



ANNUAL REPORT

Training Accreditation Council
2019 – 2020

Statement of Compliance

Hon Sue Ellery MLC

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In accordance with section 30 of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*, I submit for your information and presentation to Parliament, the Annual Report of the Training Accreditation Council for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.



Ian C Hill
CHAIRMAN
TRAINING ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

14 September 2020

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Alternative formats (such as large font and translated) are available on request.

Acknowledgment: some icons designed by Freepik and Flaticon.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report fulfils the requirements of section 30(1) of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* (VET Act) by reporting on the operations of the Training Accreditation Council (the Council) to the Minister for Education and Training for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

The annual report is prepared on a financial year basis, aligns to the Council's Business Plan and reflects its regulatory responsibilities under the VET Act and the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015*.

Where possible, data for the 2019-2020 reporting period and previous reporting periods have been provided to allow a comparison of activities.

The report comprises:

Executive summary

- Chairman's report
- 2019-2020 highlights and key activities
- Response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

Introduction – the Council at a glance

- Overview of the Council's guiding principles, membership and functions
- Context in which the Council works
- Planning and reporting framework
- Arrangements for auditors and accreditation reviewers
- Fees and charges

Approach to regulation

- Overview of the Council's approach to regulation

Performance against Key Priority Areas

- Overview of the Council's performance and achievements relating to the Council's four key priority areas as outlined in its Business Plan 2017 to 2020:
 - a) legislation and compliance
 - b) communication and information
 - c) collaboration and engagement
 - d) quality processes and services

1.2 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

On behalf of the Training Accreditation Council, I am pleased to present the Council's Annual Report for 2019-2020. This Annual Report demonstrates the Council's commitment to delivering a client-focussed regulatory service in Western Australia.

A key focus for the Council during this period has been supporting RTOs impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic, through what has been a challenging period. With support from the State Government, the Council was able to provide regulatory fee relief to RTOs and accredited course owners through adjusting a range of fees to zero and flexible payment arrangements in some fee categories. Fee relief extended to RTOs seeking to deliver training products developed as a direct result of the impact of the pandemic.

In addition to fee relief measures, the Council implemented a range of strategies to help reduce regulatory burden on RTOs impacted by the pandemic. This included alternative audit arrangements and extending RTO registration and course accreditation periods. The Council also proactively worked with RTOs to consider alternate training and assessment arrangements.

The Council would like to acknowledge the significant efforts of RTO staff who adapted training and assessment strategies during the height of the pandemic in Western Australia. RTOs are to be commended for their adaptive and flexible approach to training and assessment services to ensure ongoing delivery to students.

During the reporting period the Council continued to expand provision of education and guidance to the sector, delivering a range of practical information to support RTO business improvement and compliance practice. Workshops were offered face-to-face and via webinar presentations, with regional workshops and customised workshops delivered for RTO schools. Over 460 participants from across Western Australia attended Council Education Program events.

During 2019-2020, the Council endorsed its regulatory strategy titled *Focus on Quality: TAC Regulatory Strategy 2019-2021*. The strategy identifies a range of priority and focus areas including continued scrutiny of the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, a qualification which underpins the quality of training and assessment in the sector.

In line with its regulatory priorities, the Council finalised a strategic review into third party arrangements. Third parties play a critical role as major contributors to the quality of VET outcomes. The review was a major undertaking and confirmed the significant use of third parties in the sector. Recommendations identified from the review include continued compliance monitoring, focus on education and guidance for RTOs and third parties and strategies to enhance regulation and risk management of RTOs relying on third parties.

Through its accreditation function, the Council is able to accredit locally developed courses driven by local needs, in a timely manner. This includes accrediting courses that meet new industry requirements and State Government priorities such as employment and training

initiatives. During 2019-2020, the Council continued to respond rapidly to local priority areas with the accreditation of courses in automation and community services.

The Council continued to proactively engage with stakeholders through an extensive program of engagement and collaboration to ensure targeted and proportionate regulation. Engagement with stakeholders is a key and well established component of Council's regulatory approach and incorporates a broad range of activities focussed on the VET sector in Western Australia and nationally. The intelligence gathered from stakeholders contributes to, and helps shape, the Council's regulatory practices and priorities.

National reviews aimed at improving the quality of VET in Australia gained momentum during the reporting period and have the potential to introduce significant changes to the future direction of the VET sector. The Council actively contributes to VET policy and reform matters and as reforms progress, the outcomes including implications for the Western Australian VET sector, will continue to be considered by Council.

The Council has developed a strong reputation for its experience, knowledge, expertise, quality assurance and approach to regulation. I extend a thank you to my fellow Council Members for their contribution, collaboration and support during the reporting period.

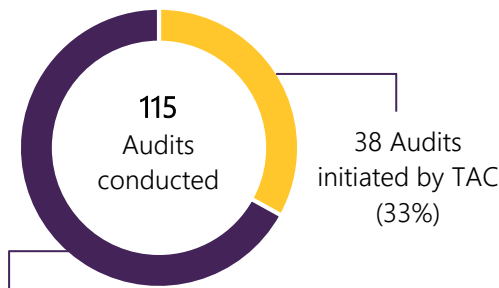
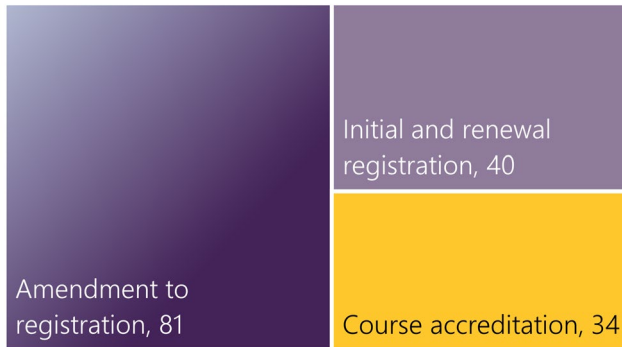
The Council could not undertake its work without the significant commitment of the Council's Secretariat. The Council would like to extend its sincere gratitude to the Council's Secretariat provided by the Department of Training and Workforce Development and acknowledge their ongoing professional conduct, dedication and expertise provided in supporting the work of the Council.



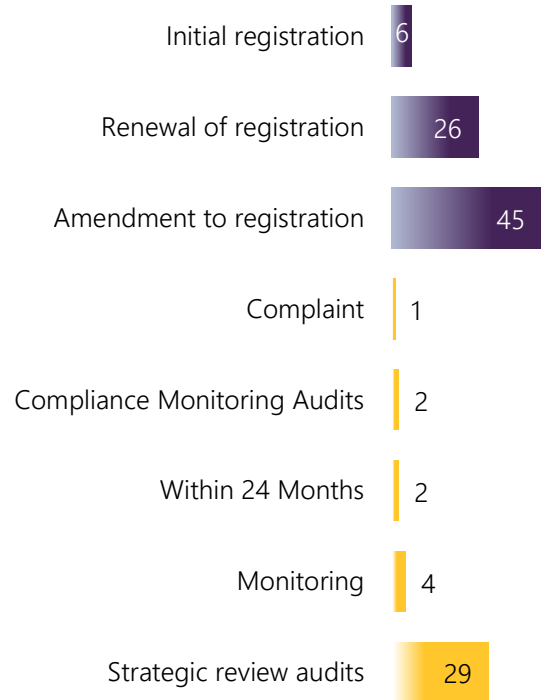
Ian C Hill
CHAIRMAN
TRAINING ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

1.3 2019-2020 HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ACTIVITIES

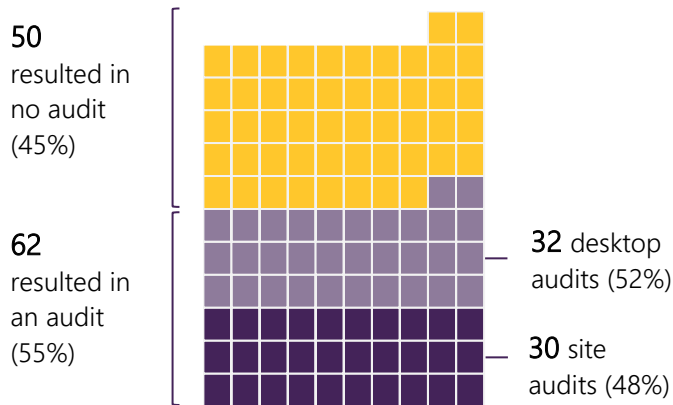
Endorsed applications



Audit types

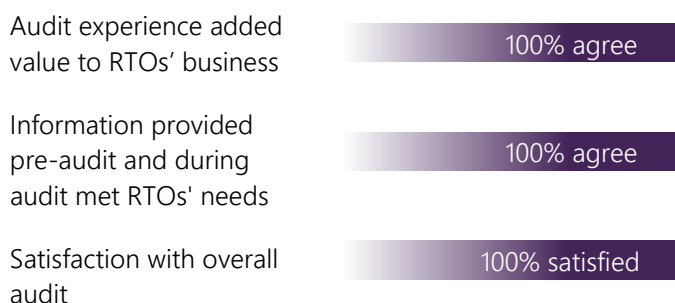


Of the **112** risk assessments undertaken on applications received:



- 8 education workshops
- 2 regional workshops
- 10 webinars
- 469 participants in the education program
- 95 formal meetings with stakeholders

RTO feedback



- 5 RTOs approved in the Compliance Recognition Program
- 0 RTO registrations were cancelled or suspended

1.4 RESPONSE TO THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the State Government approved the Council to provide regulatory fee relief to RTOs and accredited course owners from 1 May 2020 to 31 October 2020.

In supporting the fee relief measures, the State Government acknowledged the impact of COVID-19 on the Western Australian VET market. The fee relief measures include:

- annual RTO registration fee fixed to zero;
- Compliance Monitoring Audit charge fixed to zero;
- flexible payment arrangements available for RTO renewal applications;
- flexible payment arrangements available for course re-accreditation applications; and
- no amendment application fee for RTOs seeking to deliver training products developed as a direct result of the impact of COVID-19.

In addition to fee relief measures, the Council implemented a range of strategies to help reduce regulatory burden to RTOs impacted by COVID-19. These strategies included:

- alternative arrangements for audits in progress and postponing scheduled audits in cases where RTOs indicated they did not have the capacity to proceed;
- alternative communication methods for site audits were utilised such as video conferencing to assess facilities and resources and engage with the RTO;
- extending RTO registration and course accreditation periods;
- approving extended transition periods for multiple qualifications;
- expediting RTO amendment to scope applications to support State Government initiatives and promote skills development during COVID-19;
- inviting RTOs to contact the Council if COVID-19 was impacting on the RTO's financial viability; and
- proactively encouraging RTOs to consider alternative training and assessment arrangements and working with numerous RTOs on a case-by-case basis.

Additionally, the implementation of physical distancing measures in response to COVID-19 required RTOs to change the way training was delivered. Strategies adopted by RTOs included reducing class sizes, blended delivery using a combination of online and face-to-face training, rescheduling and/or temporarily ceasing course delivery.

Council also continued to deliver its education program events, with demand increasing substantially indicating RTOs continued to seek opportunities for staff to continue to engage with the VET sector despite the challenging circumstances of COVID-19.

2. INTRODUCTION – THE COUNCIL AT A GLANCE

The Council delivers a client-focussed regulatory service for the VET sector in Western Australia through quality assured registration and accreditation services.

2.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Council's guiding principles communicate to stakeholders the way in which it undertakes its business. The Council:

- is open, accountable and transparent;
- is clear on its role as a regulatory body;
- embeds an outcomes focus;
- is fair and equitable;
- maintains a culture of continuous improvement;
- communicates clearly and concisely; and
- supports the sector through education and guidance.

2.2 MEMBERSHIP

The Council has seven members who are appointed by the Minister for Education and Training in accordance with section 25 of the VET Act. Members are selected on the basis of their expertise, qualifications and experience relevant to the Council's functions.

For the reporting period, the members were:

Mr Ian Hill, Chairman

Miss Janelle Dawson, Sterling Business College Pty Ltd

Mr Neil Fernandes, Neil C Fernandes Consulting

Ms Debra Goostrey, ATEA Consulting

Ms Louise Hillman

Ms Jill Jamieson, J Jamieson Consulting

Ms Siobhán Mulvey, Health Support Services

The Training Accreditation Council has an established Code of Conduct which was developed in line with the Public Sector Commission's Good Governance for Western Australian Boards and Committees. All members are provided with a copy of the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct provides guidance about ethical conduct, public duties and legal responsibilities. There were no issues in relation to the Code of Conduct or Code of Ethics during the reporting period.

2.3 FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL

The Council is an independent statutory body that assures the quality of training and assessment of RTOs registered with the Council and accreditation of courses in the VET sector in Western Australia.

The Council's functions are detailed in Part 4 and 7A of the VET Act.

Under the VET Act, the functions of the Council are to:

- register training providers; and
- accredit courses.

In discharging its functions, the Council may also:

- inquire into training providers and courses;
- vary, suspend or cancel registration;
- vary, suspend or cancel accreditation; and
- cancel qualifications.

Provision for appeals against Council decisions is available through the State Training Board under section 58G of the VET Act.

