

Consultation Feedback Report – Proposed Quality Assurance Standard for Industry Training Organisations (ITOs)

Introduction

In August 2004, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority invited stakeholders in the industry trading organisation sector to comment on the draft *QA Standard for ITOs*. Responses were required by 28 October 2004.

Background

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority has a number of Quality Assurance (QA) Standards for different parts of the education sector to both clarify quality expectations and help lift best practice over time.

The Industry Training Federation (ITF) supported the development of the QA Standard on the basis that the application of quality assurance processes and procedures are integral to the delivery of quality education and training outcomes.

The *QA Standard for ITOs* relates only to an ITO's education and training goals and objectives and should be interpreted in the context of the Government's Tertiary Education Strategy 2002/07.

Summary of consultation feedback

Written feedback was received from five ITOs, the Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics New Zealand (ITPNZ) and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC).

The main issues identified relating to the standard were:

- capability and capacity of personnel
- arrangements for industry training including development and design
- trainee information and support
- acknowledgement of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

The main concerns identified not directly relating to the standard were:

- duplication of data collection and compliance confirmation between NZQA and TEC
- audit cycle
- availability of a self-evaluation workbook
- audit type definitions
- costs of audit visits.

Element 1.2.3 *Arrangements for industry training* was the element that attracted the most comment. The comments indicated that the wording of the element needs to be more strongly aligned with the Act.

Feedback from the ITO participants involved in the trial audits to test the draft QA Standard identified:

- concerns with the use of the word 'element' in the standard – the terminology being confused with unit standard terminology
- wording of element 1.2.4 being too provider oriented
- wording of element 1.2.5 vi not being clear
- consistency in the use of the word 'external' when referring to national external moderation
- more clarity about what external moderation is.

As a result of the feedback:

- changes were made to elements 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5 and 1.2.6 - clauses in these elements have been re-worded
- the reference to support services has been deleted.

Other feedback highlighted concerns about:

- the importance of ensuring a self-evaluation document is available in a timely manner
- the costs of the audit
- the frequency of the audits.

The feedback also indicated that the ITOs have different opinions on the interpretation of the Industry Training Act and the role of the NZQA.

Two respondents commented that the standard reads well and provides good guidance as to the expectations of the NZQA. They considered that an audit based on the standard would provide the NZQA with high quality information as well as providing ITO's with guidance as to areas of strength and where development is needed.

Individual responses were made to all respondents, with explanations where their suggestions were not incorporated into the standard. These suggestions related mainly to the audit process rather than the standard.

TEC endorsed the draft QA Standard. They stated, "The standard covers the legislative requirements for NZQA input into the recognition and will provide a useful new process for this input. The inclusion of NZQA's commitment to work with other agencies including the TEC to align review and audit processes is welcomed by the TEC and we look forward to working with NZQA aligning our audit process with the standard. The implementation of this new process will contribute to a more complete view of the quality of the ITO's contribution to the Tertiary Education Strategy."

Revised draft and recommendations

The revised draft of the *QA Standard for ITOs* was forwarded to the members of the sub-group of the ITO/NZQA consultative group for their consideration. The sub-group requested:

- the ITPNZ submission be forwarded to the ITF
- the removal of the addition made by the Qualifications Authority steering group to footnote 3 on page 8 (the addition made was in response to feedback)
- clarification and consistency in the use of the abbreviations AMAP and MAP
- a footnote be inserted to define national external moderation
- a review of the standard 12 months following implementation.

The final draft of the *QA Standard* was forwarded to the NZQA Board for approval at its March 2005 meeting.

Expression of appreciation

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority appreciates the feedback from those ITOs involved in the trial audit and the stakeholders who submitted written feedback. The feedback and support from the Industry Training Federation, (including the ITO/NZQA consultative group) was essential to the success of both the audit trial and the approval of the *QA Standard for ITOs* presented to the Board.