



Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham

Assistant Minister for Education and Training
Liberal Senator for South Australia

MEDIA RELEASE

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Reduced financial burden on registered training organisations

In a further bid to strengthen the vocational education and training (VET) sector, the Coalition has confirmed additional funding to the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA).

Assistant Minister for Education and Training, Senator Simon Birmingham, said the additional funding to ASQA will help bolster the Authority's regulatory powers and remove excessive paperwork and red tape for registered training organisations (RTOs).

"This is the first time ASQA has been properly funded to focus its attention on serious breaches of standards," Senator Birmingham said.

"The Budget implements the \$68 million funding commitment the Government made to reform the national training regulator to better enforce the tough new Standards for RTOs which came into effect on 1 April.

"Without this funding, ASQA would have been forced to increase fees and focus on revenue raising, rather than tackling poor practice.

"ASQA had been due to move to full cost recovery in 2015-16, a move which would have seen RTOs paying around 120 per cent more in annual fees from 1 July 2015.

"The funding means ASQA will not have to increase its current fees beyond the annual CPI increase, which is good news for both RTOs and students, who would have borne the brunt of any associated increase in course fees."

ASQA Chief Commissioner Chris Robinson said the additional funding would ensure that the regulator was able to identify and act on poor quality provider faster.

"The majority of ASQA's regulatory work to-date has been application-based, in that an audit of a provider would occur when that provider made an application to, for example, re-register or change its scope of registration," Mr Robinson said.

"ASQA is now able to implement a regulatory strategy that is based on sector intelligence and data. This means regulatory scrutiny and resources can be targeted at areas of greatest risk."

Senator Birmingham said the Government has introduced a range of initiatives to boost the quality of VET in Australia.

“These include implementing ASQA’s infringement notice scheme and special audit of VET FEE-HELP providers to address quality concerns, and establishing the National Training Complaints Hotline (13 38 73) to make it easier for complaints about training to be heard and actioned.”

“The Government is serious about its reform agenda to create a more streamlined and industry-focused skills and training system that delivers job-ready graduates,” Senator Birmingham said.

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