The Council's Secretariat is hosted by the Department of Training and Workforce Development (the Department). A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Council and the Department ensures the Council's independent status. The MoU provides transparency and the framework to enable Council to perform its functions under the VET Act. Further, a direct line of report from the head of the Secretariat, the Director Training Regulation, to the Director General removes any perceived conflict of interest from operational areas and ensures the Council's independence over regulatory activity and regulatory decisions.

During the reporting period the MoU operated effectively and the Council continued to meet its regulatory requirements.

2.4 THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THE COUNCIL WORKS

The Council operates within an agreed national VET regulatory framework defined in a set of standards, guidelines and policies aimed at achieving national consistency in the way RTOs and accredited courses are registered and monitored.

The Council's operating framework includes:

- *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*;
- *Vocational Education and Training (General Regulations) 2009*;
- *Standards for VET Regulators 2015*;
- *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* (Standards for RTOs);

- Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) 2007 Standards for Accredited Courses;
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF);
- Fit and Proper Person Requirements as outlined in the Standards for RTOs;
- Data provision requirements as outlined in the Standards for RTOs; and
- Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements as outlined in the Financial Viability Assessment Guidelines for the Registration of Training Providers 2017 issued by the Minister for Education and Training under section 13 of the VET Act.

2.5 VET REGULATORY ARRANGEMENTS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The governance and strategic direction of VET regulation is jointly owned by State and Commonwealth Ministers through the Council of Australian Government (COAG) Skills Council.

Three VET regulators are charged with the responsibility of regulating the VET sector within their jurisdictions - the Council, the national VET regulator (the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)) and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). This arrangement resulted from the COAG decision in late 2009 to endorse the establishment of a national regulator for the VET sector through the referral of State powers to the Australian Government. Western Australia and Victoria did not refer powers. To ensure a nationally consistent regulatory environment, the Western Australian government enacted legislation that mirrors the Australian Government arrangements.

Through the Council, Western Australia has continued to regulate those providers that deliver national recognised training to domestic students in Western Australia, or that operate only in Western Australia and Victoria. RTOs operating in multiple jurisdictions and/or deliver to international students are regulated by ASQA.

As a State based regulator, the Council enables State Government oversight of the VET provider market, continuous improvement of the sector, responsiveness to State-based policy initiatives, priorities and risks, timely intervention and protection of the State's investment in VET.

2.6 PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

In order to carry out its functions, the Council uses an outcomes based planning and reporting framework.

The framework consists of a Business Plan that is prepared on a three-year basis and reviewed annually. The framework also consists of a corresponding operational plan for the support services provided by the Council's Secretariat, and an Annual Report on the achievements of the Council. In addition, the Council also reports on VET regulation related outcomes at a national level, as required.

2.7 ARRANGEMENTS FOR RTO AUDITORS AND ACCREDITATION REVIEWERS

The Council’s RTO Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers are appointed through a public tender process, with the latest RTO Auditor and Accreditation Reviewer Panels commencing on 1 March 2016. The panels were appointed for a one-year period with three, one-year extension options. In late 2019 the contract term was extended by four months, until 30 June 2020, to allow sufficient time to finalise the tender process for the new contract.

The primary role of RTO Auditors is to undertake audits of RTOs to report on compliance against the Standards for RTOs. Accreditation Reviewers assess submissions for course accreditation to ensure they reflect the requirements of the AQTF2007 Standards for Accredited Courses. RTO Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers appointed to the panel are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Panel of RTO Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers as at 30 June 2020

Panel	Name	Organisation
RTO Auditors	Allison Burnett	Specialised Training Solutions
	Russell Docking	Skills Resource Management Systems
	Cherrie Hawke	Torque Holdings Pty Ltd
	David Love	Workplace Skills Management Pty Ltd
	Sharon Stewart	LCN Training Solutions
	Michaela Tarpley	Aptus Solutions Pty Ltd
	Pam Vlajsavljevich	Pam Vlajsavljevich
	Claire Werner	The Meyvn Group
Accreditation Reviewers	Russell Docking	Skills Resource Management Systems
	Cherrie Hawke	Torque Holdings Pty Ltd

The Department, through the Council’s Secretariat, implements a performance management model on behalf of the Council for the panel of external RTO Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers.

To ensure consistency in the approach to RTO audits and reviews of course accreditation applications, the Council’s Secretariat facilitates moderation activities, including moderation forums, in which all contracted RTO Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers are required to attend. Moderation forums are an important internal quality assurance mechanism and supports consistency in audit practice and assessment of provider compliance.

During the reporting period **three** RTO Auditor moderation forums were conducted. In addition to moderation activities and discussions, the forums provide auditors with the opportunity to stay up-to-date with State and national VET policy and regulatory developments, including progress on VET reforms.

2.8 FEES AND CHARGES

In Western Australia, fees and charges apply for the registration of training organisations and accreditation of VET courses with the Council. For activities regulated by the Council, fees and charges have not been amended since 2014. The approved schedule of fees and charges is provided at Table 2.

Table 2: Fees and charges as at 30 June 2020

INITIAL REGISTRATION FEES		
Application Lodgement Fee	Payable on application	\$800
Application Assessment Fee Base fee includes up to 4 qualifications, up to 20 units of competency and up to 2 delivery sites. <i>Total application fee, including lodgement and assessment, is capped at \$50,000.</i>	Base fee plus: - each additional qualification - each additional unit of competency - each additional delivery site	\$8,000 \$145 \$50 \$1,395
RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION FEES		
Application Lodgement Fee	Payable on application	\$900
Application Assessment Fee Base fee includes up to 4 qualifications, up to 20 units of competency and up to 2 delivery sites. <i>Total application fee, including lodgement and assessment, is capped at \$50,000.</i>	Base fee plus: - each additional qualification - each additional unit of competency - each additional delivery site	\$7,000 \$145 \$50 \$700
AMENDMENT TO REGISTRATION FEES		
Amendment to Scope Application	One qualification plus: - each additional qualification	\$920 \$135
<i>*For transition to equivalent training package qualifications or units of competency, no application is required and no fees apply</i>	First seven units of competency plus: - each additional unit	\$240 \$135
	Transition to equivalent accredited course(s)	\$240 per application
ANNUAL FEES		
Annual RTO Registration Fee (includes any number of units of competency)	0-4 qualifications 5-10 qualifications 11-60 qualifications 61 or more qualifications	\$1,130 \$3,220 \$6,975 \$10,730

Note: Applications for Skill Sets are charged per unit of competency.

COMPLIANCE MONITORING AUDIT (CMA) CHARGES		
Costs and expenses incurred in conducting the audit	First 4 hours (minimum charge)	\$1,100
	plus:	
	- each additional hour	\$275
	plus:	
	- official travel costs	If applicable

Note: CMA charge includes GST.

ACCREDITATION FEES		
Application for accreditation/ reaccreditation of a course	Includes: Courses at AQF Level 1 and above Short courses below AQF Level 1	\$8,070
Amendment to accredited course	Per course <i>Note: excludes where the amendment involves updates to imported units from training packages deemed equivalent</i>	\$2,290

Note: All registration and accreditation fees exclude GST.

Regulatory Fee Relief in Response to the Impact of COVID-19

During the reporting period, the Council was able to provide regulatory fee relief to RTOs and accredited course owners through support from the State Government.

Fee relief details are provided below:

FEE RELIEF MEASURE	APPLICABLE FEE OR CHARGE
Fee categories fixed to zero for fees and charges due 1 May to 31 October 2020 inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual RTO registration fee Compliance Monitoring Audit charge Amendments to scope only for RTOs seeking to deliver training products* developed as a direct result of the impact of COVID-19
Flexible payment arrangements for applications submitted 1 May to 31 October 2020 inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RTO renewal of registration fee** Course re-accreditation fee

*training product/s must be published on the national VET register – training.gov.au

**flexible payment arrangement applies to the renewal application 'assessment fee' only

3. APPROACH TO REGULATION

The Council's primary role is to assure the quality of training and assessment delivered in the Western Australian VET sector through effective regulation of providers and accreditation of courses.

As a VET regulator, the Council applies consistent, proportional and transparent responses to different levels of risk affecting the quality of VET outcomes.

Underpinned by its Risk Framework, the Council delivers an integrated and balanced regulatory approach that supports business improvement and delivery of quality VET.

The Council's Risk Framework describes its approach to:

- risk based regulation;
- stakeholder engagement;
- regulatory strategy; and
- education program.

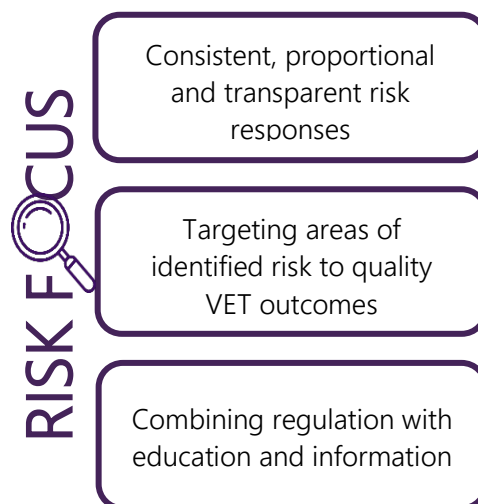
Risk Based Regulation

The Council implements a Risk Framework that underpins its regulatory approach. The Risk Framework outlines Council's risk management approach in which regulatory responses are risk based, evidence based, targeted and proportionate.

The Council applies appropriate regulatory responses in the management of risk at two levels – provider and systemic risk. RTOs demonstrating patterns of poor compliance present a high risk to quality training and assessment outcomes. Systemic risks identify particular training products or industry areas of concern.

In line with the Risk Framework, Council directs its focus and resources to RTOs deemed to pose the highest risk to quality outcomes while allowing those with a history of consistent compliance to operate with reduced regulatory scrutiny. The Council applies a range of proportionate regulatory strategies to respond to systemic risks, such as educative strategies and strategic reviews.

The Risk Framework outlines a range of regulatory responses available to the Council which vary according to the nature and severity of the risk and their potential impacts.



Stakeholder Engagement

The Council has a close and ongoing engagement with its stakeholders, which includes industry regulators, Western Australian training councils, State and Australian Government agencies and the RTOs Council regulates.

Stakeholder engagement is a key component of the Council's Risk Framework and regulatory processes that ensures Council is informed of issues that impact on the quality of VET in Western Australia. The Council's active and consultative engagement approach ensures the ability to develop appropriate and timely regulatory responses.

Regulatory Strategy

The Council's Regulatory Strategy is prepared in line with the Council's Risk Framework and conveys the Council's commitment to responding to State-based priorities and risks.

It informs stakeholders about priorities the Council has identified as posing risks to the quality of VET and the planned regulatory action to monitor and minimise those risks.

During the reporting period, the Council endorsed and published a two-year strategy titled [Focus on Quality: TAC Regulatory Strategy 2019-2021](#). In publishing this document, the Council seeks to engage and motivate RTOs to achieve quality VET outcomes for Western Australia through compliance with the Standards for RTOs.

Education Program

A well-established feature of the Council's regulatory approach is its commitment to an education program as an important regulatory strategy to encourage and promote compliance. The Council's Education Program aims to build capability and understanding of RTOs and their staff to meet their obligations in regard to the Standards.

During the reporting period, the Council continued to strengthen its commitment to providing education and guidance to the sector through the significant expansion of the program.

4. LEGISLATION AND COMPLIANCE - Key Priority 1

Outcome Indicators

The Council's success in achieving Key Priority 1 is demonstrated by the extent to which the following indicators have been achieved:

Outcome 1	The Council's governance requirements are met.
Outcome 2	Council regulates training providers in accordance with the <i>Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTO) 2015</i> , <i>Standards for VET Regulators 2015</i> , <i>Vocational Education and Training Act 1996</i> and <i>Vocational Education and Training (General) Regulations 2009</i> .

Work undertaken by the Council to progress these priorities and to achieve Key Priority 1 is detailed as follows.

4.1 THE COUNCIL'S GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

4.1.1 Council Membership 2019-2020

Membership of the Council complied with the requirements of the VET Act during the reporting period, with seven members appointed by the Minister for Education and Training.

4.1.2 Operations of the Council

During the reporting period the Council was supported by the Department of Training and Workforce Development through the services of the Council's Secretariat located in Osborne Park, Western Australia.

In supporting the Council, key roles of the Council's Secretariat are to implement the Council's Business Plan and Risk Framework, including its Regulatory Strategy, and to process applications for registration of training providers and accreditation of courses for consideration by the Council. The Council's Secretariat provides high level advice and substantial support to the work of the Council on State and national VET regulatory and policy matters.

The Council holds meetings on a monthly basis to consider registration and accreditation applications, various regulatory related matters, and to consider key strategies to progress the work of the Council. The Council formally met **13** times over the 12-months to 30 June 2020, which consisted of **12** Council meetings and **one** Executive Committee meeting.

The Council also considers matters 'Out of Session' ensuring matters are considered as needed and within a relatively short period of time. During the reporting period Council considered **10** items Out of Session.

4.1.3 Remuneration

Section 63 of the VET Act provides that Training Accreditation Council members are entitled to receive remuneration in the form of sitting fees. During the 2019-2020 reporting period, Council members received remuneration as outlined in Table 3.

