

1. It is the General Manager – Educational Support responsibility to collect, analyse and report against Quality Indicators (QI) data:
 - **Employer satisfaction** - focuses on employer evaluations of learner competency development and the relevance of learner competencies for work and further training, as well as employer evaluation of the overall quality of the training and assessment. Employer Satisfaction data must be submitted by 30 June each year.
 - **Learner engagement** - focuses on the extent to which learners are engaging in the types of activities that are likely to promote high-quality skill outcomes. It includes learner perceptions of the quality of their competency development and the level of support they receive from RTOs. Learner Engagement data must be submitted by 30 June each year.
 - **Competency completion** - This indicator shows the number of qualification enrolments completed and units of competency awarded in the previous calendar year by each RTO. Competency Completion data must be submitted by 31 December each year.
2. Learner Engagement questionnaires are distributed to participants by their Trainer and Assessor on completion of their training program. The Trainer and Assessor will confirm to the best of their knowledge that all questionnaires are returned.
3. Employer Satisfaction questionnaires are distributed to nominated mentors at the completion of the training program. An email with a link to an online survey is generated by the Spectra Receptionist monthly and return rates are monitored.
4. Learner Engagement and Employer Satisfaction questionnaires are entered into an excel database regularly for analysis and reporting by the Spectra Receptionist.
5. All questionnaire feedback is summarised in an Executive Summary by the Claims Officer and Business Analyst, then forwarded to the CIC Committee for review. Key aspects of the summary are assessed for risk and consequence using the Spectra Risk Management Framework.
6. It is the responsibility of the General Manager – Educational Support to convene meetings of the CIC Committee to regularly review Learner Engagement and Employer Satisfaction feedback.

STAKEHOLDER (STRUCTURED) FEEDBACK

1. Participant and mentor evaluation feedback/evaluation tools are developed in consultation with the QA Committee. The agreed feedback tools are documented and disseminated for implementation by the Operations Manager or delegate.
2. Participant Evaluation Feedback Forms are provided to all participants at the completion of every training cycle and are submitted by the Trainer and Assessor with typical training and assessment evidence.
3. The Spectra Receptionist collects and enters the feedback results into an excel database regularly for analysis and reporting.
4. All evaluation feedback is summarised in an Executive Summary by the Claims Officer and Business Analyst, then forwarded to the CIC Committee for review. Key aspects of the summary are assessed for risk and consequence using the Spectra Risk Management Framework.
5. Periodic moderation and validation of assessment events scheduled in the CI schedule are conducted by teams comprising Trainers and Subject Matter Experts using tools and forms prepared and distributed by the Operations Manager or delegate.
 6. The completed evaluation feedback forms and moderation and validation forms shall be maintained in appropriate and secure Course Continuous Improvement Folders by the

General Manager – Educational Support and will be reviewed regularly to inform Training and Assessment Strategy and courseware improvements.

7. Employee Engagement Surveys are distributed by a third party, to all Spectra employees each quarter, under the authority of the People and Performance Manager.
8. The survey results are collated and an Executive Summary is provided to the P&P Manager for presentation to the Executive Management team and the results will be tabled at the corresponding General Management meetings.
9. Employee Engagement survey results are distributed to all Spectra employees via the Spectra bi-monthly newsletter and are presented at the Quarterly Business Review and corresponding team meetings.
10. Spectra will support the professional development of staff by providing access to activities and education that will improve their knowledge and skills relevant to their work at Spectra. All staff will be able to access professional development through clear procedures for application, approval and recording of professional development activities.
11. The General Manager – Educational Support or delegate will ensure that the use of stakeholder feedback:
 - is for the appraisal of training conducted and guides future training and the quality of resources
 - shall be provided to trainers to guide future training processes by seeking responses on the degree of program success through the CIC Committee
 - which indicates discrimination or anti-equal opportunity practices shall be acted upon by the relevant GM
 - will inform the general business direction of Spectra
 - will inform the CIC Committee
 - identifies the quality training and assessment across all of Spectra’s operations
 - confirms that Spectra adheres to principles of access and equity and maximises outcomes for its clients
 - will identify that management systems are responsive to the needs of clients, staff and stakeholders, and the environment in which the RTO operates so that quality can be monitored over time to identify both improvements and any downward trends.

RECORD KEEPING

Records under this procedure shall be maintained for auditing purposes by the relevant governing bodies.

Spectra will retain:

- Evaluation survey data for continuous improvement
- Minutes of meetings with CEO and senior management
- CIC committee minutes
- Email records of correspondence with sessional trainers and contractors
- Email records and copies of student feedback and complaints and appeals forms
- Continuous improvement register Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure (code)
- Continuous Improvement requests
- Complaints register
- Validation and moderation record

- Improvement action register
- Assessment Validation & Moderation Records

8. Related Documents

GR006 Organisational Code of Practice

QD001 Internal audit flow chart

QD002 Engagement surveys flow chart

QD003 Quality Assurance Client feedback flow chart

TR010_S Validation and Moderation of Assessments Policy

PR009_S Performance Management Policy and Procedure

QR106_S Continuous Improvement and Compliance Committee Charter

QF003 Continuous Improvement Schedule

QF005_S Suggestions for Improvement

R005 Continuous Improvement and Compliance Register - <P:\Continuous Improvement and Compliance\CIC Register>

Data Provision Requirements 2012 <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2011L01342>

General direction: Quality indicators 24 April 2012
http://www.asqa.gov.au/verve/resources/General_direction_-_Quality_indicators_24_April_2012.pdf

NSSC Special bulletin number 01 – December 2011
http://www.nssc.natese.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/62278/NSSC-SB-01_-_QIs_for_RTOs.pdf

The following documents are located in: <T:\QA\QI Data>

AQTF Quality Indicator Handbook for Registered Training Organisations

Employer Survey Guide

Learner Survey Guide

Learner Engagement Questionnaire

Employer Satisfaction Questionnaire

9. Authority

CEO

10. Review

12 months from release or as required

AMENDMENT SCHEDULE

Date	Modification	Detail	By
23/08/2011		Policy adapted from Quality Training and Assessment Policies & Procedures, V14.0,	Chief Financial Officer

		July 2010	
2/6/2012	Updated	CLB Specific, current process & Updated to include Quality Assurance Manager & Committee	Quality Assurance Manager
29/6/2012	Updated	Restructured to merge with QR003	
12/9/2012	Updated	Included reporting requirements for general compliance	Quality Assurance Manager
March 2013	Updated	Policy updated to include SPECTRA rebranding, merging of CI policy inclusion of ASQA update and details of Validation, Moderation, CIC Committee, CI Schedule, Data and Records and Spectra specific current processes.	Operations Manager
March 2015	Updated	Updated to map against new standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015	Operations Manager
05/01/2017	Update	Update to reflect current position titles	General Manager – Education Support