Newsletter

Please ensure that this Newsletter is distributed to all members of your staff – it provides a valued source of information to assist you in managing your obligations under the PQS Agreement.

Contract Connector

Issue 21 – September 2013

NOTE: Throughout the Newsletter Supervising Registered Training Organisations (SRTOs) are able to access website information through the inclusion of hyperlinks.

Should a link not work when clicked – copy and paste that portion of the link that has "broken" and sits on the next line of the article – place this into the browser.

Check that the full pathway has been copied across – then activate the hyperlink as normal. It should work.

INDUSTRY SUPPORT GUIDELINES – For Variation Requests [1]

The July 2013 edition of Contract Connector alerted Suppliers to an updated Industry Support Guideline resource available on the website.

Recent streamlining of Departmental Industry Engagement arrangements has necessitated this resource being updated again. This guideline is available at

http://www.training.qld.gov.au/trainingorganisations/user-choice/documents-2010-2015.html

Please ensure that you refer to this document before making variation requests.

EOFY PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS [2] For Pre- qualified supplier agreements

The PQS agreements run for a 5 year period from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2015 and maintain the same Agreement Number throughout the program. In order to manage the data flow throughout the 5 year program period, the Department's payment system separates the training activity for each financial year.

In order to finalise training activity at the end of the financial year, suppliers have 90 days (**until 30 September**) to submit error free data.

Suppliers are reminded they will receive two (2) (PQS) agreement payments for data submitted during July to September and paid with the August to October claims. **Suppliers please note: There will be delay between these payments due to:**

- The first payment to be processed and paid will cover your 2012-2013 financial year data.
- The second payment to be processed and paid will be for the 2013-2014 financial year data.
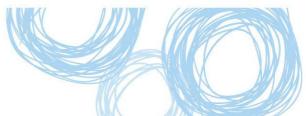
Once the 2012-2013 financial year data has been finalised and paid for in October you will return to receiving one payment for data submissions from November 2013.

WHEN SRTO'S CEASE TRAINING OPERATIONS – New Procedure [3]

Generally, a supervising registered training organisation (SRTO) is **NOT** able to withdraw from delivering training as agreed to in the training plan without the agreement of all parties to the training plan.

However, from time to time, an SRTO may exit the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector as a result of a business decision, a change to their scope of registration, or a funding decision made by DETE that affects their ability to deliver training for particular qualifications.

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In the event that an apprentice'/trainees' nominated SRTO is about to cease or has ceased training operations, the Department has formalised a process to transition affected apprentices and trainees to a new SRTO. The SRTO is to refer to the ***SRTO – Ceasing Training Operations – Policy and Procedure***.

Under this process, when an SRTO is no longer in a position to deliver training and assessment, they are required to:

- complete any eligible apprentices or trainees who are entitled to be issued with a qualification;
- inform their employers and apprentices and trainees impacted by the change and provide them assistance to identify a replacement SRTO to complete the training;
- provide the apprentice/trainee with any outstanding statement of attainments and update the training record to reflect the training undertaken, both structured and on-the-job components since the previous update, and
- meet their obligations for providing student records to Australian Skills Quality Authority (refer www.ASQA.gov.au)

Additionally if the SRTO has a Pre-qualified Supplier agreement under User Choice, they must provide written advice of their intentions to: Contract Management and Performance Unit (contact details are listed at the end of this newsletter).

The ***SRTO – Ceasing Training Operations Policy and Procedure*** can be located at the following: http://training.qld.gov.au/about/vet-policies-procedures/apprenticeships-traineeships/procedures/index.html

For all other enquiries, please contact Apprenticeships Info on 1800 210 210

Policy and Procedure updates [4] - Adequate Training Arrangements

A new policy covering the requirements for supervision and adequate training arrangements has been created and added to the existing **Apprenticeship and Traineeship Operational Policies and Procedures.** The new policy is titled "***Adequate Training Arrangements – Policy***"

In line with the new policy the procedure titled **"*Adequate Training Arrangements - Procedure*"** has been updated and now includes information which was previously located in the procedure **Relating to Ratio of Apprentices and Trainees to Qualified Persons**.

The "ratio of apprentices and trainees to qualified persons" procedure has been removed as it is no longer current.

The Employer Resource Assessment (ERA) has also been updated in line with the new policy and updated procedure. In summary the policy and procedure has been aligned to actual practice where the SRTO makes a determination on whether there is adequate supervision and training arrangements in place to allow for completion of the apprenticeship/traineeship.

A section has also been added in respect to dealing with a Group Training Organisation or Principal Employer Organisation and the different considerations this has for an SRTO. In all aspects of the new policy, procedure and ERA it is very clear the SRTO is required to retain sufficient evidence to support any variation from the ratio of 1:1.

If an SRTO identifies that an employer is not able to provide adequate arrangements to achieve the outcomes required under the training plan the SRTO should not commit to the training plan and must advise the employer, the Australian Apprenticeships Centre and the Department immediately. For further information please review the new policy and procedure.