Table 3: Council remuneration

Position	Name	Type of remuneration	Period of membership	Gross/actual remuneration
Chairman	Mr Ian Hill	Annual	12 months	\$39,442
Member	Miss Janelle Dawson	Annual	12 months	\$22,150
Member	Mr Neil Fernandes	Annual	12 months	\$22,150
Member	Ms Debra Goostrey	Annual	12 months	\$22,150
Member	Ms Louise Hillman	Annual	12 months	\$22,150
Member	Ms Jill Jamieson	Annual	12 months	\$22,150
Member	Ms Siobhán Mulvey	-	12 months	\$0
				\$150,192

4.1.4 Compliance with the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015*

The *Standards for VET Regulators 2015* outlines the national framework for the approach to be taken by VET regulators to ensure:

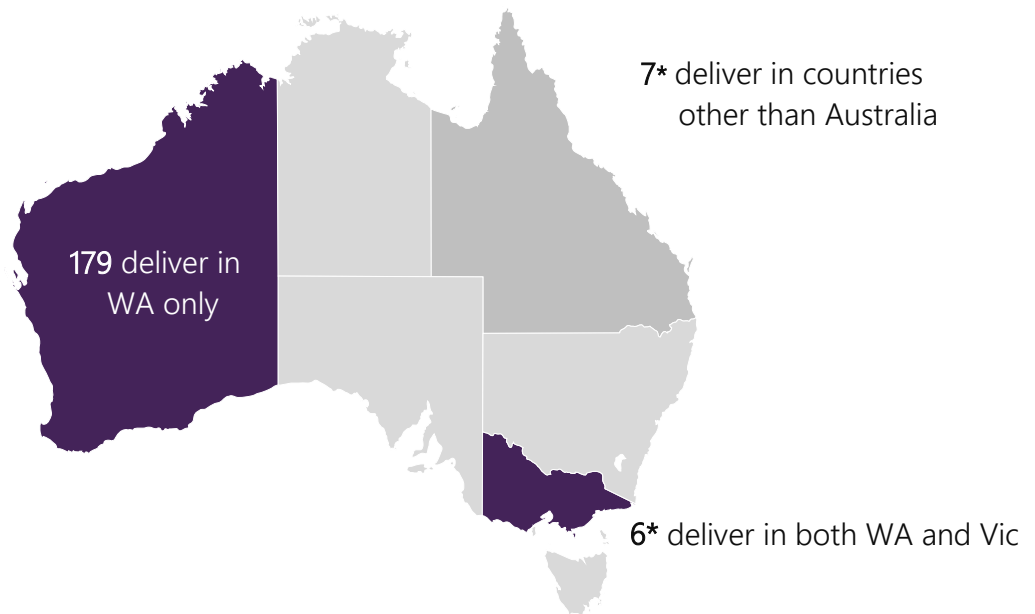
- the integrity of nationally recognised training by regulating RTOs and VET accredited courses using a risk-based approach that is consistent, effective, proportional, responsive and transparent;
- consistency in the implementation and interpretation of the Standards for RTOs and Accredited Courses; and
- accountability and transparency in undertaking its regulatory functions.

During the reporting period, the Council progressed a range of initiatives to ensure compliance with the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015* and these are detailed throughout the report.

4.2 OVERVIEW OF THE REGULATORY MARKET

4.2.1 Registered Training Organisations as at 30 June 2020

189 RTOs registered with the Council



*Includes three RTOs in both categories

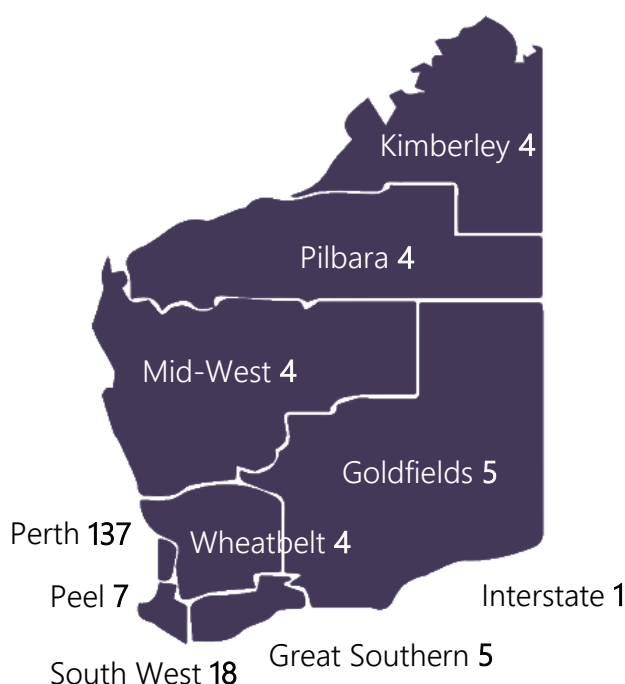
During the 2019-2020 year:

- 9 RTOs voluntarily relinquished registration
- 4 RTOs did not renew registration when it expired
- 0 RTOs had a sanction (cancellation or suspension) imposed on their registration

4.2.2 Demographics of RTOs

The following provides an overview of the Council’s regulated VET market in Western Australia for the 2019-2020 reporting period.

Figure 1: RTOs by location



The location is based on the RTO’s head office.

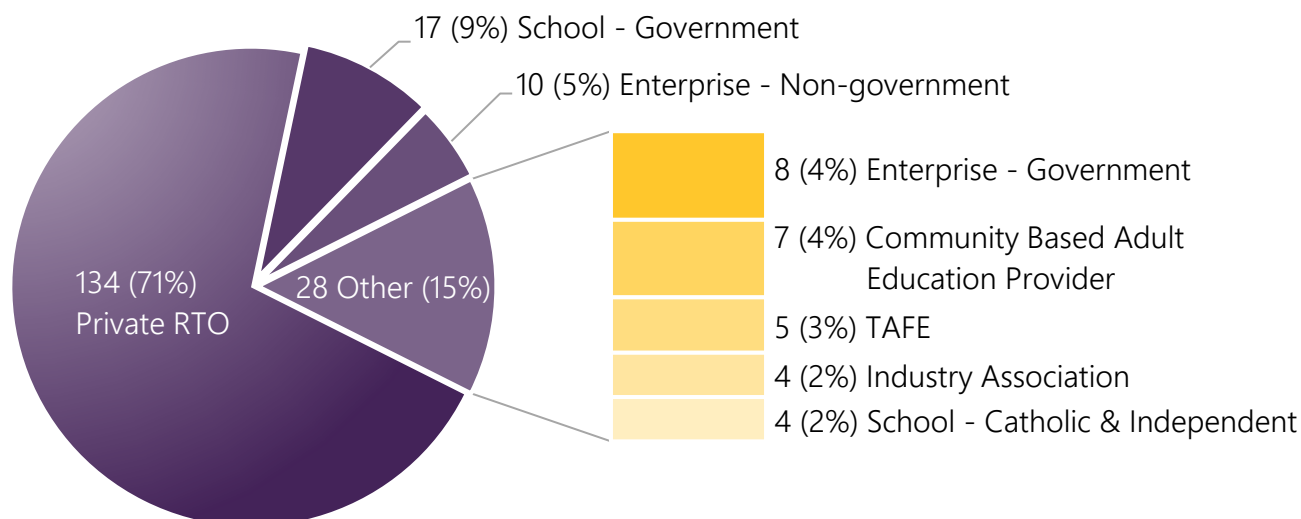
Of the 189 RTOs registered with the Council, **137 (72%)** were located in the Perth region and the remaining **52 (28%)** are spread across regional Western Australia and one Interstate.

The distribution of RTOs by location remained stable during the reporting period.

RTOs by Type of Business

134 (71%) of the **189** RTOs registered with the Council at 30 June 2020 were private RTOs. The remaining **55 (29%)** RTOs included a range of business types as presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: RTOs by type of business



Top 10 Overall Qualifications

Figure 3 provides a profile of the Western Australian regulatory market based on the highest number of qualifications on the scope of registration for Council registered RTOs.

Figure 3: Top 10 overall qualifications

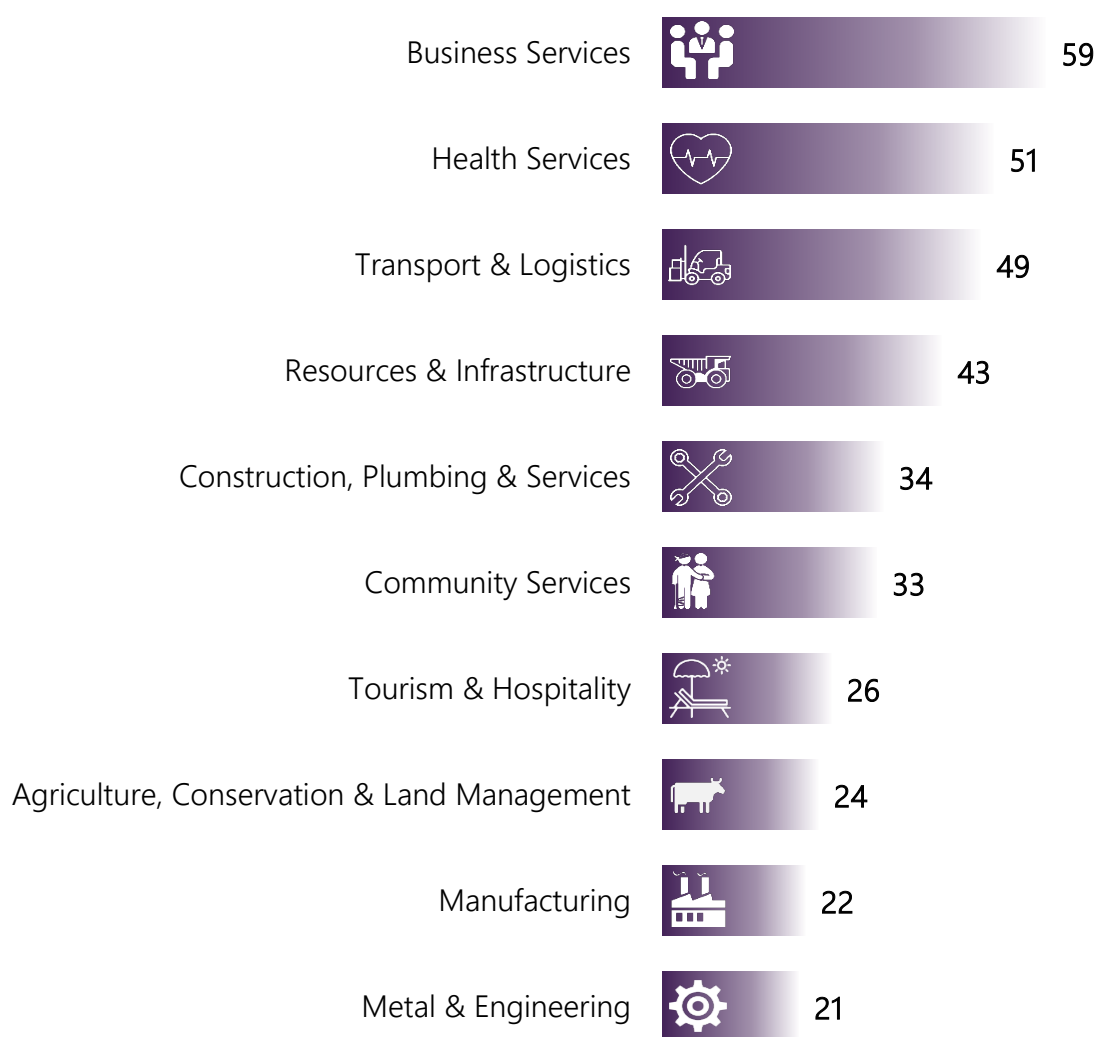


Top 10 Industry Areas of Training Delivery

Of the **189** RTOs registered with the Council, **59** (31%) had Business Services on their scope of registration, followed by **51** (27%) in Health Services and **49** (26%) in Transport and Logistics.

Figure 4 provides a summary of the top 10 industry areas of training delivery.

Figure 4: Top 10 industry areas of training delivery - based on the number of endorsed industry training packages on the scope of registration of Council registered RTOs.



4.2.3 Accredited Courses

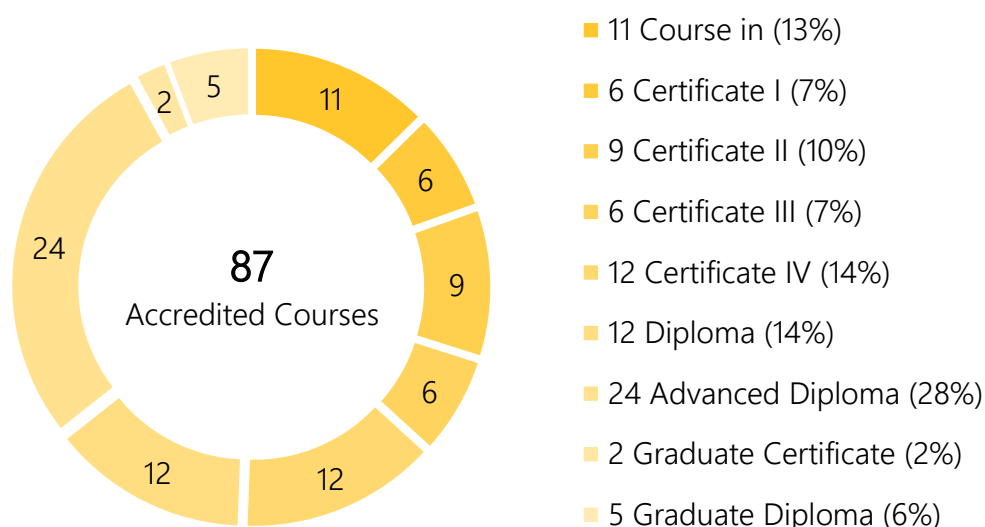
In its capacity as a VET regulator, the Council accredits courses in line with the requirements of the AQTF2007 Standards for Accredited Courses to meet training needs not addressed in training packages.

Through its accreditation function, the Council is able to accredit locally developed courses driven by local needs, in a timely manner. This includes accrediting courses that meet new industry requirements and State Government priorities such as employment and training initiatives.

At 30 June 2020 there were **87** courses accredited with the Council. During 2019-2020 **11** accredited courses expired, **four** of which were re-accredited.

Figure 5 shows courses accredited by the Council by AQF level.

Figure 5: Accredited courses by AQF level as at 30 June 2020



* Percentages may not total to 100% due to rounding

4.2.4 Regulatory Activity

During the reporting period the Council continued to regulate the Western Australian VET sector in accordance with the requirements of the VET Act and the Standards.

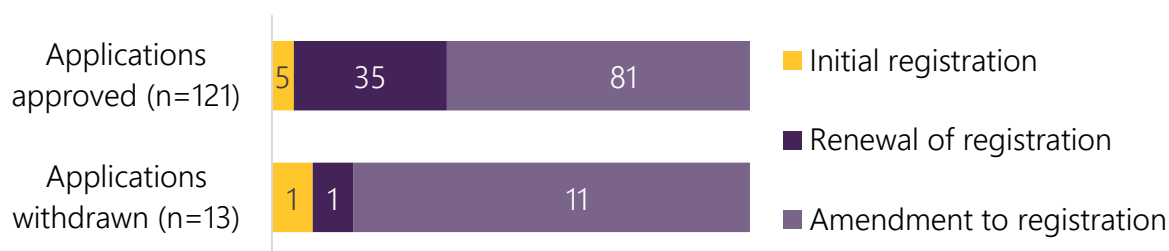
The following section provides an overview of the Council’s regulatory activity for the reporting period 1 July 2019–30 June 2020.

Registration Activity

During the 2019-2020 year the Council approved a total of **121** new registration applications of which **five** were initial registrations, **81** were amendment to registration applications and **35** were renewal of registration applications.

Figure 6 provides an overview of registration applications approved and withdrawn during the reporting period.

Figure 6: Registration activity for 2019-2020



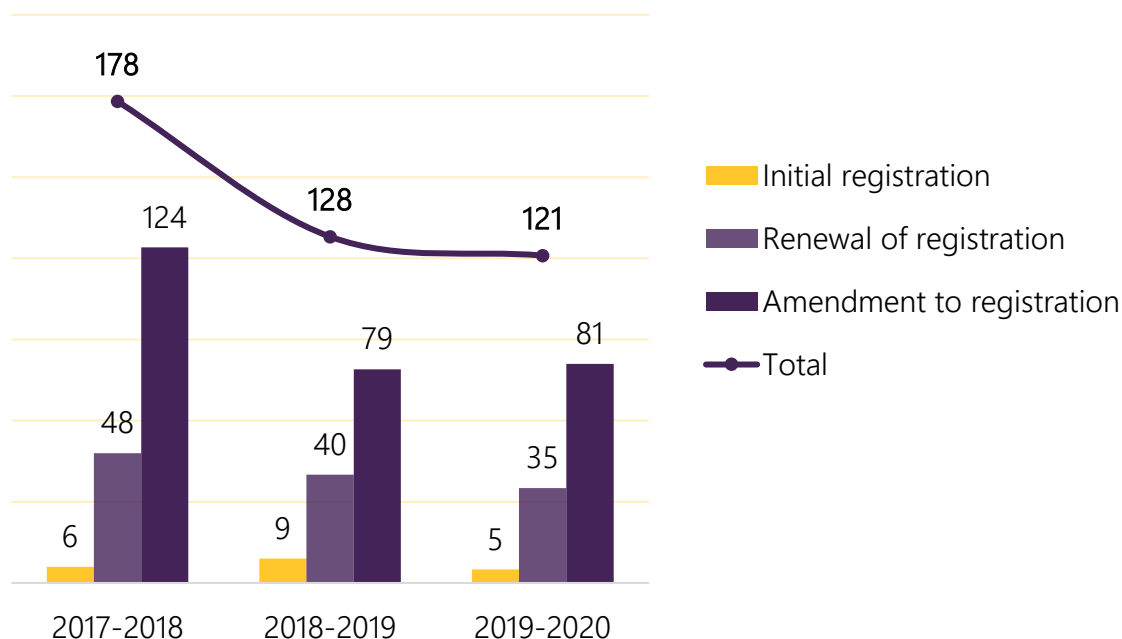
While the majority of applications received during the reporting period were approved by the Council, several registration applications were withdrawn.

An application is withdrawn following a request from the applicant and may occur at any stage of the application process.

Applications Endorsed

Figure 7 provides an overview of applications endorsed by the Council for the 2019-2020 period and the two previous reporting periods.

Figure 7: Registration activity – applications endorsed



The number of applications for renewal of registration varies based on the cyclic nature of training provider registration periods. Amendments to registration are initiated by the training provider and the decrease could be attributed to RTO business requirements, delivery focus and fewer changes to training package products.

Replacement of Equivalent Training Package Products

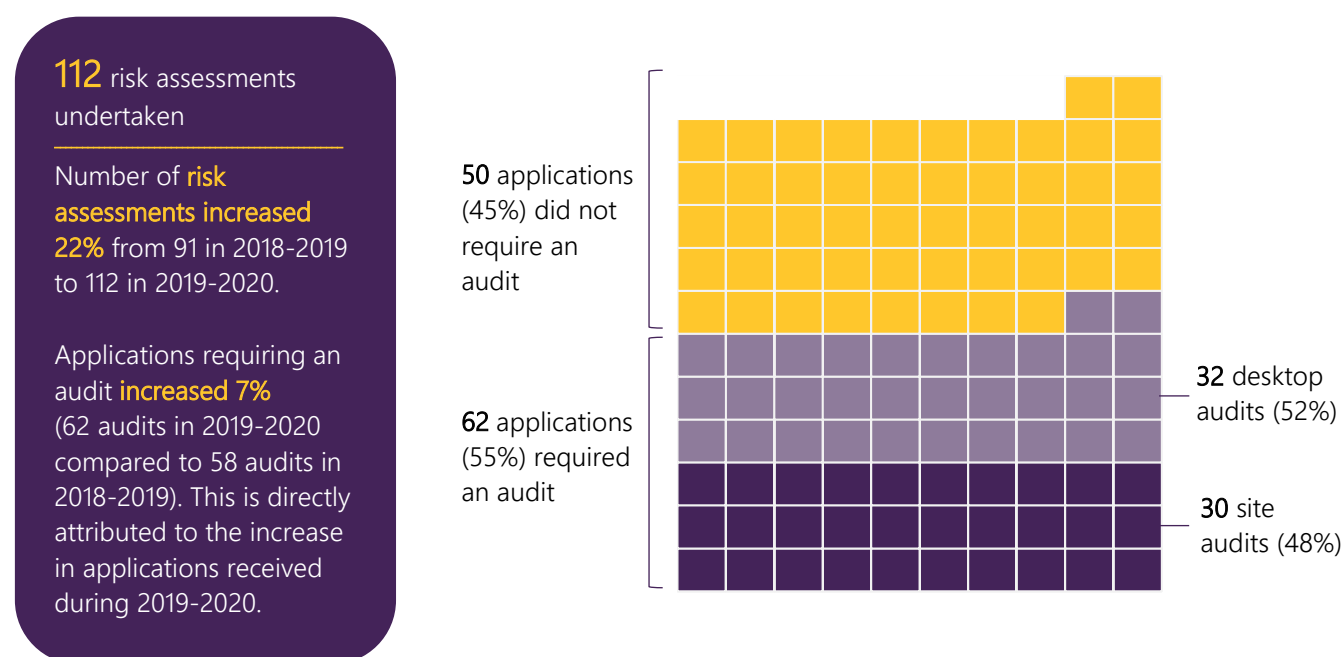
Equivalent training package products (qualifications and/or units of competency) are automatically added to an RTO's scope of registration without requiring an application or a fee.

During the 2019-2020 period, **197** training products were processed by the Council through the replacement of equivalent training package products process, a decrease from the 421 processed in the 2018-2019 period. The decrease in the number of training products processed can be attributed to the decrease in equivalent training package products endorsed by the Australian Industry and Skills Committee during the period.

Risk Management of Applications

The Council implements a systematic risk management approach to assessing all applications submitted by training providers, with all applications subject to a risk assessment process. In order to determine the appropriate regulatory response to be applied, the risk assessment process considers individual provider risk, broader systemic risks and the relevant regulatory response identified in the Council’s Regulatory Strategy. This assessment determines if a training provider is required to undergo an audit and the appropriate audit method.

Figure 8: Risk assessments conducted on applications received



4.2.5 Audit Activity

Overview of Audits

Audits offer a point-in-time insight into the quality of the training and assessment services being provided and inform the Council’s regulatory decisions. Audits are undertaken in accordance with the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015*, the Standards for RTOs and the Council’s Risk Framework. During the reporting period the Council audited **83** RTOs conducting a total of **115** audits.

The **83** RTOs represents **40%**¹ of all providers registered with the Council over the reporting period.

¹ While there were 189 RTOs registered with the Council at 30 June 2020, the percentage of RTOs audited represents the total number of providers that were registered with the Council over the reporting period (206 RTOs).

Audits may include multiple audit types for individual training organisations during the reporting period. During a 12-month period, a training organisation may have submitted several amendment to scope applications related to proposed new delivery. The Council may also have initiated an audit in its capacity as the VET regulator, such as a strategic review audit.

Figure 9 provides an overview of audits undertaken during the reporting period.