The new policy and procedure are available at training.qld.gov.au http://www.training.qld.gov.au/about/vet-policies-procedures/apprenticeships-traineeships/procedures/index.html For further information please contact Brett Haagsma on 3237 9757 or brett.haagsma@dete.qld.gov.au

APPRENTICESHIPS INFO – Updates to published fact sheets [5]

The **ATSR-005 Transition requirements for apprenticeships and traineeships** stakeholder reference sheet has been deleted from the Apprenticeships Info website because the information contained in the reference sheet can be found on the Australian Skills Quality Authority website - http://www.asqa.gov.au/verve/_resources/General_direction_Transition_and_teach_out.pdf.

SRTOs should refer to the ASQA website so that transition procedures are always up to date.
For further assistance, please contact Apprenticeships Info on 1800 210 210 or via email at apprenticeshipsinfo@qld.gov.au.

TRANSITIONING REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW QUALIFICATIONS [6]

SRTOs must ensure that they meet the requirements of ASQA's General Direction: Transition and Teach-out policy. For DETE funded training this specifically relates to:-

- **New Students** – once a replacement qualification is published on the national register, an SRTO may commence training or assessment of the superseded qualification to a new student, for a period of 12 months or until it is registered for the replacement qualification (whichever occurs first).

- **Teach-out provisions** – The SRTO may continue to deliver training and assessment services and issue awards to current students of the superseded qualification who would be genuinely disadvantaged if required to transfer to the replacement qualification, for up to 6 months after the expiry of the transition period for its replacement.

TRAINING COMPLIANCE UNIT (TCU) [7]

The information provided to SRTOs by TCU is intended to achieve our shared aims of quality outcomes for VET stakeholders in Queensland. Information provided in this edition will focus on the importance of preparing and providing audit evidence.

Audit evidence

A compliance audit will take up to two days. During this on-site audit activity, the SRTO will be asked to provide all available evidence to demonstrate its compliance with requirements of the PQS Agreement. Audit findings are based on evidence sighted during the site audit. Where the SRTO is unable to provide evidence of compliance during the site audit process, that evidence will be assumed to not exist. It is therefore critical for SRTOs to provide necessary compliance evidence during the conduct of the site visit. Upon conclusion of the site audit i.e. once the site audit activity ends, the SRTO **will not** be given an opportunity to provide further evidence to substantiate claims made prior to the audit.

At audit, the audit team will focus on, but not be limited to, records pertaining to the SRTO's processes and documentation relating to its compliance with the PQS Agreement and its legislated function as a SRTO. This will include assessment of information provided to students, implementation of fees and charges, student participation, assessment evidence, the legitimacy of employment arrangements, employer's capacity to train

and supervise the apprentice/trainee and validation of AVETMISS data.

To ensure compliance with the Pre-Qualified Supplier (PQS) Agreement, the organisation should review the following documents:
- PQS Agreement,
- User Choice Policy 2010/15,
- the *Vocational Education, Training and Employment Act 2000* and
- the Evidence Guide for Supervising Registered Training Organisations

and ensure that all necessary evidence has been prepared and is available at the time of audit.

EOFY CLOSURES– USER CHOICE [8] PROGRAM AGREEMENTS

The 2012-2013 financial year ended 30 June 2013. Suppliers have 90 days (until 30 September 2013) to finalise and submit all AVETMISS data for the 2012-2013 financial year. Data errors appearing on the Validation Report **MUST** be rectified by 30 September 2013 to ensure payment.

There will be no extension granted to submit 2012-2013 financial year data past 30 September 2013.

Where errors relate to a student's Training Contract such as cancellations and amendments etc., Suppliers need to follow up with the relevant Training Queensland Regional Office.

For all other funding types with Program completion dates in the same timeframe, Suppliers must ensure that all data is submitted and error free within the required timeframe as specified in their Agreement.

CERTIFICATE 3 GUARANTEE PROGRAM [9] – Policy Amendment [a]

As detailed in an email to providers on 17 July, and highlighted in last months' Contract Connector, Section 3.2.3 of the *Certificate 3 Guarantee Program Policy 2013-2014* - Obligations of Pre-qualified Suppliers has been amended.

This policy amendment states "It is not permissible for a Certificate 3 Guarantee Pre-qualified Supplier to publish or advertise fee free training".

As per the policy, please ensure that all student contribution fees (inclusive of all essential training costs) for both concessional and non-concessional participants

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are published/advertised and disclosed up front to Participants.

Failure to collect and report student contributions fees will result in non-payment for training delivery reported.

The updated policy is available on the Department of Education, Training and Employment website at http://training.qld.gov.au/information/investing-in-skills/certificate3/training-provider.html,

- Reporting of Student Contribution Fees [b]

Section 3.4 - Reporting and Payment, of the Certificate 3 Guarantee Program Policy 2013-2014 provides information about AVETMISS reporting requirements including the reporting of the Student Contribution Fee.

Section 3.4.2 (h) indicates that for each Participant, the PQS must submit electronic data that provides the amount of Student Contribution Fees collected per Unit of Competency.