Figure 9: Total audits for 2019-2020

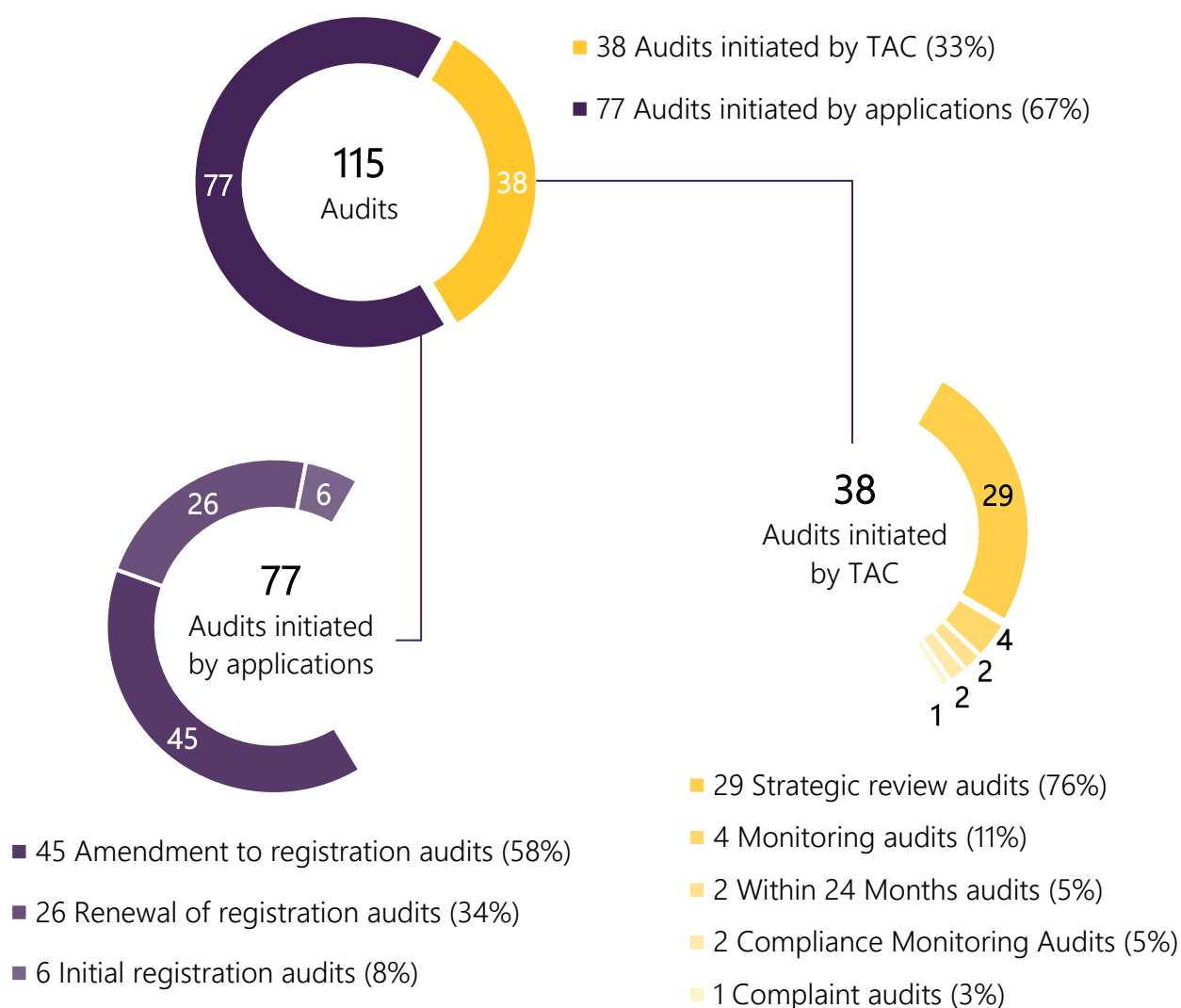
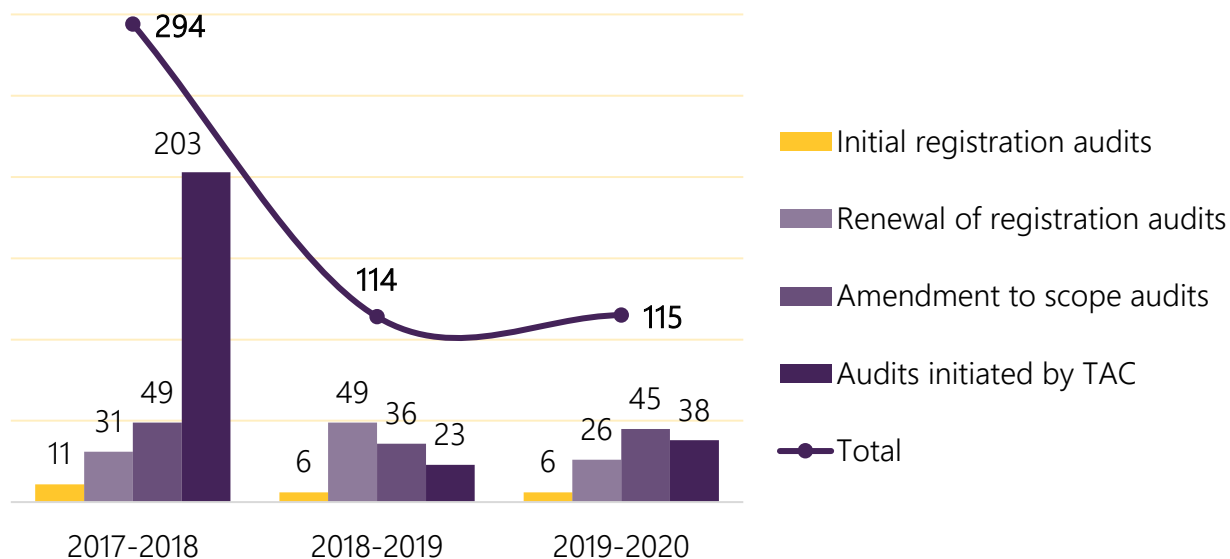


Figure 10 provides a comparison of the type and number of audits conducted in the 2019-2020 period and the two previous reporting periods.

Figure 10: Total number of audits by financial years



The high number of audits undertaken in 2017-2018 can be directly attributed to the Council’s 2017 Marketing and Governance Audit Strategy.

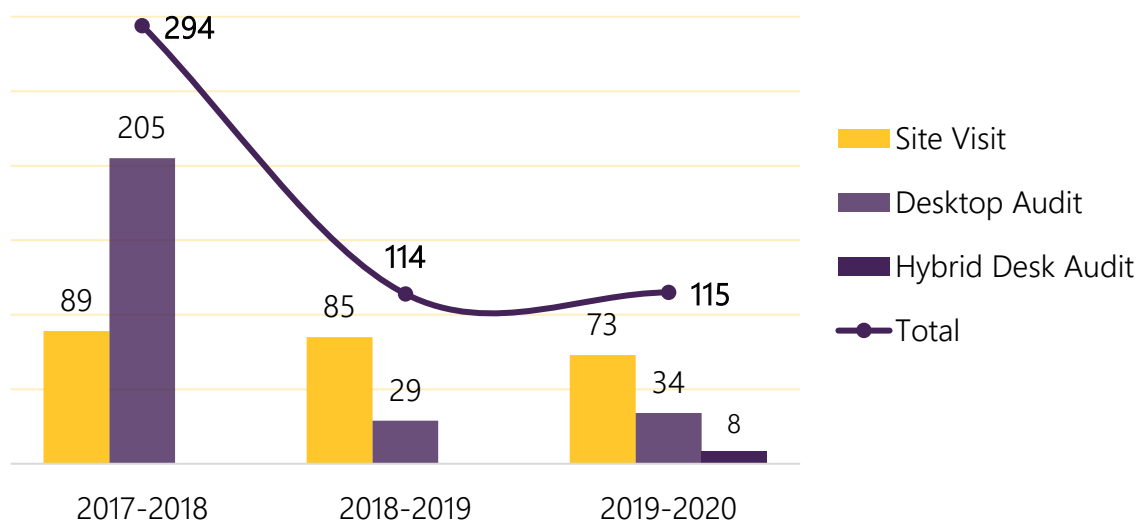
Audits by Method

The Council utilises its Regulatory Strategy and the outcome of the application risk assessment process to determine the appropriate regulatory response to be applied. The outcome could result in no audit being required, or either a desktop or site audit being conducted.

A new audit approach was applied for site audits during the height of COVID-19 in Western Australia. Where RTOs agreed to proceed with the site audit, the audit was undertaken as a ‘hybrid desk audit’. During these audits, Auditors utilised alternative communication methods such as videoconferencing to engage with the RTO and to review facilities and resources.

Figure 11 provides a comparison of the audit method between the current and the previous reporting periods.

Figure 11: Total number of audits by method



The high number of desk audits undertaken in 2017-2018 can be directly attributed to the Council's 2017 Marketing and Governance Audit Strategy.

Audit Outcomes

Compliance identified at audit is considered by the Council in line with established processes. If the outcome of the main audit is non-compliance, training organisations are provided with an evidence review period of 20 working days to address outstanding issues. RTOs must demonstrate compliance with the Standards for RTOs in order to continue to operate within the Western Australian VET market.

Figure 12 provides a breakdown of the outcome of audits conducted during the 2019-2020 period (based on overall level of non-compliance identified at the main audit).

Figure 12: Audit outcome at main audit

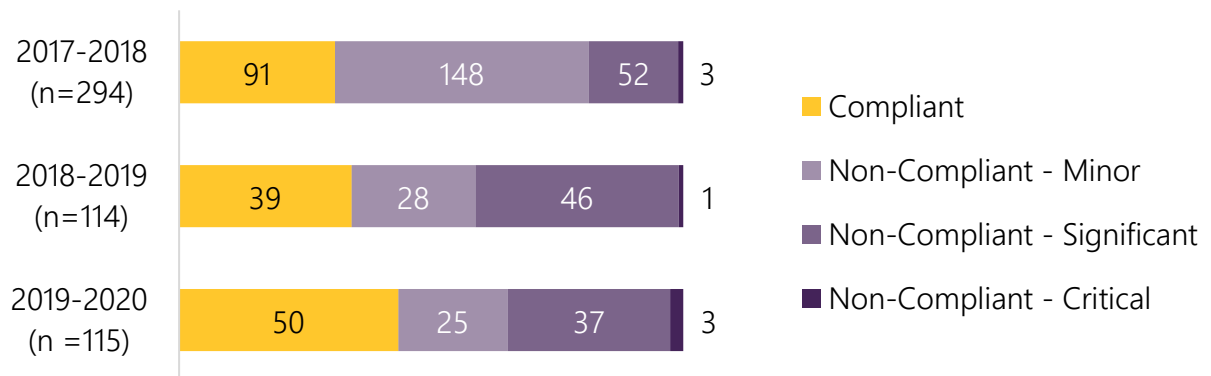
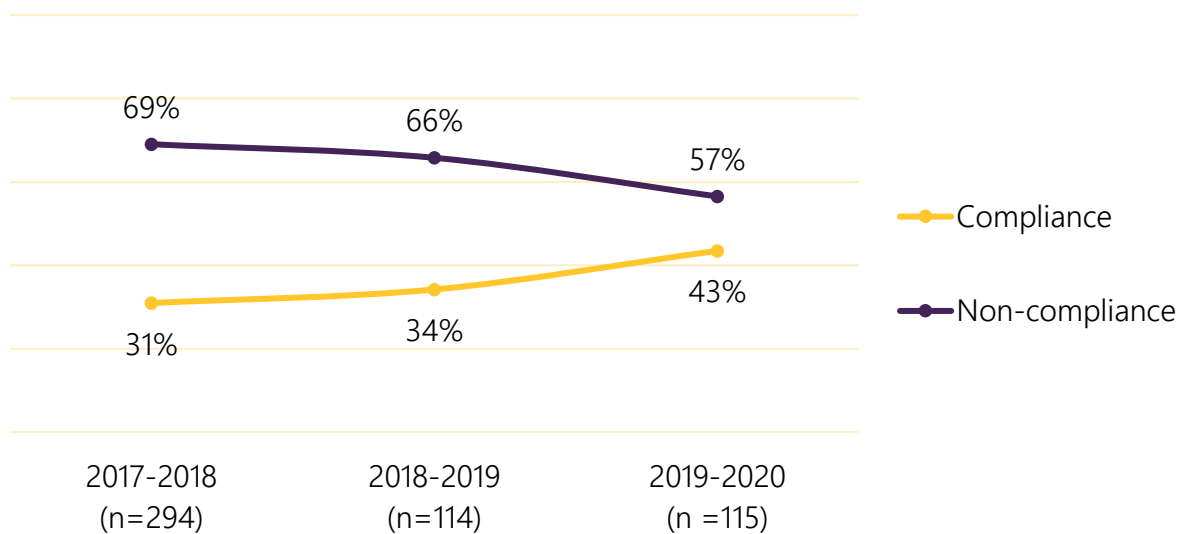


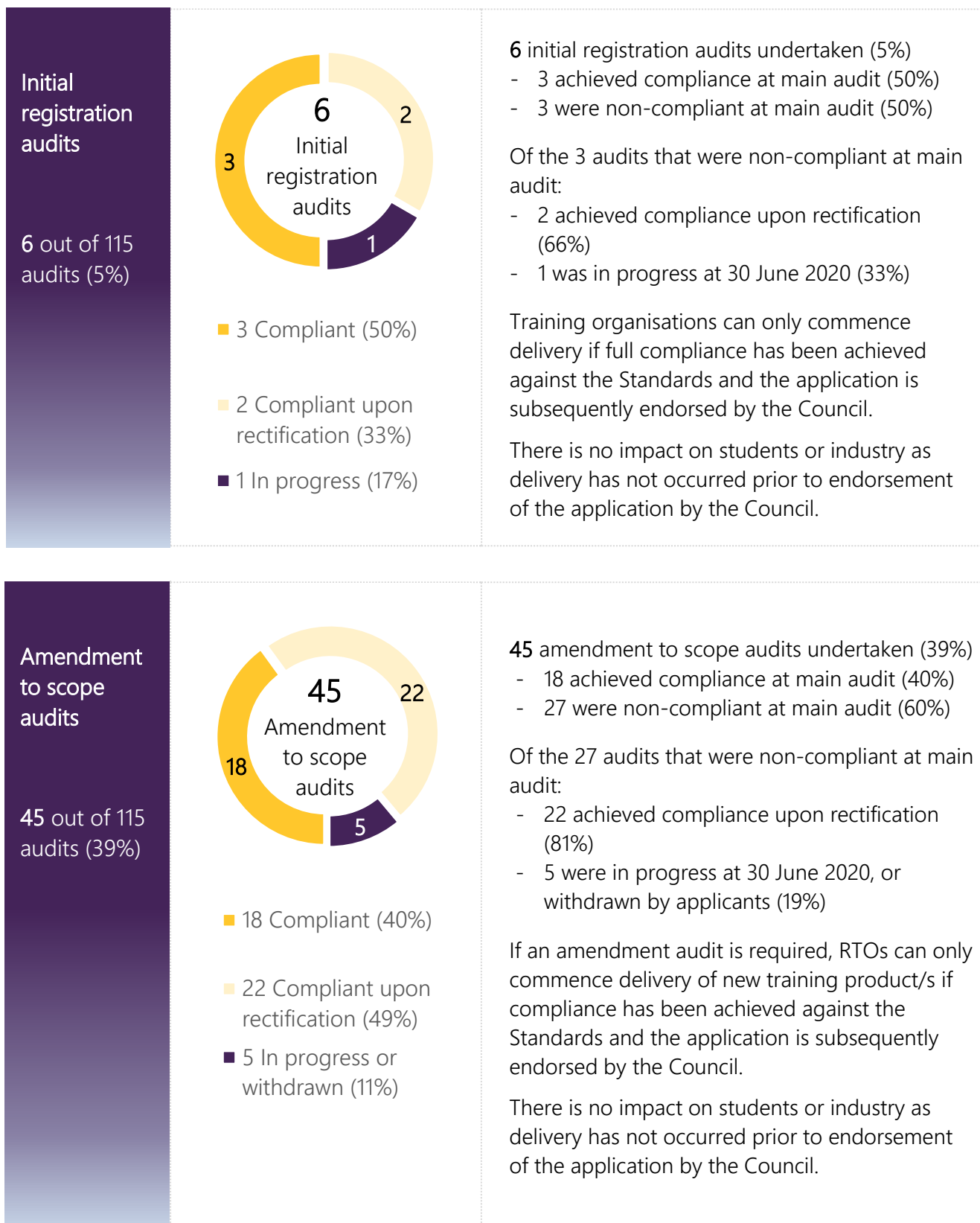
Figure 13 shows the compliance trend at main audit over three reporting periods and indicates an increase in compliance and a decrease in overall non-compliance outcomes.

Figure 13: Compliance trend at main audit



An overview of the 115 audits conducted by Council during 2019-2020 is provided at Figure 14.

Figure 14: Overview of audits conducted (based on main audit outcome)



Renewal of registration audits

26 out of 115 audits (23%)



- 4 Compliant (15%)
- 16 Compliant upon rectification (62%)
- 6 In progress or withdrawn (23%)

26 renewal of registration audits undertaken (23%)

- 4 achieved compliance at main audit (15%)
- 22 were non-compliant at main audit (85%)

Of the 22 audits that were non-compliant at main audit:

- 16 achieved compliance upon rectification (73%)
- 6 were in progress at 30 June 2020, or withdrawn by applicants (27%)

RTOs applying to renew their registration with the Council must demonstrate compliance against the Standards in order to be re-registered and enable delivery to continue.

These audits include student interviews.

Audits initiated by TAC

38 out of 115 (33%)



- 25 Compliant (66%)
- 13 Compliant upon rectification (34%)

38 audits initiated by Council (33%)

- 25 achieved compliance at main audit (66%)
- 13 were non-compliant at main audit (34%)

Of the 13 audits that were non-compliant at main audit:

- all 13 achieved compliance upon rectification (100%)

Audits initiated by Council are audits that respond to identified provider or systemic risk. These audits include monitoring, compliance monitoring, within 24 months, strategic review audits and complaint audits and are endorsed by the Council.

These audits may have minimal disruption to an RTO's operations unless the audit outcome warrants further regulatory actions. For example, further actions may result in the Council imposing sanctions on the RTO's registration including suspension or cancellation.

These audits include student interviews.

4.2.6 Annual Declaration on Compliance

Clause 8.4 of the Standards for RTOs requires RTOs provide the Council with an annual declaration on compliance.

The declaration is in relation to whether the RTO:

1. currently meets the requirements of the Standards for RTOs across all its scope of registration and if not, action taken or planned to address the non-compliance; and
2. has met the requirements of the Standards for RTOs for all AQF certification documentation issued in the last financial year.

By submitting the annual declaration, the RTO's legally responsible person is confirming that the RTO systematically monitors and evaluates training and assessment strategies and practices, and uses the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation to inform improvements in business and educational practice.

The annual declaration covers the RTO's entire scope of operations, including all services provided on its behalf by other organisations under third party arrangements, and for all locations where the RTO operates in Western Australia, Victoria or overseas. RTOs were required to submit the 2018-2019 Annual Declaration on Compliance by 30 September 2019 with **all active RTOs meeting this requirement**.

4.2.7 Extension to Transition Periods for Training Products

Clause 1.26 of the Standards for RTOs states the time allowed for RTOs to transition to new training products. Upon request from stakeholders, the Council may consider and approve an extension to the transition period for training products where it can be demonstrated that there would be a genuine disadvantage to students or industry without the extension.

During the 2019-2020 period, the Council approved **20** applications for extension to the transition period for **219** training products.

4.2.8 Compliance Recognition Program

The Council's Compliance Recognition Program (CR Program) is designed to provide RTOs that consistently demonstrate compliance, with a degree of flexibility, by removing the requirement to submit applications or fees to the Council for amendment to scope activity.

The CR Program is premised on the basis that the RTO has undertaken an internal verification process to determine that training products meet compliance with the Standards, AQF and requirements of registration as an RTO under the VET Act. The Council retains the overall authority to approve the amendment.

Participation in the CR Program is granted by the Council and does not indicate or imply that the RTO is of a higher standard, or of a lower risk than other RTOs. As at 30 June 2020, **five** RTOs maintained CR program status.

4.2.9 Regulatory Strategy

During the reporting period, the Council endorsed and published a two-year strategy titled *Focus on Quality: TAC Regulatory Strategy 2019-2021*. Regulatory action undertaken in the first year for each of the areas of risk identified in the strategy are summarised below.

Monitoring of Systemic Risks linked to Training Products

- **Training and Education** – trainers and assessors have a substantial impact on the quality of VET outcomes, and qualifications from the Training and Education (TAE) Training Package remain an area of systemic risk. The Regulatory Strategy focuses on the appropriateness of RTO staffing, resources and facilities for the delivery of TAE qualifications, strategies for training and assessment, the credentials of trainers and assessors delivering the qualifications and independent validation of the RTO's assessment systems, tools, processes and outcomes for TAE qualifications.

During 2019-2020, RTOs that were the subject of Council monitoring audits were found to be **compliant**. TAE qualifications remained on the list of qualifications excluded from the Council's Compliance Recognition Program.

- **Construction Industry: CPCCWHS1001 Prepare to work safely in the construction industry** – this unit is linked to the Construction Induction Training (White) Card. In June 2019, WorkSafe WA amended the terms and conditions for RTOs authorised to issue the White Card. Only learners located in Western Australia at the time of assessment are eligible for a White Card.

The focus for the Regulatory Strategy is on training and assessment practices (including amount of training) and RTO processes for verifying the identity of learners, particularly where there is online delivery. Site audits were conducted for **five** RTOs applying to deliver the CPCCWHS1001 White Card unit.

- **Heavy Vehicle training** – monitoring audits endorsed by the Council and scheduled for March-April 2020 were postponed due to the impact of COVID-19 physical distancing requirements on Council's audit activities. The audits were rescheduled for later in 2020, with findings and recommendations to be reported in 2020-2021.

- **Security Qualifications** – a range of security qualifications are linked to licenced occupations, including crowd controller, unarmed bodyguard, security officer/cash in transit, investigator and alarm/CCTV installer.

Revised security qualifications released in January 2019 were deemed not equivalent to the superseded qualifications. Secretariat staff and auditors consulted with Western Australia Police Licencing on new trainer and assessor requirements in the revised qualifications and amendments to minimum hours of face-to-face training, mandated under the Western Australia Commissioner of Police Conditions. **Five** RTOs applying to add the revised qualifications to scope of registration underwent site audits under the 2019-2021 Regulatory Strategy.

- **Units of competency leading to the issuance of High Risk Work Licenses (HRWL)** – these units are applicable in many industries including in construction, electricity supply, manufacturing, transport and logistics, and continue to be an area of risk.

HRWL units reviewed and endorsed during 2018-2019 were implemented in 2019-2020. Site audits were conducted for **three** RTOs applying to add revised HRWL units to scope of registration under the Regulatory Strategy.

- **Health and Community Services** – Community Services qualifications continue to be an area of focus for the Council on account of ongoing industry concerns and significant changes to the Training Package. RTOs seeking to amend their scope of registration to include the CHC33015 Certificate III in Individual Support, CHC30113 Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care and CHC50113 Diploma of Early Childhood and Care qualifications are subject to a site audit. These qualifications remained on the list of qualifications excluded from the Council's Compliance Recognition Program.

During 2019-2020, **20** RTOs delivering health and community services qualifications were audited. Consultation with stakeholders during the next financial year will inform further development of this strategy in 2020-2021.

Monitoring of Systemic Issues linked to the Standards for RTOs

- **Amount of Training (Clauses 1.1 and 1.2)** – these clauses remain an area of systemic risk to quality VET outcomes and continue to be included in the scope of audits conducted. Of the **237** instances where amount of training was audited during the year, **71%** were found to be compliant. Assessment workshops conducted during the year, as part of the Council's Education Program, included amount of training as a topic.

The Council's Fact Sheet on Amount of Training was reviewed and updated in 2020 and includes suggestions for RTOs on a logical and systematic approach to determining amount of training appropriate for learners.

- **Assessment System (Clause 1.8)** – concerns persist about issues associated with validity, reliability, sufficiency and authenticity of assessment, including addressing requirements specified in training products. Of the **230** instances where this clause was audited during the reporting period, **61%** were compliant.

Assessment, including topics on amount of training, developing assessment tools and systems and assessment validation continued to feature prominently in Education Programs offered during the year and were heavily subscribed.

- **Trainer and Assessor Competencies (Clauses 1.13 – 1.16)** – due to ongoing industry concerns about the quality of the VET workforce, the focus on trainer and assessor competencies remained throughout this period. Audit results, however, indicate a high level of RTO compliance against all four clauses related to trainer and assessor competencies. Of the **210** instances where Clause 1.13 was audited, **83%** were compliant, and of the **191** instances where Clause 1.14 was audited, **95%** were compliant.

VET Delivered in Secondary Schools

VET delivery in secondary schools is the most common education pathway for Year 11 and Year 12 public school students and continued to be an area of attention. Audits of RTOs delivering qualifications through this pathway continued to focus on amount of training, assessment and trainer/assessor competence and industry skills.

In December 2019 the Council established a MoU with the Department of Education for collaboration and information sharing on VET delivered in secondary schools, including school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.

The Council's Education program is a key strategy to support compliance and increase quality of VET delivered to secondary school students. In the reporting period, two workshop presentations '*Designing Assessment Tools*' and '*Assessment in Practice – Making the Assessment Decision*', were adapted for vocational education and training in schools and delivered to the RTO School network.

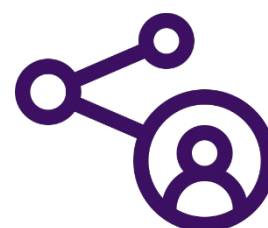
4.2.10 Strategic Reviews

Strategic reviews are undertaken to ascertain whether RTOs providing training and assessment services are meeting the requirements set out in the Standards for RTOs, the nationally recognised training products and in line with industry expectations. They are an in-depth analysis of systemic issues affecting the quality of VET outcomes and enable the Council to respond to quality issues in Western Australia in a timely manner.

Strategic reviews are managed by the Council's Secretariat with the guidance of industry stakeholders who provide invaluable input to the process. Review reports are published on the Council's website www.tac.wa.gov.au.

Strategic Review into Third Party Arrangements

The Council's 2019-2021 Regulatory Strategy identified third party arrangements as an area of concern. Under the Standards, RTOs are responsible for the quality of training and assessment services provided on their behalf by third parties. Third party arrangements must be the subject of a written agreement and RTOs are required to notify the Council of any written agreement entered into for services delivered by third parties.



During the reporting period, the Council conducted a strategic review into RTO Third Party Arrangements.

The review confirmed the prevalence of RTO use of third party arrangements in the VET sector predominantly for training and assessment, provision of a training location and marketing/promotion.

RTOs demonstrated high levels of compliance. The majority (72%) of the RTOs audited demonstrated compliance with all the clauses of the Standards audited. In line with the Council's established audit process, the remaining non-compliant RTOs were provided with

an opportunity to review practices. On review of this evidence, the Council was satisfied that these RTOs were also in compliance with the Standards.

A number of recommendations were identified from the review as follows:

- explore strategies to provide education and guidance for RTOs and third parties on their obligations when they enter into third party agreements;
- consider strategies to enhance the regulation and risk management of RTOs who rely on third party arrangements, including options for collection and analysis of data to assess the risks and impacts on learners, clients and industry if the third party arrangements are deficient;
- review the Council's Third Party Register to determine additional information to be captured to ensure the Register's accuracy and currency; and
- ongoing monitoring of RTOs for compliance with third party requirements as specified in the Standards.

Most of the recommendations were implemented or in development during the reporting period.

First Aid Strategic Review

The Council's 2019-2021 Regulatory identified First Aid training as an area of risk. Poor training and assessment practices, trainers and assessors lacking in contemporary industry knowledge and instances of inappropriate online delivery were some of the concerns expressed by industry stakeholders.

During the reporting period, work commenced on stakeholder consultation, research and data analysis to determine the scope and scale of a strategic review into First Aid training delivery. The findings and recommendations from the review will be reported when finalised.