It has come to the Department's attention that in some cases, AVETMISS software systems are either rounding these values to the nearest dollar, or as there is only capacity for 4 characters to be reported, is removing the decimal point e.g. $12.75 is being received as $1275.

In order to alleviate this issue, please report the Student Contribution Fees collected per Unit of Competency by rounding to the nearest dollar amount with no decimal point or cents. For example, **if the competency charge is $12.75 please enter 13 only**.

- Apprentice Information Self Service (AISS) [c]

To assist PQS determine if a prospective student has previously attained a Certificate III or higher level qualification, **or** is currently enrolled in an Apprenticeship or Traineeship, the Department has modified its Apprentice Information Self Service (AISS) system.

PQS **must** use this database as part of their processes when checking a participant's eligibility to participate in the program.

Please be advised that the Department is able to access logs showing user activity in AISS. In the course of reviewing user activity where the Department confirms that a provider has:

(1) **accessed** student information via AISS that indicates that a participant is ineligible for training but accepts this student anyway; or

(2) **not accessed** student information available via AISS which indicates that a participant is ineligible but accepts the student anyway;

Then the PQS **will not be entitled for payment for that student.**

ELECTRONIC RECORDKEEPING – reminder [10]

Recently some Suppliers have sought clarification with Contract Management and Performance, and the Department's Training Compliance Unit regarding the issue of Electronic Record Keeping.

Please note that the Department's position in relation to this matter is that the "Records" that a Supplier must keep, as set out in section 9.1 of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Pre-qualified Supplier Agreement can be both digital and/or paper-based, providing there are systems in place and implemented to ensure the integrity of those records.

SUPPLIER RESPONSIBILITY [11]. . .

Suppliers are reminded of their responsibility to ensure compliance with all **policy guidelines and agreement requirements**. In particular:-
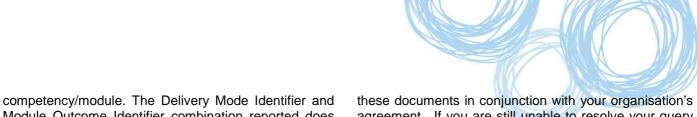
- Any changes to a Supplier's Scope of Registration must be advised to Contract Management and Performance immediately. Notification can be provided by email then submitting a variation request through Variations On Line (VOL) to either remove the qualification from your Schedule or remove the qualification from being published on QTIS.
- Any changes to a Supplier's Legal Name or a change in control must be notified to Contract Management and Performance **before** the changes occur. **Failure to advise the Department will result in the recognition that no valid Agreement is in place and no payments will be made**. It is at the Department's discretion as to whether it consents or refuses to consent to any change in Control of the Supplier.

ERRORS EXPLAINED [12]

This month's validation error is 32013 – Invalid Delivery Strategy/Module Outcome Combination.

Explanation:

The Delivery Mode Identifier uniquely identifies the **predominant** mode of delivery for a unit of

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competency/module. The Delivery Mode Identifier and Module Outcome Identifier combination reported does not align with the guidelines as stated in the AVETMIS Standard**.**

- **Remedy**

  Supplier needs to refer to the following appropriate documents to check that correct codes have been entered into their AVETMISS database.

  - User Choice 2010-2015 Policy
  - User Choice Continuing Student Policy

  Where necessary amend the data as required to comply with the AVETMIS Standard, Agreements or Policies.

DECLARATIONS [13]

The following qualifications have been approved for User Choice funding:

UEE11 – Electrotechnology Training Package

Qualification	Code	Priority
Certificate IV in Electrotechnology – Systems Electrician	UEE40611	1

Note: All declared apprenticeships/traineeships and details about User Choice funding can be found on Queensland Training Information Service (QTIS) located on the departments Home Page - under Online Services.

Remember: You must have scope of registration before applying for the addition of any qualification to your Schedule A/Delivery Schedule.
Only when scope has been approved can you then apply for the qualification to be added to your Schedule A/Delivery Schedule through Variations on Line using your Purchasing on Line (POL) account.

CONTACTING CONTRACT MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE UNIT (CM&P) [14]

CM&P is your primary contact regarding information about your **executed** Agreement including payment, variation requests and any other agreement related issues. The User Choice 2010-2015 documents located on User Choice website, http://training.qld.gov.au/training-organisations/user-choice/documents-2010-2015.html contains all information for the 2010-2015 User Choice program. Before seeking advice or information from CM&P regarding the program you are encouraged to read

these documents in conjunction with your organisation's agreement. If you are still unable to resolve your query then email the Unit's general email account: supplier.management@dete.qld.gov.au

Wherever possible, your enquiry will be forwarded to your contract manager, however if they happen to be away or working on another project, we will ensure that someone knows about your email and can respond appropriately. **Emails sent to a specific officer who may be away or working elsewhere in the Department may not be answered until the officer returns.** Emailing the general account will ensure that your concerns are addressed promptly.

Contact the Contract Management and Performance Unit.
Email: supplier.management@dete.qld.gov.au
Tel: (07) 3405 3715.

LAST WORD

The way to get things done is not to mind who gets the credit of doing them

Benjamin Jowett

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