4.2.11 Course Accreditation

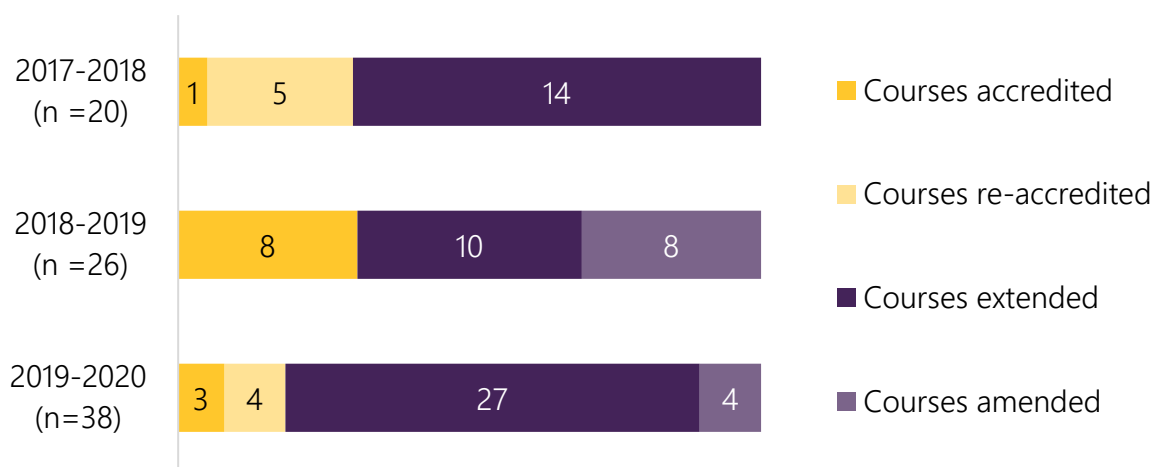
At 30 June 2020 there were **87** courses accredited with the Council.

During the reporting period, the Council considered and approved a total of **38** course accreditation applications. These included **three** applications for accreditation of a new course, **four** course amendment applications, **four** applications for re-accreditation and **27** applications for extension of course accreditation. **One** application for extension of course accreditation was rejected.

Extension to course accreditation applications are considered by the Council on a case-by-case basis. Reasons for extensions may include cases where an application for re-accreditation is in progress, or transition from an accredited course into a training package qualification is pending.

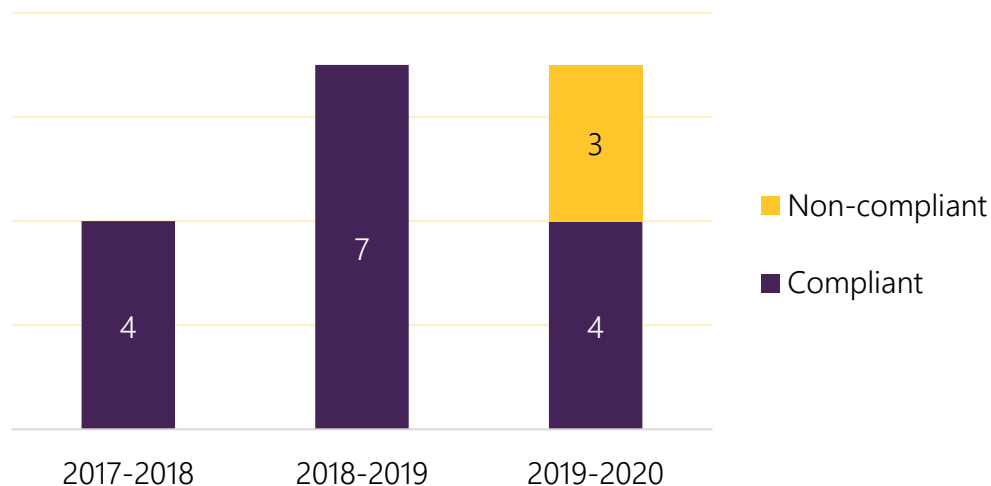
Figure 15 summarises accreditation activity undertaken in the reporting period.

Figure 15: Accreditation applications endorsed



The following chart (Figure 16) sets out the outcome of each accreditation review undertaken against the AQTF2007 Standards for Accredited Courses during the reporting period.

Figure 16: Outcome of accreditation reviews (main review)



Accreditation reviews are undertaken when a course owner submits an application for course accreditation, course re-accreditation or, in some cases, course amendment.

In line with Council processes, if the outcome of the initial review is non-compliance, the applicant is given an opportunity to provide evidence during an evidence review period of 20 working days.

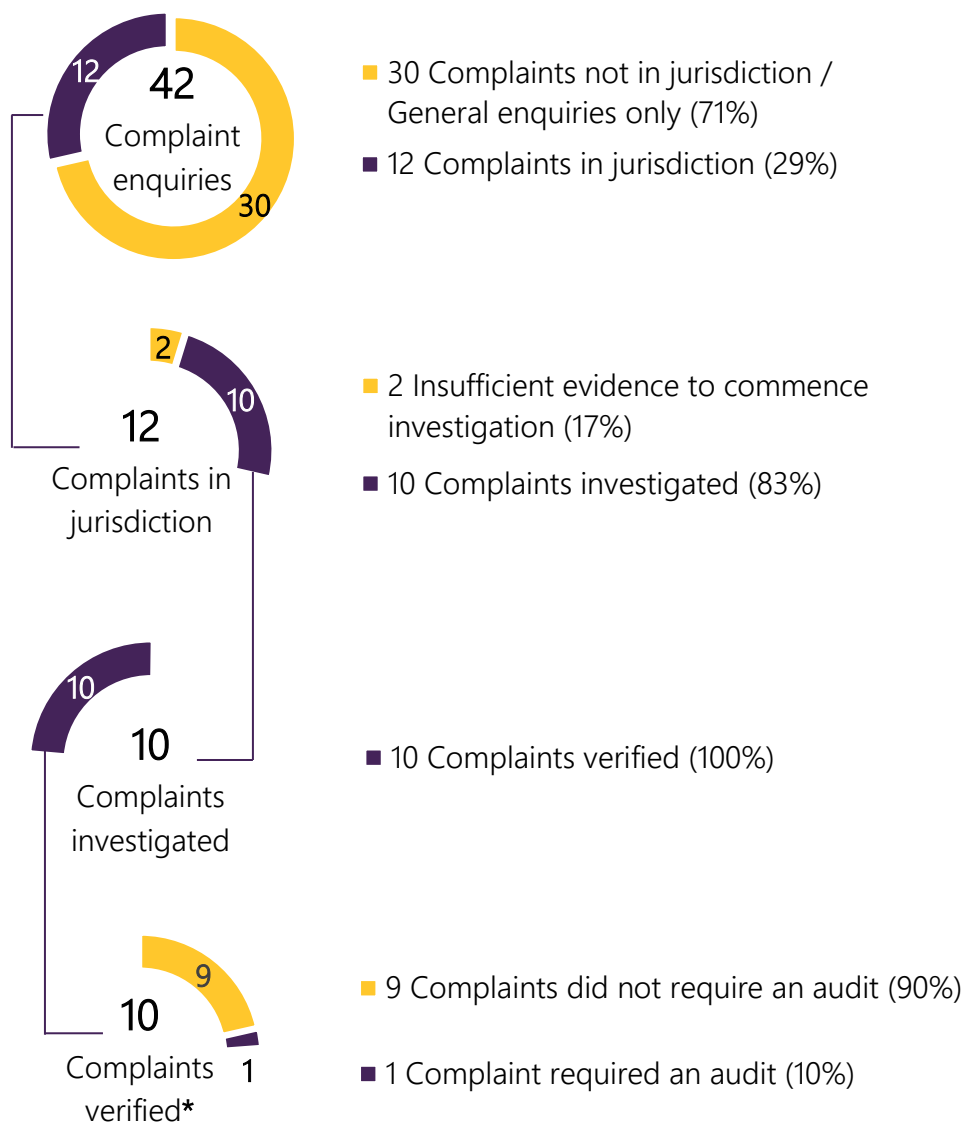
All accreditation reviews undertaken during the reporting period demonstrated compliance at evidence review.

4.2.12 Complaints Management

The VET Act and the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015* require that the Council implements a policy to manage and respond to stakeholder complaints. The Council can only investigate complaints if they relate to the ongoing compliance by RTOs with the Standards for RTOs and the VET Act. In the reporting period, the Council endorsed a revised Complaints Policy and reporting structure. Complaint reports specify the number of complaints received, closed and outcomes during the defined reporting period.

During 2019-2020, the Council's complaints management included a total of **42** closed complaint enquiries. Of these, **30** were not in jurisdiction or considered enquiries only and **12** complaints were formalised (in jurisdiction). Figure 17 provides an overview of complaint matters closed within the reporting period.

Figure 17: Complaints activity



*Verified complaints refer to non-compliances that have been identified following a complaint investigation.

A complaint may include issues associated with more than one clause in the Standards for RTOs. The highest number of verified complaint issues following investigation relate to an RTO purporting to provide nationally recognised training that is not on the RTO’s scope of registration, or a training organisation purporting to be an RTO when not registered (VET Act).

There were two verified complaint issues each for Standard 3 and 4 that specify an RTO can only issue AQF certification documentation to learners it has assessed as meeting the requirements of the training product, and the provision of accurate and factual information with regard to RTO services.

One verified complaint was also recorded in relation to each of Standard 1, 6, 7 and 8. One complaint audit was undertaken during the period with a non-complaint (minor) outcome.

Complaints management is an integral component of the Council's Risk Framework and the data collected from complaints helps to inform consideration to areas of highest risk and appropriate regulatory responses on an ongoing basis. While the number of complaints to Council are generally low, these continue to provide useful insights into issues experienced by stakeholders.

5. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION - Key Priority 2

Outcome Indicators

The Council's success in achieving Key Priority 2 is demonstrated by the extent to which the following indicator has been achieved:

Outcome	The Council effectively communicates and provides an educative service on its functions to stakeholders and gathers appropriate information to enhance its regulatory functions.
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Work undertaken by the Council to progress this priority and to achieve Key Priority 2 is detailed as follows.

5.1 EDUCATION PROGRAM AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Council's Risk Framework and Regulatory Strategy 2019-2021 outlines Council's commitment to an education program as an important strategy to encourage and promote compliance. The Council's Business Plan also identifies provision of educative services as a key priority.

The Council has established itself as a key contributor to RTO professional development in Western Australia, and there has been significant expansion and success in its program of delivery to the VET sector.

The Council's Education Program in 2019-2020 proved highly successful with **469** participants attending workshops either in person or online. The Education Program continued to offer workshops free of charge, through a variety of mediums including face-to-face and online (webinar) presentations facilitating State-wide participation.

The design of the Education Program is based on the analysis of a range of data obtained from audits, complaints, biennial RTO survey, workshop participant feedback and stakeholder consultations, to inform the target areas.

Post workshop surveys undertaken with participants indicated a high level of satisfaction with the presenter's knowledge and expertise, delivery mode, topic selection and the areas of focus in the 2019-2020 Education Program. The feedback indicated significant support on the effectiveness of the program in increasing the capability and understanding of participants in relation to the role of the Council, and in meeting the requirements of the Standards for RTOs.

During July 2019 to June 2020, **20** workshops were conducted as a webinar, face-to-face workshop or a combination of the two. From April 2020 the majority of workshops conducted were adjusted to webinar-only due to COVID-19 restrictions. Feedback from respondents indicated that the move to webinar-only workshops did not adversely affect the program.

Education Program initiatives undertaken during the reporting period included:

6

Six workshops were delivered through a combined face-to-face/webinar delivery providing RTOs with practical information to support compliance against the Standards for RTOs. Target areas included design and development of an assessment system, using assessment tools, making assessment decisions and assessment validation.

2

Two regional workshops were conducted covering assessment and RTO governance. A face-to-face workshop was conducted in Bunbury. Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the regional workshop in Kalgoorlie was delivered via webinar.

10

Ten webinars were conducted covering topics such as *'The Audit Experience, The Accreditation Process, The Audit Experience, Driving Quality Through Good RTO Business Practice'* and information about *'Becoming an RTO'*. All webinar sessions were recorded and made available on the Council's website.

2

Two workshop presentations, *'Designing assessment tools'* and *Assessment in Practice – Making the Assessment Decision* were adapted for RTO schools.

17

TAC Fact Sheets provide training providers with guidance about the Standards for RTOs. All **14** existing Fact Sheets were reviewed during the reporting period and **three** new Fact Sheets were published on *'Distance and Online Modes of Training Delivery during the COVID-19 Pandemic'*, *'Records Management'* and *'RTO Governance'*.

The Education Program will continue to be a major focus during 2020-2021, with the Council continuing to actively consult with stakeholders to inform the provision of relevant education program opportunities and resource delivery that supports RTO business improvement and compliance practices.

5.2 COMMUNICATIONS WITH CLIENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS

5.2.1 Report on Council Activities

The Snapshot of Activities report is produced by the Council every six months, reporting on the previous six months activity and highlights the Council's regulatory activities in accordance with its functions under the VET Act and the Standards.

The Snapshot of Activities report is published via the Council's website.

5.2.2 Provision of Consumer Information

The Council actively provides information to its clients and stakeholders, including guidance material to promote and support the delivery of quality services in the sector.

TAC Website

The website is the Council's major communication portal and the most frequently accessed information and communication tool. The website contains all Council policy and key documentation in relation to the Standards for RTOs, course accreditation and other key information relevant to the sector and its stakeholders.

The Council's website includes access to the RTO Portal, registration and course accreditation application forms, complaints handling information and forms, published newsletters and a vast selection of information and guidance material. The website also includes details about professional development opportunities offered through the Council's Education Program.

The Council's **website** is updated regularly to include relevant and up-to-date information.

During the 2019-2020 period, the website had **113,271** page views from **26,628** unique users. This is a **13% increase** in unique users from the previous period.

TAC Newsletters

During 2019-2020, the Council published and distributed:

5 TAC Updates
13 TAC Special Bulletins

The Council continues to produce regular newsletters - the TAC Update and TAC Special Bulletins.

Newsletters contain announcements on key TAC initiatives and policy matters, updates on State and national VET policy and regulatory matters and reminders to RTOs about mandatory reporting requirements.

In 2019-2020 newsletters included a suite of Special Bulletins in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Newsletters are emailed to subscribers including RTOs and key stakeholders and are available electronically on the Council's website.

Western Australian Training Awards

The Council continues to support the Western Australian Training Awards through its sponsorship of the 'Trainer of the Year Award'. Given the Council's functions under the VET Act, sponsorship of this award reinforces the Council's on-going commitment to recognising quality training and assessment in the VET sector.



Sponsored 2019
'Trainer of the Year'
WA Training Awards

RTOPortal

The Council's RTOPortal, an electronic client management system, provides RTOs with direct access to information linked to their registration.

RTOs can view their registration details with the Council including their contact details and scope of delivery. RTOs must submit applications through the portal and are able to track the progress of their application through the system.

Organisations intending to become an RTO can gain access to the system in order to lodge an initial registration application.

5.3 FEEDBACK FROM RTOs AND STAKEHOLDERS

A key priority of the 2017-2020 Business Plan requires that the Council communicates effectively, provides an educative service on its functions to stakeholders and gathers appropriate information to enhance its regulatory functions. One of the identified strategies is that the Council considers stakeholder feedback to inform its regulatory services and functions, and that Council gathers reliable data to measure its performance and inform its planning, policies and services.

The *Standards for VET Regulators 2015* also require VET regulators to evaluate and improve their regulatory performance in regulating RTOs and accrediting courses.

A key strategy for Council to achieve this outcome has been the Council's RTO and Stakeholder surveys which are conducted on a biennial basis. The surveys seek to obtain feedback to help shape Council's regulatory services and enhance its interactions and communications with RTOs and stakeholders. In June 2020 the Council commenced work on the development of the 2020 RTO and Stakeholder surveys. The surveys will be finalised during 2020 and the survey findings will be reported in the 2020-2021 period.

Feedback from RTOs following Audit

In addition to the Council’s external stakeholder survey, feedback is collected from a number of sources. This includes feedback from RTOs via audit surveys, direct contact with key stakeholders, the Council’s complaints handling process and auditor feedback.

This feedback is incorporated into the Council’s continuous improvement processes and is reported on a biannual basis.

The Council collects feedback from RTOs following completion of site audits during the initial and renewal of registration process, noting responses are voluntary. During the 2019-2020 period, the response rate increased significantly compared with previous periods following changes to the process for administering the surveys and implementing a new engagement strategy.

Figure 18: Survey response rate

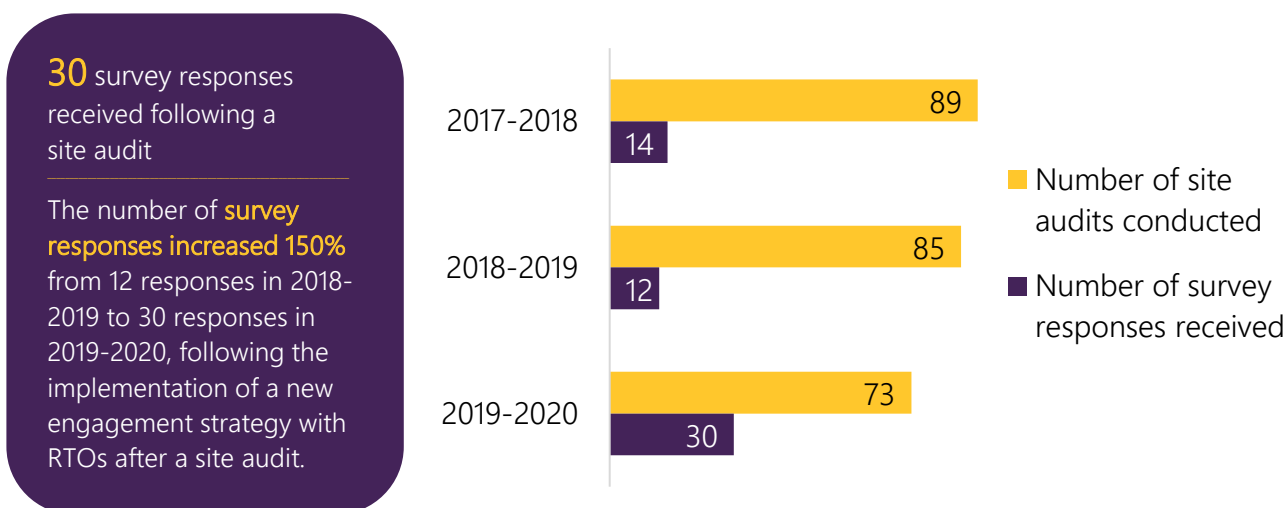
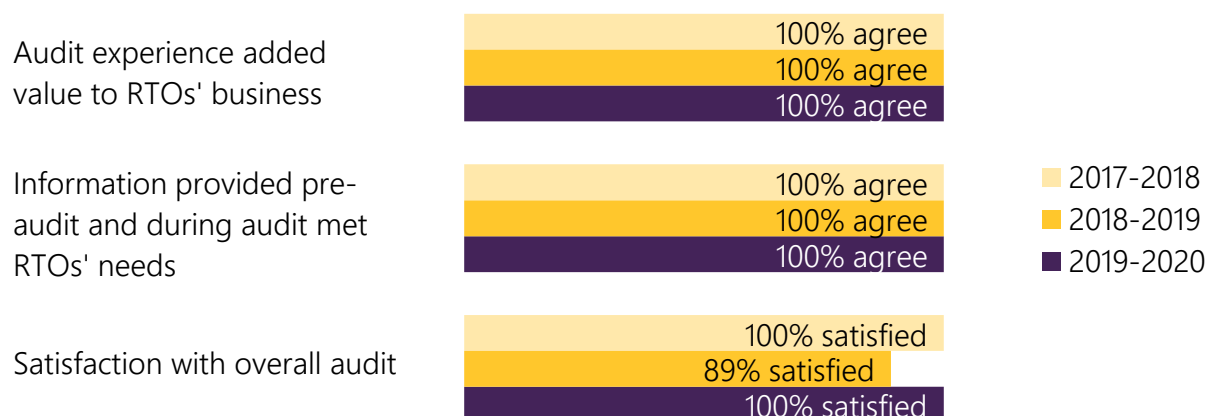


Figure 19 provides an overview of the feedback collected from RTOs during the reporting period.

Figure 19: Feedback from RTOs



6. COLLABORATION AND ENGAGEMENT - Key Priority 3

Outcome Indicators

The Council's success in achieving Key Priority 3 is demonstrated by the extent to which the following indicator has been achieved:

Outcome

Council collaborates with stakeholders in the provision of VET regulatory and educative services to ensure confidence in VET outcomes.

Work undertaken by the Council to progress and achieve Key Priority 3 is detailed as follows.

6.1 ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Engagement with stakeholders is a key component of the Council's Business Plan and Risk Framework. The intelligence gathered through stakeholder engagement ensures appropriate and timely regulatory responses are identified to address risks within the Western Australian VET sector.

During the reporting period, the Council continued to proactively engage with stakeholders to strengthen information sharing and collaboration. Approximately 95 formal meetings were undertaken with various stakeholders including Western Australian training councils, Skills Service Organisations, VET and industry regulators, State and Australian Government agencies, industry associations and RTOs.

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

95 formal meetings



Key stakeholder engagement included:

- engagement with industry regulatory bodies in State Government agencies on industry specific issues for qualifications and units of competency linked to licensed or regulated outcomes – including high risk work licences, the Construction Induction Training (White) Card, security, heavy vehicles and education and care;
- consultation with the Western Australian training council network and industry regulators to identify areas of systemic risk in VET for the development of the Council's 2019-2021 Regulatory Strategy;
- establishment of a new MoU with the Department of Education in December 2019 for information sharing on matters associated with VET delivery in secondary schools, including school-based apprenticeships and traineeships;
- engagement with various government agencies with whom the Council has established a MoU for information sharing on VET issues, including apprenticeships and traineeships, training contracts, training packages and national VET policy implementation;

- participation in information sessions hosted by Skills Service Organisations to provide updates on training package reviews, streamlining and implementation issues; and
- consultation with technical advisors on current industry, regulatory or workplace requirements. Auditors and Secretariat staff consult technical advisors when required to ensure RTO strategies for training and assessment meet industry requirements.

6.2 PARTICIPATION AT A STATE AND NATIONAL LEVEL

During 2019-2020, the Council continued to work collaboratively with the State and Australian Governments, VET regulators and national stakeholders in the regulation and development of the VET sector.

Major national reviews aimed at improving the quality of VET in Australia gained momentum. During the reporting period the Council contributed formally to reviews, including participation at numerous meetings with State and national VET stakeholders and providing written submissions.

Working With Other VET Regulators

The Council continued to engage with ASQA and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). VET regulators met formally **four** times during the reporting period to discuss issues such as the review of the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* (NVETR Act), VET reforms, strategic reviews, and COVID-19 response measures. Additional meetings occurred during the reporting period to discuss the AQTF2007 Standards for Accredited Courses.

The Council participated in tri-partisan meetings between VET regulators and the Department of Training and Workforce Development to discuss issues relevant to each stakeholder.

Government Agency Interactions

Engagement with State and Australian Government agencies is critical to the development and progression of VET policy and reform matters. As a key VET stakeholder, the Council continued to provide input into strategic policy and regulatory matters including:

- review of the NVETR Act - the NVETR Act establishes the national VET regulator. In June 2018 the Australian Government released the '*All eyes on quality: Review of the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011, Australian Government Response*' which outlined the Australian Government's response to the review. During the reporting period, the Australian Government continued to work with States and Territories, including VET regulators, to progress reforms that respond to the recommendations;
- VET Reform Roadmap - in 2019 the COAG agreed a new vision for VET and the development of a VET Reform Roadmap;
- Productivity Commission Review of the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development;

- VET Quality and RTO Excellence;
- review of the Australian Qualifications Framework;
- in response to the COVID 19 pandemic, the introduction of nationally endorsed skill sets to address workforce development needs; and
- review of VET data requirements.

The Council continued to strengthen relationships with the Western Australian Department of Education through a signed MoU between the Council and the Department of Education to cement information sharing protocols. In addition, a number of education program workshops have been specifically designed for RTO Schools to address questions regarding compliance against the Standards.

The Council's working relationship with the Department of Training and Workforce Development is pivotal to matters affecting VET in Western Australia including public funding, information sharing in relation to areas of risk to the sector, professional development opportunities and Training Package implementation. While the process for review and development of training products is managed by the Australian Government, advice is often sought where decisions intersect or impact on VET regulatory activities and the requirements of the Standards for RTOs.

7. QUALITY PROCESSES AND SERVICES - Key Priority 4

Outcome Indicator

The Council's success in achieving Key Priority 4 is demonstrated by the extent to which the following indicator has been achieved:

Outcome The Council delivers consistent and transparent processes and services.

Work undertaken by the Council to achieve Key Priority 4 is detailed as follows.

7.1 REVIEW OF COUNCIL OPERATIONS AND PROCESSES

As part of its role in supporting the business of the Council, the Council's Secretariat maintains a quality system that underpins the day-to-day operations and processes of the Council. The quality system is designed to support the Council's functions as a VET regulator and ensure compliance with a range of State and national requirements.

The Council monitors the implementation of operational processes and procedures on an ongoing basis with refinements made as and when required.

During the reporting period, an extensive review of the quality system was undertaken. The review considered adjustments to reflect regulatory changes or for continuous improvement purposes. The following outlines major reviews undertaken:



- The Council continually monitors the sector in line with its risk management approach. This led to the adjustments to renewal of registration and amendment to registration application processes.
- The Council conducted a review of the Dispute of Audit Findings Policy. The review amended the policy to ensure that it provided greater clarity to RTOs on the process for handling a dispute and the effect of a dispute on the evidence review period.
- The Council conducted a review of the Compliance Recognition Program focusing on the effectiveness and uptake of the program and potential improvements. The review outcomes included amendments to the RTO eligibility requirements and the participation terms of the program.
- In the reporting period, a review of the Council's Complaints Policy was undertaken. In August 2019 Council endorsed a revised Complaints Policy and reporting structure to meet its obligations in regard to complaints about RTOs in line with the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015*, the VET Act and subsidiary legislation. The review identified the need to update content within the policy, the inclusion of the complaints handling process and clarification on scope and jurisdiction, processes for dealing with and investigating complaints and stages for reporting.

7.2 APPEALS AGAINST COUNCIL DECISIONS

Under the requirements of section 58G of the VET Act, RTOs can appeal against Council decisions. Appeals must be lodged with the State Training Board in line with established processes.

During the reporting period the Council, in line with the Standards and the VET legislation, made a range of decisions concerning RTO registration including the rejection of one renewal of registration application and the rejection of one extension to accreditation application.

At the time of reporting, an appeal had been lodged with the State Training Board against a decision of the Council but had not been finalised. The appeal was in relation to the rejection of a renewal of registration application.

8. APPENDIX 1 – Acronyms

AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DoE	Department of Education
DTWD	Department of Training and Workforce Development
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
TAC	Training Accreditation Council
VET	Vocational education and training